

MASTER OF ARTS EXAMINATION 2017
Second Year Fourth Semester
ENGLISH

Mystery and Detection in the Victorian Novel

Full marks – 30

Time – 2 Hours

Answer *three* questions in all, choosing *at least one* from each group. All questions carry equal marks.

Group A (Victorian Texts)

1. A common charge levelled against the Newgate novels was that they glorified crime and made heroes out of notorious convicts. How far can this charge be levelled against *Paul Clifford* is concerned? Answer with close reference to the novel.
2. In both 'The Minister's Black Veil' and *The Turn of the Screw*, the central mysteries remain unsolved till the end. How does this shape your response to these texts?
3. Inspector L- of 'The Secret Cell' and the detective figures in Poe's stories represent two very different approaches to crime-solving. Analyze the differences with reference to the said texts.
4. How do *The Woman in White* and *The Trail of the Serpent* compare as sensation novels?
5. Comment on the use of mesmerism as a plot-device in *The Notting Hill Mystery* and 'The Ghost of Fountain Lane'.
6. Would you agree that Charles Dickens was far more concerned with the character and mentality of John Jasper than with the mysterious disappearance of Edwin Drood? Give reasons for your answer.
7. Is it appropriate to categorize *Desperate Remedies* as a sensation novel? Substantiate your answer with detailed reference to the text.
8. How successfully, in your opinion, has Conan Doyle reconciled the principles of rationality and eccentricity, action and contemplation, and the law and individual morality in the figure of Sherlock Holmes? Answer with reference to the texts studied.
9. How convincing do you find the concept of the armchair detective? Answer with reference to 'The Dublin Mystery'.

Group B (Later Texts)

10. 'From a Detective's Notebook' may be written in a comic vein, but its central argument is rooted firmly in evidence from the Holmes canon.' Discuss.
11. Stacy Gillis states that *A Taste for Honey* anticipates the 'concerns of post-war detective fiction in both Britain and America.' Comment on this claim with reference to the novel.
12. How do the queer re-tellings of Holmes you have read intertwine his sexual orientation with his sleuthing? Answer with reference to the texts studied.
13. Discuss the various configurations of the Outcast/Other as found in *The Truth of All Things*.
14. The plot of *The Anatomist's Wife* may unfold in a remote and sequestered setting, but the prevalent social attitudes and real-life events in England and the world at large make their presence acutely felt in the narrative. Discuss.