



UNIVERSITY INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE

# Literary Criticism

Invitational A • 2019



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**University Interscholastic League**  
**Literary Criticism Contest • Invitational A • 2019**

**Part 1: Knowledge of Literary Terms and of Literary History**

**30 items (1 point each)**

1. The repetition of initial consonant sounds or any vowel sounds in successive or closely associated syllables is recognized as
  - A) alliteration.
  - B) assonance.
  - C) consonance.
  - D) resonance.
  - E) sigmatism.
2. The form of verse to be sung or recited and characterized by its presentation of a dramatic or exciting episode in simple narrative form is the
  - A) antiphon.
  - B) ballad.
  - C) madrigal.
  - D) rondeau.
  - E) round.
3. **Not** designated by Kenneth Burke in his *Grammar of Motives* as one of the four master tropes (master because of their role in the discovery and description of "the truth") is
  - A) irony.
  - B) metaphor.
  - C) metonymy.
  - D) simile.
  - E) synecdoche.
4. The presentation of material in a work in such a way that later events are prepared for is known as
  - A) digression.
  - B) flashback.
  - C) flashforward.
  - D) foregrounding.
  - E) foreshadowing.
5. The literary trope that can be used to heighten effect, including humorous effect, through exaggeration is
  - A) animism.
  - B) gigantism.
  - C) hyperbole.
  - D) litotes.
  - E) understatement.
6. The common English verse triple-syllable foot consisting of one accented syllable followed by two unaccented syllables is the
  - A) anapest.
  - B) antibacchius.
  - C) dactyl.
  - D) iamb.
  - E) pyrrhic.
7. The author of *Love's Labour's Lost*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Coriolanus*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and *The Tragedy of King Lear* is
  - A) John Fletcher.
  - B) Thomas Kyd.
  - C) Christopher Marlowe.
  - D) Thomas Middleton.
  - E) William Shakespeare.
8. The name that the *Edinburgh Review* gave to the early nineteenth-century poets Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey, among others, living and writing in Cumbria and Lancashire is
  - A) Cockney School.
  - B) Graveyard School.
  - C) Kailyard School.
  - D) Lake School.
  - E) Metaphysical School.
9. A character who develops or changes as a result of the actions of the plot is considered to be a
  - A) dynamic character.
  - B) flat character.
  - C) foil character.
  - D) round character.
  - E) static character.
10. Rhyme that falls on the stressed concluding syllables of the rhyme words is called
  - A) compound rhyme.
  - B) feminine rhyme.
  - C) internal rhyme.
  - D) leonine rhyme.
  - E) masculine rhyme.

11. The term first used as a substitute for "popular anti-  
quities" but now used to catalogue the comparison  
and identification of the surviving evidence of archa-  
ic beliefs, customs, and traditions in modern ages is  
A) folk ballad.  
B) folk etymology.  
C) folklore.  
D) folk song.  
E) folktale.
12. The period in English literary history influenced by  
the importation of style and content from France and  
Italy and during which humanism modified English  
life and thought significantly, all of which paved the  
way for the Elizabethans, is called the  
A) Caroline Age.  
B) Early Tudor Period.  
C) Edwardian Age.  
D) Georgian Age.  
E) Jacobean Age.
13. The period in English literature between 1100 and  
1350, which is also often called the Early Middle  
English Period and is frequently dated from the  
Conquest in 1066, is known as the  
A) Anglo-Norman Period.  
B) Anglo-Saxon Period.  
C) Middle English Period.  
D) Old English Period.  
E) Renaissance Period.
14. The poet and author of *The Bell Jar* who received,  
posthumously, the 1982 Pulitzer Prize for Poetry is  
A) Carolyn Kizer.  
B) Lisel Mueller.  
C) Mary Oliver.  
D) Sylvia Plath.  
E) Anne Sexton.
15. A speech delivered while the speaker is alone  
and calculated to inform the audience of what is  
passing in the character's mind is known as a(n)  
A) apostrophe.  
B) aside.  
C) dramatic monologue.  
D) harangue.  
E) soliloquy.
16. Something that is itself and which also stands  
for something else and that, in a literary sense,  
combines a literal and sensuous quality with  
an abstract or suggestive aspect is (a/n)  
A) emblem.  
B) icon.  
C) kitsch.  
D) symbol.  
E) volta.
17. The early nineteenth-century New York literary  
society that includes Washington Irving, James  
Fenimore Cooper, and William Cullen Bryant,  
and which was based more on geography and  
chance rather than on close organization, is the  
A) Fireside Poets.  
B) Hartford Wits.  
C) Knickerbocker Group.  
D) Muckrakers.  
E) New York School.
18. The twentieth-century British author of *Burmese  
Days*, *A Clergyman's Daughter*, *Keep the Aspidis-  
tra Flying*, *Animal Farm*, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*,  
and *Coming Up for Air* is  
A) Ian Fleming.  
B) John Le Carré.  
C) George Orwell.  
D) Evelyn Waugh.  
E) H. G. Wells.
19. **Not** catalogued among the post-World War I  
American authors of novels and short stories is  
A) Saul Bellow.  
B) John Cheever.  
C) Samuel Clemens.  
D) William Faulkner.  
E) John Steinbeck.
20. A pause or break in a line of verse, which in  
classical poetry usually occurs near the middle  
of a line, is (the)  
A) cadence.  
B) caesura.  
C) chiasmus.  
D) elision.  
E) enjambment.

21. The period in American literary history covering 1900 to 1930 that is known for, in part, the virtual birth of modern American poetry, is the
  - A) Naturalistic and Symbolistic Period.
  - B) Period of the Confessional Self.
  - C) Postmodernist Period.
  - D) Realistic Period.
  - E) Romantic Period.
22. A statement that although seemingly contradictory or absurd may be well founded or true is (a/n)
  - A) antiphrasis.
  - B) equivoque.
  - C) paradox.
  - D) paraleipsis.
  - E) transumption.
23. The group of American writers, including Ida Tarbell, Lincoln Steffens, and Upton Sinclair, who between 1902 and 1911 worked to expose the dishonest methods and unscrupulous motives in big business and in city, state, and national government is
  - A) the Agrarians.
  - B) The Fugitives.
  - C) the Hartford Wits.
  - D) the Lost Generation.
  - E) the Muckrakers.
24. The recipient of the 1961 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction for her novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*, which was recently voted best Great American Read in a PBS poll, is
  - A) Harper Lee.
  - B) E. Annie Proulx.
  - C) Anne Tyler.
  - D) Alice Walker.
  - E) Eudora Welty.
25. The recipient of the 1949 Pulitzer Prize for Drama for his *Death of a Salesman* and the playwright whose *Crucible* serves as a comment on the 1950s' Congressional House on Un-American Activities Committee, is
  - A) Horton Foote.
  - B) William Inge.
  - C) David Mamet.
  - D) Arthur Miller.
  - E) Tennessee Williams.
26. To expurgate a piece of writing by omitting material considered offensive or indecorous especially to female modesty is to
  - A) abridge.
  - B) bowdlerize.
  - C) modulate.
  - D) quibble.
  - E) truncate.
27. **Not** a type of poetry whose ancient origins can be traced back to the Greeks is (the)
  - A) Arcadian verse.
  - B) bucolic verse.
  - C) idyll.
  - D) jeremiad.
  - E) pastoral.
28. The Texas-born short story writer and author of the novel *Ship of Fools* and the long short story "Pale Horse, Pale Rider" and whose *Collected Short Stories* earned her the 1966 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction is
  - A) Harper Lee.
  - B) Katherine Anne Porter.
  - C) E. Annie Proulx.
  - D) Alice Walker.
  - E) Eudora Welty.
29. The African-American editor of *Burn This Book: PEN Writers Speak Out on the Power of the Word* who wrote the novels *Beloved* and *Jazz* and who received the 1993 Nobel Prize for Literature is
  - A) Toni Morrison.
  - B) Nelly Sachs.
  - C) Carol Shields.
  - D) Elizabeth Strout.
  - E) Anne Tyler.
30. The period of literary beginnings in which the voices of Hugh Henry Brackenridge, Philip Freneau, Benjamin Franklin, Phillis Wheatley, Washington Irving, and Royall Tyler found expression is the
  - A) Colonial Period.
  - B) Naturalistic and Symbolistic Period.
  - C) Realistic Period.
  - D) Revolutionary and Early National Period.
  - E) Romantic Period.

**Part 2: The UIL Reading List**

**20 items (2 points each)**

**Items 31-36 are associated with Tennessee Williams's *A Streetcar Named Desire*.**

**Items 37-42 are associated with Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*.**

**Items 43-50 are associated with Edna St. Vincent Millay's poetry (selected).**

31. In Tennessee Williams's *A Streetcar Named Desire*, the name of the family home-place that is lost to creditors is
  - A) Belle Reve.
  - B) Cemeteries.
  - C) Desire.
  - D) Elysian Fields.
  - E) Flamingo.
32. Kowalski's mention of the Two-forty-first is a reference to his
  - A) favorite card game.
  - B) favorite Lake Pontchartrain amusement park visit.
  - C) military unit.
  - D) streetcar stop on his way to work.
  - E) top bowling score.
33. The former admirer whom Blanche tells Stella she ran into in Miami over the Christmas holidays is
  - A) Allan Gray.
  - B) Shep Huntleigh.
  - C) Stanley Kowalski.
  - D) Harold Mitchell.
  - E) the newspaper subscription collection boy.
34. The self-appraisal "[M]y belly is hard. It is so hard now that a man can punch me in the belly and it don't hurt me" is offered to Blanche by
  - A) Marlon Brando.
  - B) Allan Gray.
  - C) Shep Huntleigh.
  - D) Stanley Kowalski.
  - E) Harold Mitchell.
35. Stanley's rage-in-response to Blanche and Stella includes "Remember what Huey Long said—'Every Man is a King!' And I am the king around here, so don't forget it!" constitutes an allusion to a
  - A) DuBois ancestor.
  - B) famous riverboat captain.
  - C) New Orleans Carnival krewe.
  - D) Shakespearean tragic hero.
  - E) governor of the state of Louisiana.
36. Blanche's observation that "[e]veryone has something he won't let others touch because of their—intimate nature" has immediate reference to a(n)
  - A) bottle of whiskey.
  - B) bundle of love-letters.
  - C) deck of playing cards.
  - D) envelope containing mortgage papers.
  - E) packet of poems.
37. In Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*, Henry's use of the phrase "Zona di Guerra post-card" refers to
  - A) post cards sent from an Austrian violin shop.
  - B) post cards sent from the battlefront.
  - C) post cards sent from the gorilla zone.
  - D) post cards sent from the hospital zone.
  - E) post cards sent from the spamming zone.
38. The medical surgeon who works on Frederic Henry's leg is
  - A) Rinaldi.
  - B) Rodgers.
  - C) Simmons.
  - D) Valentini.
  - E) Varella.
39. Helen Ferguson's protective, admonitory threat, "But watch out you don't get her in trouble. You get her in trouble and I'll kill you," turns on a(n)
  - A) dysphemism.
  - B) euhemerism.
  - C) euphemism.
  - D) euphonism.
  - E) euphuism.
40. The tone of Catherine Barkley's rejoinder to Henry's "I feel like a criminal. I've deserted from the army," "It's not deserting from the army. It's only the Italian army," is
  - A) compassionately celebratory.
  - B) derisively dismissive.
  - C) humorously hypocritical.
  - D) nostalgically negative.
  - E) reverently righteous.

41. The timeline that begins with Frederic Henry's arriving in Italy in the late summer of 1915 ends in Switzerland in
- A) March 1918.
  - B) May 1918.
  - C) June 1919.
  - D) November 1918.
  - E) November 1919.
42. The meteorological phenomenon—the one that, as a controlling image, brackets the action of Henry's storyline—of which Catherine declares she is afraid is (the)
- A) early morning mist.
  - B) icing.
  - C) rain.
  - D) sirocco.
  - E) tramontane.
43. In Edna St. Vincent Millay's "Conscientious Objector," the speaker's promise, especially as it is directed in lines 12-13, constitutes (a/n)
- A) allusion.
  - B) apostrophe.
  - C) harangue.
  - D) paradox.
  - E) reification.
44. The endowment of the abstraction Death with a human personality, intelligence, and, perhaps herein, a lack of emotion is an example of
- A) affective fallacy.
  - B) mimesis.
  - C) pathetic fallacy.
  - D) personification.
  - E) rhetorical accent.
45. The rhyme that occurs in line 6 of Millay's "Conscientious Objector" is
- A) assonant rhyme.
  - B) consonant rhyme.
  - C) leonine rhyme.
  - D) macaronic rhyme.
  - E) mosaic rhyme.
46. The "business" to which the speaker twice refers in line 3 is
- A) alliterative writing.
  - B) horse racing.
  - C) international trade.
  - D) leatherworking.
  - E) war.

**Items 43-46 refer to Edna St. Vincent Millay's**

**Conscientious Objector**

I shall die, but that is all that I shall do for Death.

I hear him leading his horse out of the stall; I hear the  
clatter on the barn-floor. 2

He is in haste; he has business in Cuba, business in the  
Balkans, many calls to make this morning. 3

But I will not hold the bridle while he cinches the girth.  
And he may mount by himself: I will not give him a  
leg up. 5

Though he flick my shoulders with his whip, I will not  
tell him which way the fox ran.

With his hoof on my breast, I will not tell him where  
the black boy hides in the swamp. 7

I shall die, but that is all that I shall do for Death; I am  
not on his pay-roll. 8

I will not tell him the whereabouts of my friends nor of  
my enemies either.

Though he promise me much, I will not map him the  
route to any man's door.

Am I a spy in the land of the living, that I should deliver  
men to Death?

Brother, the password and the plans of our city are safe  
with me; never through me 12

Shall you be overcome.

**Items 47-50 refer to Edna St. Vincent Millay's**

**To Inez Milholland**

Upon this marble bust that is not I  
Lay the round, formal wreath that is not fame;  
But in the forum of my silenced cry  
Root ye the living tree whose sap is flame. 4  
I, that was proud and valiant, am no more;—  
Save as a dream that wanders wide and late,  
Save as a wind that rattles the stout door,  
Troubling the ashes in the sheltered grate. 8  
The stone will perish; I shall be twice dust.  
Only my standard on a taken hill  
Can cheat the mildew and the red-brown rust  
And make immortal my adventurous will. 12  
Even now the silk is tugging at the staff:  
Take up the song; forget the epitaph.

47. The imagery in line 13 of Millay's "To Inez Milholland," "Even now the silk is tugging at the staff," relies on (a)
- conceit.
  - litotes.
  - synæsthesia.
  - synecdoche.
  - zeugma.
48. Line 7's *rattles* is an example of
- cacophony.
  - heteroglossia.
  - onomatopoeia.
  - sigmatism.
  - xenoglossia.
49. The repetition of expression occurring at the beginning of lines 6 and 7 is an example of
- anaphora.
  - asyndeton.
  - epanalepsis.
  - polyptoton.
  - symploce.
50. Millay's "To Inez Milholland" is a(n)
- Anglo-Norman sonnet.
  - English sonnet.
  - Miltonic sonnet.
  - Petrarchan sonnet.
  - Spenserian sonnet.
51. Children in Charles Martin's "Sharks at the New York Aquarium" "almost never tap the glass" because
- they cannot reach over the railings.
  - their parents warn them not to do so.
  - they always obey the aquarium's "few laws."
  - they are afraid they might break the glass.
  - they understand the sharks' endless searching.
52. The law that the poem's persona refers to is
- Darwin's survival of the fittest.
  - eating is surviving.
  - Heisenberg's uncertainty principle.
  - Newton's second law of motion.
  - to swim constantly in order to breathe.
53. The type of rhyme characterizing lines 10 and 12 of Martin's poem is
- assonance.
  - consonance.
  - eye.
  - feminine.
  - perfect.
54. The form of Martin's poem is most like the
- caudate sonnet.
  - curtal sonnet.
  - Elizabethan sonnet.
  - Italian sonnet.
  - Spenserian sonnet.

---

**Part 3: Ability in Literary Criticism**  
15 items (2 points each)

**Items 51-54 refer to Charles Martin's**

**Sharks at the New York Aquarium**

Suddenly drawn in through the thick glass plate  
And swimming among them, I imagine  
Myself as, briefly, part of the pattern  
Traced in the water as they circulate 4  
Endlessly, obeying the few laws  
That thread the needle of their simple lives:  
One moment in a window of serrated knives,  
Old-fashioned razors and electric saws. 8  
And then the sudden, steep, sidewinding pass:  
No sound at all. The waters turning pink,  
Then rose, then red, after a long while clear.  
And here I am again, outside the tank, 12  
Uneasily wrapped in our atmosphere!  
Children almost never tap the glass.

**Item-55-56 refer to Larkworthy's**

The teacher says "Learn  
from life," and the students ask  
"Is it on the test?"

55. The form of Larkworthy's poetic expression is the
- haiku.
  - kabuki.
  - manga.
  - senryu.
  - tanka.
56. The tone characterizing these lines relies on (a/n)
- allusion.
  - hyperbole.
  - irony.
  - paradox.
  - tautology.

Items 57-61 refer to Alastair Reid's

**Living in Time**

This morning, overpowered  
by weather and discontent,  
I climb the escarpment\*  
and manage to be lost  
in watching for an hour

cliff

5

the pointlessness of swallows\*  
which have nothing to do with me  
larruping\* through the trees,  
and in curling thrown stones  
into the dull valley.

kind of bird

flying (onomatopoeic)

10

Yet on my slow way home,  
the dark selves from the study\*  
fall into step beside me,  
and one by one resume  
the morning's lame conundrum.†

reading room

intellectual challenge

15

Bird-minded now, I answer  
loosely, light-heartedly,  
but their presences tower.  
Looking becomes a question.  
Thought glooms the day.

20

Then, unexpectedly,  
she is waiting in the doorway,  
ready with something to say,  
so much herself, so beautifully  
occupying her body

25

that I am all wonder,  
beyond mind and words.  
She wears the day about her.  
The dark ones disappear, and birds  
reclaim the particular air.

30

Better to live in time.  
The moment is her home.  
Better to leave it  
as something that is, that happens  
as luck will have it.

35

57. The lack of rhyme and sustained meter characterizing Alastair Reid's "Living in Time" is representative of

- A) blank verse.
- B) free verse.
- C) heroic verse.
- D) nonsense verse.
- E) shaped verse.

58. The poem's final stanza's approach to life can be understood in terms of the formula

- A) *carpe diem*.
- B) *in medias res*.
- C) *in memento mori*.
- D) *ubi sunt*.
- E) *verbum infans*.

59. The continuance of both grammatical structure and meaning from one stanza to the next (lines 5 to 6 and lines 25 to 26) is known as

- A) boustrophedon.
- B) end-stopped rhyme.
- C) enjambment.
- D) run-on line.
- E) truncation.

60. Line 29's "the dark ones" is a reference to the speaker's

- A) autonomous bird-mindedness.
- B) challenging morning thoughts.
- C) dark book shelves.
- D) fear of pointless swallows.
- E) walking partners.

61. The persona's having been "overpowered / by weather and discontent"(lines 1-2) is a fine example of

- A) antithesis.
- B) hyperbole.
- C) metonymy.
- D) paradox.
- E) zeugma.

Items 62-65 refer to Maya Angelou's

**The Mothering Blackness**

She came home running  
back to the mothering blackness  
deep in the smothering blackness  
white tears icicle gold plains of her face  
She came home running

5

She came down creeping  
here to the black arms waiting  
now to the warm heart waiting  
rime\* of alien dreams befrosts her rich brown face  
She came down creeping

10

*continued*



She came home blameless  
black yet as Hagar's daughter\*  
tall as was Sheba's daughter\*  
threats of northern winds die on the desert's face  
She came home blameless 15

line 9: rime is a type of frost  
lines 12-13: Hagar and Sheba are found in Genesis

62. The strength of Maya Angelou's "The Mothering Blackness" lies in the poet's use of, both literally and figuratively, symbolic
- A) auditory and tactile imagery.
  - B) gustatory and auditory imagery.
  - C) olfactory and gustatory imagery.
  - D) tactile and gustatory imagery.
  - E) visual and tactile imagery.
63. Line 9's "rime of alien dreams befrost[ing] her rich brown face" suggests
- A) absolute fear.
  - B) befuddled amusement.
  - C) cautious apprehensive.
  - D) deep disappointment.
  - E) frozen resentment.
64. The successive stagings to which each stanza's first and last lines refer point to a reunion troubled by the returning daughter's feelings of
- A) adolescent guilt.
  - B) filial bliss.
  - C) physical exhaustion.
  - D) profound remorse.
  - E) theatrical reconciliation.
65. Both the embedded and the overt references that inform the narrative aspect of Angelou's poem are
- A) biblical allusions.
  - B) classical allusions.
  - C) historical allusions.
  - D) literary allusions.
  - E) topical allusions.

**Required tie-breaking essay prompt on the next page.**

**Part 4: Tie-Breaking Essay (required)**

**Note well: Contestants who do not write an essay will be disqualified even if they are not involved in any tie. Any essay that does not demonstrate a sincere effort to discuss the assigned topic will be disqualified. The judge(s) should note carefully this criterion when breaking ties: ranking of essays for tie-breaking purposes should be based primarily on how well the topic has been addressed.**

Three sheets of paper have been provided; your written response should reflect the *Handbook's* notion that an essay is a "moderately brief discussion of a restricted topic": something more than just a few sentences.

---

Read Edna St. Vincent Millay's "An Ancient Gesture" and offer a discussion regarding what the poem has to say about the universality of being human, specifically, the universality of being a woman married, and about dealing with troubles.

**An Ancient Gesture**

I thought, as I wiped my eyes on the corner of my apron:  
Penelope\* did this too.  
And more than once: you can't keep weaving all day  
And undoing it all through the night;  
Your arms get tired, and the back of your neck gets tight;  
And along towards morning, when you think it will never be light,  
And your husband has been gone, and you don't know where, for years.  
Suddenly you burst into tears;  
There is simply nothing else to do.

And I thought, as I wiped my eyes on the corner of my apron:  
This is an ancient gesture, authentic, antique,  
In the very best tradition, classic, Greek;  
Ulysses did this too.  
But only as a gesture,—a gesture which implied  
To the assembled throng that he was much too moved to speak.  
He learned it from Penelope . . .  
Penelope, who really cried.

1954

\*Ulysses' patient wife in Homer's *Odyssey*

DO NOT DISTRIBUTE THIS **KEY** TO STUDENTS BEFORE OR DURING THE CONTEST.

**UIL Literary Criticism**  
**Invitational A • 2019**

line arrows up ➔

1.	A	13
2.	B	49
3.	D	445
4.	E	205
5.	C	242
6.	C	129
7.	E	534
8.	D	268
9.	A	159
10.	E	287
11.	C	203
12.	B	161
13.	A	27
14.	D	605
15.	E	449
16.	D	467
17.	C	267
18.	C	582
19.	C	572
20.	B	71
21.	A	316
22.	C	349
23.	E	309
24.	A	602
25.	D	607
26.	B	66
27.	D	261
28.	B	603
29.	A	601
30.	D	410

31.	A	
32.	C	109,125
33.	B	76
34.	E	106
35.	E	131
36.	E	42
37.	B	31
38.	D	199
39.	C	94
40.	B	218
41.	A	264
42.	C	109
43.	B	37
44.	D	361
45.	A	43
46.	E	
47.	D	470
48.	C	337
49.	A	24
50.	B	173
51.	E	
52.	E	
53.	B	107
54.	D	260
55.	D	438
56.	C	259
57.	B	209
58.	A	75
59.	C	174
60.	B	
61.	E	509
62.	E	
63.	D	
64.	A	
65.	A	

**9 FOLD**

along the **three**  
longitudinal  
lines for ease  
in grading. ➔

**Please** note that the objective  
scores should not be altered to  
reflect the breaking of any ties.

**Simply adjust ranking.**

The thirty items in Part 1  
are worth one point each.

The twenty items in Part 2  
are worth two points each.

The fifteen items in Part 3  
are worth two points each.

**DO NOT**  
mark (cross out)  
actual **LETTER** answer;  
mark the answer **NUMERAL**.

Page numbers refer  
to the *Handbook 12e*,

the New Directions  
*A Streetcar Named Desire*,

the Simon and Schuster  
*A Farewell to Arms*,  
and

American Poets Project  
St V Millay collection.

## Part 4: Tie-Breaking Essay

These notes are not intended to be understood as a key for the Tie-Breaking Essay prompt; rather, they should serve the judge(s) as a presentation of critical ideas that might appear in an essay responding to the prompt.

Criteria for judging the Tie-Breaking Essay **SHOULD** include

- the degree to which the instructions have been followed,
- the quality of the critical insight offered in response to the selection,
- the overall effectiveness of the written discussion, and
- the grammatical correctness of the essay.

Note well that the quality of the contestant's critical insight is more important than the contestant's prose style. In short, the Literary Criticism contest is one that promotes the critical analysis of literature. The quality of the writing, which should never go unappreciated, does not trump evidence of critical analysis.

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### **Critical Notes on Edna St. Vincent Millay's "An Ancient Gesture"**

Literary concepts that **MIGHT** be used by the contestant in a discussion regarding what St. Vincent Millay's poem has to say about the universality of being human, specifically, the universality of being a woman married, and about dealing with troubles include

- allusion,
- diction,
- free verse,
- imagery,
- literal meaning,
- metaphor,
- persona,
- symbolic meaning,
- theme,
- tradition, and
- tone.

The competitor should recognize Millay's allusion to Penelope's lengthy, patient wait for her husband who has been away at war and Ulysses' being welcomed, once recognized, by his people. The young scholar is being asked to discuss the poem in terms of the universality of being human and the universality of being a woman married, both in terms of dealing with unspecified troubles.

Millay's modern Penelope, the poem's persona, is rather frank about the emotional weight of enduring whatever it is that she endures. The implication seems to be that little recognition comes to the woman of the household. Millay's persona, through allusion, recognizes in her own plight the plight of women historically, and she seems to find solace in the tradition of enduring—whatever it is that women have variously had to endure. She finds specific solace in the tradition of a woman's quietly suffering in the background. The strength of Millay's statement, indeed, the crux, is both that the woman's response is genuine and the man emulates, learns from, the woman. Candor, which might not be so ancient, is all.

# ANSWER SHEET

Items 31-65 2 points each

## UIL Literary Criticism Invitational A • 2019



Items 1-30 1 point each

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Part 3  
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# A-

contestant number

**Please** note that the objective scores should not be altered to reflect the breaking of any ties.

**Simply adjust ranking.**

SCORE:

The thirty items in Part 1 are worth one point each.

The twenty items in Part 2 are worth two points each.

The fifteen items in Part 3 are worth two points each.

### FIRST GRADER

number correct x 1 \_\_\_\_\_

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number correct x 2 \_\_\_\_\_

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initials

### SECOND GRADER

number correct x 1 \_\_\_\_\_

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initials

### THIRD GRADER

number correct x 1 \_\_\_\_\_

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