

Mohamed Boudiaf University

Level: Master 2 Civ/ Lit



Department of English

Ms. Rebahi

Model Answers for AMERICAN LITERATURE Exam

Evaluation Grid	
No RELEVANCE No MARKS	
-An <u>introduction</u> with a <u>hook</u> , a <u>thesis statement</u> and your <u>essay plan</u> .	1.5pt
- clear academic style and register.	1pt
-accurate terminology.	0.5 pt
-Body: effectively organised, with several well-written paragraphs.	1 pt
- demonstrates flair, high levels of technical accuracy.	1.5 pt
- <u>perceptive</u> application of literary concepts and terminology.	1.5 pt
- <u>productive</u> and illuminating connections and comparisons between the literary texts discussed.	2 pts
-apt textual support (quotations).	2 pts
-sophisticated analysis of the literary texts.	2 pts
-thoughtful and relevant ideas in each paragraph.	3 pts
-autonomous, independent interpretations of texts.	2 pts
-A conclusion:	2pts
-restates the thesis statement	
-summarises the main points	
-states your position	

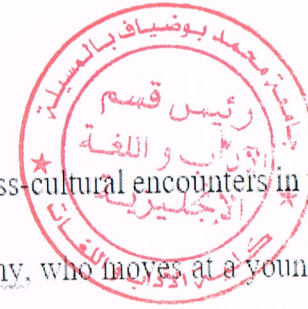


"What if identity is conceived not as a boundary to be maintained but as a nexus of relations and transactions actively engaging a subject. The story or stories of interaction must then be more complex, less linear and teleological" (Clifford).

↓ Students are required to highlight the following points with reference to Leslie Marmon Silko 's *Ceremony* and Mohja

Kahf's *The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf* in addition to other (American ) literary works of their choice

- ✓ Identities are constructed in the context of human interaction
- ✓ Cultural contacts and the dichotomy of resistance to or assimilation to the other.
- ✓ The fear of losing one's identity
- ✓ Despite the overall negative impact of cultural contact on native identity, this identity can alternatively be reinvigorated or restored in the process. Neither mere assimilation nor mere traditionalism are the cure for native identity in the aftermath of colonial contact but rather a new vision that acknowledges change and seeks to move beyond it to achieve integration into one's culture. While postcolonial texts write back to imperialist ones, they also mirror and enrich each other.
- ✓ What is crucial to note about Kahf's novel is its idiosyncratic ability to amalgamate the tension between the culture *and* the Muslim faith of the Arab homeland with the culture and the predominantly Judeo-Christian faith of the American



hostland. Her novel thus embodies the intricacies embedded within cross-cultural encounters in the American diaspora.

*The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf* portrays the protagonist, Khadra Shamy, who moves, at a young age from Syria to the

United States during the 1970s and grows up in a devout, tightly-knit Muslim family in Indianapolis.

- ✓ The state of in-betweenness for Khadra and Ebtelhaj begins with a sense of resistance to the American culture and the Judeo-Christian influence of the hostland.
- ✓ Ebtelhaj's intense resistance to the American hostland is effectively reverberated through her exclamative declaration that she and her family “are not Americans” (67)
- ✓ In *Ceremony*, the figure of the mixed-blood Indian has often been used as a metaphor for the historical processes which were changing and in many ways destroying Indian communities, and is central to a great deal of Indian literature, but the question has been how to see this figure. A negative view has been to see the mixed-blood figure as representing a tragic loss of Indianness, indicative of the demoralized and directionless condition of Indians deprived of the ability to continue in traditional ways. But a more positive way of looking at these figures is to see them as representing ways of mediating and negotiating, rather than being defeated by, contradictions. Refer to Tayo and Betonie.



✓ In Ceremony, Silko revisits the condition of the returned war veteran. Her protagonist Tayo has been shattered by the experience of World War II and has withdrawn from the world. Always the outsider, Tayo must come to understand the forces behind the destructive patterns of his experience. Using oral tradition and an unorthodox ceremony, the novel binds the fate of the reader with the fate of Tayo and humankind in a struggle that holds off mass destruction and brings renewal to the Pueblo traditions. For Silko, his integration into society, culture, and myth represent revitalization of tradition by those marginalized by both traditional Native societies and mainstream American society.

- Read carefully the statement below and write an essay explaining the core points explicitly mentioned. ( less than 40 lines in your own language)

All languages change all the time (except dead ones). Language change is just a fact of life; it cannot be prevented or avoided and historical linguistics tends to study the changes that occurred through history and contributes with reliable information to understanding other disciplines. Moreover, Historical Linguistics provides us with the necessary information about the circumstances that pushed people to borrowing , what to borrow from other languages and how to identify historically what has been borrowed.

**Sample :**

Indeed all languages change except dead ones. Historically speaking languages no one could avoid or prevent change due to contacts whether peacefully or violently. Along this sense historical linguistics intervenes not only to find out what linguistic changes occurred throughout history and also contributes with its findings with sound evidence that could be used by other disciplines, for instance ; social sciences, humanities, language typology and enrich linguistic theory.

Additionally, historical linguistics attempts to find explanation for the circumstances of borrowing ; (prestige, negative connotations or need). We have to consider that language borrowing might occur at all language levels ; phonological, morphological , semantic..... Identifying what had been borrowed is not that easy, however, it is always safer to consider certain hints that help us • determine recipient and donor languages through determining phonological diffusion and adaptation, morphological complexity, semantic clues, calques or analogy as internal borrowing.

## QUIZ 1

**Question one :** Language borrowing has always been considered as healthy and positive, but what is regarded as negative is always related to the people's choice of borrowing? (not more than 12 lines)

**Sample :**

Language borrowing has always been considered healthy and positive. It reflects contact and interaction between languages and strengthens the idea of language liveliness. Yet, occasionally it is seen by some people as being negative in the sense that it causes foreign languages intrusion that ensues decay, deterioration, degeneration , corruption, and language impurity. All in all language borrowing is an avoided process because contact is unavoidable. People borrow from languages but not to the extent of forgetting about their language as a sign of identity.