

American Literature

Direction: Answer all four, with each answer counting 25%

1. According to your knowledge of Modernism, what are the basic characteristics of modern novels? Illustrate your points with examples from Winesburg, Ohio; The Great Gatsby; The Sound and the Fury; A Farewell to Arms.
2. Whitman celebrated America as the great democracy where each individual could evolve to spiritual perfection. He declared the human body to be the equal of the soul and asserted the equality of men and women and of all races and conditions, however, he was severely criticized for his poetry full of sexual content. You may justify the statements and propose your argument.
3. Nina Baym, in "Thwarted Nature: Nathaniel Hawthorne as Feminist," argues that "Although criticism of The Scarlet Letter for a long time took Dimmesdale as the central character, it has more more recently reacknowledged what was well understood in Hawthorne's own time, that Hester is protagonist and center." Try to discuss Baym's statement from the feminist point of view.
4. Letters from an American Farmer was a broad social and moral survey of the colonies that would become the United States. In it, what did St. Jean de Crevecoeur attempt to answer his own question: "What is an American, this new man?"