

## Longer English Fiction I/Narrativas Longas I

LEM2014 – Semester 1 – 2018

### Evaluation 1

Instructions: Please answer the questions on ANY THREE of the writers dealt with below. In each case, there are some Comprehension questions together with an opportunity to express your wider views about the work from which the passage is taken in response to a Commentary question. There is one rule that you must follow: *do not write about the author you have made or are making a presentation on.* (The reason is too obvious to mention!) You may consult any resources that you like but please avoid plagiarism—i.e., borrowed sentences from Grade-saver, &c. Take your time. Hand the paper back to me within a week if you wish but comfortably before the next Evaluation.

#### DANIEL DEFOE (*ROBINSON CRUSOE*)

Read the following passage and answer the questions below:

I used frequently to visit my boat; and I kept all things about or belonging to her in very good order. Sometimes I went out in her to divert myself, but no more hazardous voyages would I go, scarcely ever above a stone's cast or two from the shore, I was so apprehensive of being hurried out of my knowledge again by the currents or winds, or any other accident. But now I come to a new scene of my life. It happened one day, about noon, going towards my boat, I was exceedingly surprised with the print of a man's naked foot on the shore, which was very plain to be seen on the sand. I stood like one thunderstruck, or as if I had seen an apparition. I listened, I looked round me, but I could hear nothing, nor see anything; I went up to a rising ground to look farther; I went up the shore and down the shore, but it was all one; I could see no other impression but that one. I went to it again to see if there were any more, and to observe if it might not be my fancy; but there was no room for that, for there was exactly the print of a foot—toes, heel, and every part of a foot. How it came thither I knew not, nor could I in the least imagine; but after innumerable fluttering thoughts, like a man perfectly confused and out of myself, I came home to my fortification, not feeling, as we say, the ground I went on, but terrified to the last degree, looking behind me at every two or three steps, mistaking every bush and tree, and fancying every stump at a distance to be a man. Nor is it possible to describe how many various shapes my affrighted imagination represented things to me in, how many wild ideas were found every moment in my fancy, and what strange, unaccountable whimsies came into my thoughts by the way.

#### COMPREHENSION

1. What 'boat' is Robinson Crusoe speaking of? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Who does the footprint belong to? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. Summarise Crusoe's feelings on discovering the footprint \_\_\_\_\_

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COMMENTARY: Write an account of the significance of this event for Robinson Crusoe and its wider importance for our understanding of the novel considered as a representation of 18<sup>th</sup> century British experience as a merchantile and colonising nation. (Draw on any criticism that you may know of to guide your answer in this question.)

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JONATHAN SWIFT (*GULLIVER’S TRAVELS*)

Read the following passage and answer the questions below:

In hopes to ingratiate myself farther into his Majesty’s favour, I told him of an invention discovered between three and four hundred years ago, to make a certain powder, into a heap of which the smallest spark of fire falling, would kindle the whole in a moment, although it were as big as a mountain, and make it all fly up in the air together, with a noise and agitation greater than thunder. That a proper quantity of this powder rammed into a hollow tube of brass or iron, according to its bigness, would drive a ball of iron or lead with such violence and speed, as nothing was able to sustain its force. The largest balls thus discharged, would not only destroy whole ranks of an army at once, but batter the strongest walls to the ground, sink down ships, with a thousand men in each, to the bottom of the sea; and, when linked together by a chain, would cut through masts and rigging, divide hundreds of bodies in the middle, and lay all waste before them. That we often put this powder into large hollow balls of iron, and discharged them by an engine into some city we were besieging, which would rip up the pavements, tear the houses to pieces, burst and throw splinters on every side, dashing out the brains of all who came near. That I knew the ingredients very well, which were cheap, and common; I understood the manner of compounding them, and could direct his workmen how to make those tubes of a size proportionable to all other things in his Majesty’s kingdom, and the largest need not be above a hundred feet long; twenty or thirty of which tubes, charged with the proper quantity of powder and balls, would batter down the walls of the strongest town in his dominions in a few hours, or destroy the whole metropolis, if ever it should pretend to dispute his absolute commands. This I humbly offered to his Majesty, as a small tribute of acknowledgment in return of so many marks that I had received of his royal favour and protection.

The king was struck with horror [and] amazed how so impotent and grovelling an insect as I (these were his expressions) could entertain such inhuman ideas [...] and commanded me, as I valued my life, never to mention [it] any more.

### COMPREHENSION

1. What is Gulliver describing in his remarks to the King of Brobdingnag (given above)? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Based on these fact, what is Gulliver’s offer and suggestion? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. What is the King’s reaction? \_\_\_\_\_

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### COMMENTARY

Michael Hauskeller has written: “For Swift, the corruption of reason becomes particularly evident when we consider all the ingenious methods to hurt and kill each other that our reason has allowed us to develop. Because we are rational animals who use the reason we have got to produce deadly weapons [...], it is highly questionable just how reasonable we actually are.” Say in your own words what you think Swift’s point is in this passage adding, if possible, some conception of the way in which he uses Gulliver as a vehicle for his ideas.

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SAMUEL RICHARDSON (*PAMELA, OR VIRTUE REWARDED*)

Read the following passage and answer the questions below:

When I arose in the morning, I went to wait on Lady Davers, seeing her door open; and she was in bed, but awake, and talking to her woman. I said, I hope I don't disturb your ladyship. Not at all, said she; I am glad to see you. How do you do? Well, added she, when do you set out for Bedfordshire?— I said, I can't tell, madam; it was designed as to-day, but I have heard no more of it.

Sit down, said she, on the bed-side.—I find, by the talk we had yesterday and last night, you have had but a poor time of it, Pamela, (I must call you so yet, said she,) since you were brought to this house, till within these few days. And Mrs. Jewkes too has given Beck such an account, as makes me pity you.

Indeed, madam, said I, if your ladyship knew all, you would pity me; for never poor creature was so hard put to it. But I ought to forget it all now, and be thankful.

Why, said she, as far as I can find, 'tis a mercy you are here now. I was sadly moved with some part of your story and you have really made a noble defence, and deserve the praises of all our sex.

It was God enabled me, madam, replied I. Why, said she, tis the more extraordinary, because I believe, if the truth was known, you loved the wretch not a little. While my trials lasted, madam, said I, I had not a thought of any thing, but to preserve my innocence, much less of love.

But, tell me truly, said she, did you not love him all the time? I had always, madam, answered I, a great reverence for my master, and thought all his good actions doubly good and for his naughty ones, though I abhorred his attempts upon me, yet I could not hate him; and always wished him well; but I did not know that it was love. Indeed I had not the presumption.

Sweet girl! said she; that's prettily said: But when he found he could not gain his ends, and began to be sorry for your sufferings, and to admire your virtue, and to profess honourable love to you, what did you think?

Think! Indeed, madam, I did not know what to think! could neither hope nor believe so great an honour would fall to my lot, and feared more from his kindness, for some time, than I had done from his unkindness: And, having had a private intimation, from a kind friend, of a sham marriage, intended by means of a man who was to personate a minister, it kept my mind in too much suspense, to be greatly overjoyed at his kind declaration.

COMPREHENSION

1. Who is Mrs Davers and what has been her attitude to Pamela? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. What change in that attitude can be discerned in this passage and what is the reason for it? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. Pamela says, 'while my trials lasted'. What does she mean and what does the phrase imply about the plot of the novel? \_\_\_\_\_

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COMMENTARY

Ian Watt writes: '[T]here is at least very little doubt that the appearance of *Pamela* marks a very notable epiphany in the history of our culture: the emergence of a new, fully developed and immensely influential stereotype of the feminine role.' Please attempt to make it clear, on the basis of your reading of the novel, what that 'epiphany' is, considered as a perception of 'the feminine role' in contemporary society.

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HENRY FIELDING (*TOM JONES: THE HISTORY OF A FOUNDLING*)

Read the following passage and answer the questions below:

"Oh, Mr Jones, you know not, you know not what hath passed this cruel afternoon." —"I know all, my Sophia," answered he; "your cruel father hath told me all, and he himself hath sent me hither to you." —"My father sent you to me!" replied she: "sure you dream." —"Would to Heaven," cries he, "it was but a dream! Oh, Sophia, your father hath sent me to you, to be an advocate for my odious rival, to solicit you in his favour. I took any means to get access to you. O speak to me, Sophia! comfort my bleeding heart. Sure no one ever loved, ever doted like me. Do not unkindly withhold this dear, this soft, this gentle hand —one moment, perhaps, tears you for ever from me —nothing less than this cruel occasion could, I believe, have ever conquered the respect and awe with which you have inspired me." She stood a moment silent, and covered with confusion; then lifting up her eyes gently towards him, she cried, "What would Mr Jones have me say?" —"O do but promise," cries he, "that you never will give yourself to Blifil." —"Name not," answered she, "the detested sound. Be assured I never will give him what is in my power to withhold from him." —"Now then," cries he, "while you are so perfectly kind, go a little farther, and add that I may hope." —"Alas!" says she, "Mr Jones, whither will you drive me? What hope have I to bestow? You know my father's intentions." —"But I know," answered he, "your compliance with them cannot be compelled." —

“What,” says she, “must be the dreadful consequence of my disobedience? My own ruin is my least concern. I cannot bear the thoughts of being the cause of my father’s misery.” —“He is himself the cause,” cries Jones, “by exacting a power over you which Nature hath not given him. Think on the misery which I am to suffer if I am to lose you, and see on which side pity will turn the balance.” —“Think of it!” replied she: “can you imagine I do not feel the ruin which I must bring on you, should I comply with your desire? It is that thought which gives me resolution to bid you fly from me for ever, and avoid your own destruction.” —“I fear no destruction,” cries he, “but the loss of Sophia. If you would save me from the most bitter agonies, recall that cruel sentence. Indeed, I can never part with you, indeed I cannot.”

The lovers now stood both silent and trembling, Sophia being unable to withdraw her hand from Jones, and he almost as unable to hold it; when the scene, which I believe some of my readers will think had lasted long enough, was interrupted by one of so different a nature, that we shall reserve the relation of it for a different chapter.

### COMPREHENSION

1. Who are the participants in this meeting and what is their relationship to each other? Who is Blifil? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. What possible course of action are they considering? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. Why does the narrator think that some of his readers ‘will think’ the scene ‘has lasted long enough’? \_\_\_\_\_

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### COMMENTARY

One great difference between Henry Fielding and Samuel Richardson is the fact that Richardson works from inside his character’s mind and Fielding observes and records their actions and exchanges, adding his own comments. What do you think are the relative merits of these methods and which of them (if any) seems more essential to the full development of the novel form?

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JANE AUSTEN (*EMMA*)

Emma had no opportunity of speaking to Mr. Knightley till after supper; but, when they were all in the ballroom again, her eyes invited him irresistibly to come to her and be thanked. He was warm in his reprobation of Mr. Elton's conduct; it had been unpardonable rudeness; and Mrs. Elton's looks also received the due share of censure.

"They aimed at wounding more than Harriet," said he. "Emma, why is it that they are your enemies?"

He looked with smiling penetration; and, on receiving no answer, added, "She ought not to be angry with you, I suspect, whatever he may be.—To that surmise, you say nothing, of course; but confess, Emma, that you did want him to marry Harriet."

"I did," replied Emma, "and they cannot forgive me."

He shook his head; but there was a smile of indulgence with it, and he only said,

"I shall not scold you. I leave you to your own reflections."

"Can you trust me with such flatterers?—Does my vain spirit ever tell me I am wrong?"

"Not your vain spirit, but your serious spirit.—If one leads you wrong, I am sure the other tells you of it."

"I do own myself to have been completely mistaken in Mr. Elton. There is a littleness about him which you discovered, and which I did not: and I was fully convinced of his being in love with Harriet. It was through a series of strange blunders!"

"And, in return for your acknowledging so much, I will do you the justice to say, that you would have chosen for him better than he has chosen for himself.—Harriet Smith has some first-rate qualities, which Mrs. Elton is totally without. An unpretending, single-minded, artless girl—ininitely to be preferred by any man of sense and taste to such a woman as Mrs. Elton. I found Harriet more conversable than I expected."

Emma was extremely gratified.—They were interrupted by the bustle of Mr. Weston calling on every body to begin dancing again.

"Come Miss Woodhouse, Miss Otway, Miss Fairfax, what are you all doing?—Come Emma, set your companions the example. Every body is lazy! Every body is asleep!"

"I am ready," said Emma, "whenever I am wanted."

"Whom are you going to dance with?" asked Mr. Knightley.

She hesitated a moment, and then replied, "With you, if you will ask me."

"Will you?" said he, offering his hand.

"Indeed I will. You have shewn that you can dance, and you know we are not really so much brother and sister as to make it at all improper."

"Brother and sister! no, indeed."

COMPREHENSION

1. What has Mr. Elton done to occasion these remarks? \_\_\_\_\_
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2. What is the key point of the conversation between Emma and Mr Knightley at this point for their progress of their mutual understanding? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. Mr. Knightley has just danced with Harriet Smith and now he is about to dance with Emma. How will this effect the outcome of the novel? \_\_\_\_\_

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### COMMENTARY

“Emma, in the novel that bears her name, is a sensitive and intelligent young woman—beautiful too, we are led to believe—who must learn to recognise her own ‘errors of imagination’ before she reaches a good understanding of the social world around her. In this last she is anticipated by Mr. Knightley who seems to understand everything from the start except, perhaps, how attached he is to Emma.” [BS] Discuss the novel in the light of this commentary, giving your own account of the essential transactions that mobilise the real feelings between these two characters. (You may find room to write about what Jane Austen feels about their ultimate union.)

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