

國立成功大學

111學年度碩士班招生考試試題

編 號： 15

系 所： 外國語文學系

科 目： 美國文學

日 期： 0219

節 次： 第 3 節

備 註： 不可使用計算機

※ 考生請注意：本試題不可使用計算機。請於答案卷(卡)作答，於本試題紙上作答者，不予計分。

Instructions:

You essay will be graded based on your analysis (50%), the organization of your essay (25%), and your writing competency (25%).

Below are the first two paragraphs of Chapter 2 of Henry David Thoreau's *Walden, or Life in the Woods* (1854). Read the passage and analyze some aspect or aspects of *how* it says *what* it says. You don't have to try to discuss all of the following questions, or *any* of those listed, as long as you provide *specific* interpretation and analysis of the text.

- Why does Thoreau employ the images he does, and how do they function in this passage?
- Discuss some puns and other forms of wordplay that the passage contains and how they affect it. (For example, words punned on here include "deed," "premises," "cultivate," and "improve.") Why is Thoreau so fond of wordplay? How is that important to the work he wants his book to do?
- "How has he "retained the landscape" if he "never got [his] fingers burned by actual possession"? What does this have to do with themes of the book, if you have read it?
- What details of the farms does he notice, and how might they be significant?
- How do ideas and attitudes found in this passage compare with those seen in other well-known American texts? Among the possibilities you might consider are references to the significance of the natural world, to the attractions of living alone, to the value of labor, or to the dangers of property.

You don't have to summarize American history in order to write your essay, and please don't do so even if you can. (100 points)

2. *Where I Lived, and What I Lived For*

AT A CERTAIN season of our life we are accustomed to consider every spot as the possible site of a house. I have thus surveyed the country on every side within a dozen miles of where I live. In imagination I have bought all the farms in succession, for all were to be bought, and I knew their price. I walked over each farmer's premises, tasted his wild apples, discoursed on husbandry with him, took his farm at his price, at any price, mortgaging it to him in my mind; even put a higher price on it- took everything but a deed of it-took his word for his deed, for I dearly love to talk- cultivated it, and him too to some extent, I trust, and withdrew when I had enjoyed it long enough, leaving him to carry it on. This experience entitled me to be regarded as a sort of real-estate broker by my friends. Wherever I sat, there I might live, and the landscape radiated from me accordingly. What is a house but a sedes, a

seat?--better if a country seat. I discovered many a site for a house not likely to be soon improved, which some might have thought too far from the village, but to my eyes the village was too far from it. Well, there I might live, I said; and there I did live, for an hour, a summer and a winter life; saw how I could let the years run off, buffet the winter through, and see the spring come in. The future inhabitants of this region, wherever they may place their houses, may be sure that they have been anticipated. An afternoon sufficed to lay out the land into orchard, wood-lot, and pasture, and to decide what fine oaks or pines should be left to stand before the door, and whence each blasted tree could be seen to the best advantage; and then I let it lie, fallow, perchance, for a man is rich in proportion to the number of things which he can afford to let alone.

My imagination carried me so far that I even had the refusal of several farms- the refusal was all I wanted- but I never got my fingers burned by actual possession. The nearest that I came to actual possession was when I bought the Hollowell place, and had begun to sort my seeds, and collected materials with which to make a wheelbarrow to carry it on or off with; but before the owner gave me a deed of it, his wife- every man has such a wife- changed her mind and wished to keep it, and he offered me ten dollars to release him. Now, to speak the truth, I had but ten cents in the world, and it surpassed my arithmetic to tell, if I was that man who had ten cents, or who had a farm, or ten dollars, or all together. However, I let him keep the ten dollars and the farm too, for I had carried it far enough; or rather, to be generous, I sold him the farm for just what I gave for it, and, as he was not a rich man, made him a present of ten dollars, and still had my ten cents, and seeds, and materials for a wheelbarrow left. I found thus that I had been a rich man without any damage to my poverty. But I retained the landscape, and I have since annually carried off what it yielded without a wheelbarrow. With respect to landscapes,

"I am monarch of all I survey/My right there is none to dispute."

I have frequently seen a poet withdraw, having enjoyed the most valuable part of a farm, while the crusty farmer supposed that he had got a few wild apples only. Why, the owner does not know it for many years when a poet has put his farm in rhyme, the most admirable kind of invisible fence, has fairly impounded it, milked it, skimmed it, and got all the cream, and left the farmer only the skimmed milk.