



Level : MASTER 2

Responsible for the Module : Pr. M. Y. Bendjeddou

Semester : 3

Academic Year : 2021/2022

Exam Correction of :

Post- War American Novel

I) Exam Questions

ATTEMPT ONE (01) OF THE FOLLOWING THEMES .

- A) John Barth's "Lost in the Funhouse" represents a "funhouse of language narrative in which it is easy to get lost".
- B) Historiographic Metafiction in Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse Five* .

II) Model Answers

In their answer students should concentrate on some of the following points:

A) "Lost in the Funhouse".

The starting point for the discussion should be a reference to John Barth's essay "The Literature of Exhaustion". In "Lost in the Funhouse", John Barth puts into practice what he preaches in his essay. The short story is an illustration of what the authors calls "the used upness" of the traditional literary forms.

Ambrose, the protagonist, sets to write the story of his trip to Ocean City with his family and their visit to the funhouse. It is important to show that he has difficulty to give a coherent

account of his experience. The difficulty is highlighted through the author's/narrator's frequent interruptions of the narrative.

Such interruptions are in fact a series of comments on the process and difficulty of writing fiction. They come also as a strong reaction against conventional literature, especially realistic fiction. (Argument that should be illustrated with examples from the story).

Focus should be also laid upon John Barth's use of postmodernist features : Comments on the process of writing illustrate what is termed as metafiction . Other postmodernist techniques are also used in the story such as, self-reflexivity , intertextuality, and parody.

Parallels between the funhouse and story (as places/sites where one gets lost) .

In one of the metafictional passages in which the narrator discusses the construction of a story like "Lost in the Funhouse" (?) and points out the difficulty (if not the failure/loss) at devising a coherent narrative, he states,

" And a long time has gone by already without anything happening ; it makes a person wonder . We haven't even reached Ocean City yet : we will never get out of the funhouse".

To sum up, the statement, John Barth's "Lost in the Funhouse" represents a "funhouse of language narrative in which it is easy to get lost", may find its reflection in one critic's claim that "Ambrose, unable to write a coherent account of his life writes himself into a funhouse of language and then cannot write himself out".

B) Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse Five* .

To start with it is important to give a brief insight into the concept of Linda Hutcheon 's historiographic metafiction . It is also crucial to point out its relevance as a postmodernist technique in postmodernist fiction as a whole.

Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse Five* : Describe the major features of the novel, especially the importance of reality/history as exemplified by war events.

Historiographic Metafiction in *Slaughterhouse Five* . Its technical manifestations (Illustrate with examples).

Kurt Vonnegut's purpose when using Historiographic metafiction. His Literary achievement: what is the impact of blurring the boundaries between fiction and history? What is the perception of history in *Slaughterhouse Five* .?

