

TEST ONE. ENGLISH LITERATURE: MEDIEVAL TO RENAISSANCE

Start Time:

Duration:

Name

F. N.

Read the excerpt from Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*, Book V. Discuss it in an essay integrating your short answers to the following questions and referring to the original text.

1. *Context: To which cultural tradition could Chaucer's poem be related? How would you describe the poem's genre and the way Chaucer uses its generic repertoire?*
2. *Content: Discuss the position and the status of the excerpt within the poem? How does it shape our understanding of the whole work?*
3. *Themes and ideas: Identify the main themes and the way their tackling relates the work to its tradition. Mention the philosophical commonplaces echoes by it.*
4. *Form: Discuss the imagery you consider important. What are its sources? What are its implications about the meaning of the excerpt? Follow the rhyme pattern. Try to identify the main metrical characteristics.*
5. *Inter- and meta-texts. Suggest possible echoes from other works. Does the excerpt echo other works of the same and/or other genres? Does it have a metatextual potential?*

Original Text:

1. And whan that he was slayn in this manere,
2. His lighte goost ful blisfully is went
3. Up to the holownesse of the eighte spere,
4. In convers letyng everich element;
5. And ther he saugh, with ful avysement,
6. The erratik sterres, herkeninge armonye
7. With sownes fulle of hevenish melodye.
8. And doun from thennes faste he gan avyse
9. This litel spot of erthe, that with the see
10. Embraced is, and fully gan despise
11. This wrecched world, and held al vanitee
12. To respect of the pleyn felicitee
13. That is in hevene above; and at the laste,
14. Ther he was slayn, his loking doun he caste;
15. And in him-self he lough right at the wo
16. Of hem that wepten for his deeth so faste;

17. And dampned al our werk that folweth so
18. The blinde lust, the which that may not laste,
19. And sholden al our herte on hevene caste.
20. And forth he wente, shortly for to telle,
21. Ther as Mercurie sorted him to dwelle.

22. Swich fyn hath, lo, this Troilus for love,
23. Swich fyn hath al his grete worthinesse;
24. Swich fyn hath his estat real above,
25. Swich fyn his lust, swich fyn hath his noblesse;
26. Swich fyn hath false worldes brotelnesse.
27. And thus bigan his lovinge of Criseyde,
28. As I have told, and in this wyse he deyde.

Modern English Version

And when he was slain thus, his freed spirit went blissfully up into the eighth sphere of heaven, leaving all the elements in their spheres below him. From there he gazed long upon the wandering stars, listening to the harmony of sounds full of heavenly melody.

And then down upon this little spot of earth embraced by the sea. And then he began utterly to despise this wretched world, and held all to be vanity in comparison to the full felicity of heaven above. At length he cast his eyes down upon the spot where he was slain;

And laughed within himself at the grief of those who wept so for his death, and condemned all our deeds who follow so hard after blind pleasures which cannot endure, when we should cast our whole heart on heaven. So on he went to the place where Mercury allotted him a dwelling.

Thus ended Troilus for love, thus ended his worth and his royal station, thus ended his joyousness and his nobility; to such an end leads this false world's instability. Thus, as I have told, began his loving of Criseyde; and in this way he died.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Context	20 points
Content	10 points
Themes and ideas	20 points
Form	20 points
Intertextual links and metatextual techniques	10 points
Accuracy, range of vocabulary and structure	10 points