Name: ENG 374 American Literature

Number: Midterm 1

1. Fill in the blanks: (2 marks)
2. Christopher Columbus “discovered” America in the year \_\_1492\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
3. In poetry, the repetition of a word or phrase is called a \_\_\_refrain\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
4. America declared its independence in the year \_\_\_1776\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
5. \_Jonathan Edwards\_\_\_is a Puritan writer who wrote *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*.
6. The following is from the poem *Old Song of the Musk Ox People*: (5 marks)

**It is glorious**

When the caribou herds leave the forests

And begin to wander northward.

1. Provide an analysis of the **underlined** part of the poem.

Native Americans consider nature to be sacred. The phrase “it is glorious” is a refrain which is repeated throughout the poem, and emphasizes the exalted position of nature in the Native American psyche. The caribou is part of nature and is thus exalted. This particular tribe associates its own self-image with this animal. Through its link with the musk ox, and by extension with nature itself, the tribe itself becomes glorious.

1. What are some of the characteristics of Native American literature?
2. It is an oral tradition
3. Stories usually impart moral lessons
4. There is a deep respect for animals and nature, and characters are frequently animals
5. In the following, write √ next to the true statements or X next to the false statements: (2 marks)

a- Rationalists believe that Christianity is the only way to ultimate truth ( x )

b- Thomas Paine wanted to start a war against Spain ( x )

c- The author of *How Turtle Got His Tail* is Benjamin Franklin ( x )

d- Anne Bradstreet was a Revolutionary writer ( x )

1. Answer the questions about the following poem: (6 marks)

Sister, quoth Flesh, what liv’st thou on,

Nothing but meditation?

Doth contemplation feed thee so

Regardlessly to let earth go?

1. Who is the author? Anne Bradstreet.
2. Who is the speaker? Flesh
3. Provide an analysis of these lines. The poem is structured as a dialogue between Flesh and Spirit. Flesh admonishes her sister, Spirit, for her refusal to indulge in earthly pleasures, and for her insistence on pursuing spiritual goals which, in Flesh’s view, hardly satisfy one’s needs. In Flesh’s view, one should pursue material benefits instead.
4. Provide an analysis of the following section from Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense*:

I have heard it asserted by some, that as America has flourished under her former connection with Great Britain, the same connection is necessary towards her future happiness, and will always have the same effect. Nothing can be more fallacious than this kind of argument.

Paine was a proponent of revolution against the English. In this section of his political pamphlet “Common Sense,” Paine responds to those who support reconciliation with Britain. First, Paine presents their claims, namely that America has enjoyed prosperity under British rule and should thus continue under British rule. Paine finds this argument specious and proceeds to dismantle it.