

Instructions: Write your answers in English. Aim for quality, not quantity. Even if graders will tolerate occasional grammatical and/or spelling errors, your answers should be legible, clear, well structured, and argumentative. Write in separate paragraphs and pay attention to topic sentences and transitions. You don't have to title your essays. Also, avoid section and sub-section titles throughout the essays. Answers are assessed primarily on ability to formulate and communicate an academic argument about literature, though also on familiarity with the field, and written English fluency.

Question 1 (70%). In his preface to *Edgar Huntly, or Memoirs of a Sleep-Walker* (1799), Charles Brockden Brown distinguishes European from U.S. Gothic fiction. According to Brown, whereas European authors rely on "Gothic castles and chimeras," Americans turn to "the perils of the western wilderness."

Write an essay that explores Brown's maxim. Structure your essay in three parts: an introduction (stating your thesis statement), a body of analysis, and conclusion. In your analysis, discuss three American historical and/or literary texts in which the wilderness, the frontier, geographical exploration, and/or similar themes acquire Gothic overtones. Your texts should be representative of different eras in American literature: one from the 18th century, one from the 19th, and one post-1900. [Suggested length: 4-6 paragraphs]

Question 2 (30%). Analyze the following poem. Focus on a characteristic or two you find noteworthy regarding its dialect, tone, perspective, structure, metadiscourse, or any other formal aspects. Link your analysis to the theme of commercialism in American culture. Suggested length: 2-3 paragraphs.

Langston Hughes, "Note on Commercial Theatre" (1940)

You've taken my blues and gone —
You sing 'em on Broadway
And you sing 'em in Hollywood Bowl,
And you mixed 'em up with symphonies
And you fixed 'em
So they don't sound like me.
Yep, you done taken my blues and gone.

You also took my spirituals and gone.
You put me in *Macbeth* and *Carmen Jones*
And all kinds of *Swing Mikados*
And in everything but what's about me —
But someday somebody'll
Stand up and talk about me,
And write about me —
Black and beautiful —
And sing about me,
And put on plays about me!
I reckon it'll be
Me myself!

Yes, it'll be me.