

# Literature Institute Study Guide

## LIT 432 Japanese Literature

### Required Texts

Bedford Anthology of World Literature, Books 1-6. Boston. Bedford-St. Martins, 2004.

UNIT	WEEKS	TOPICS	READINGS
I	1	<b>Ancient Literature</b>	
		Introduction	Book 2, 1010-1018
		Man'yoshu (8 <sup>th</sup> century)	Book 2, 1018-1044
	Literary Terms	Please briefly define key literary terms. tanka, hanka, choka, elegy	
	Essay Topics	E1. Please provide an overview of the Man'yoshu.  E2. Please describe the life and works of the principal authors in this section. E3. Please answer the following questions for each of the poems in this chapter. Who is the narrator? What is the poet describing? Discuss the narrator's experience in terms of perceptions and emotions. Can you see any ideas and themes in the poems? Please list specific elements of the poem to support your argument.	
	2	Kokinshu (905)	Book 2, 1044-1058
		Literary Terms	Please briefly define key literary terms. tanka
		Essay Topics	E1. Please provide an overview of the Kokinshu.  E2. Please describe the life and works of the principal authors in this section. E3. Please answer the following questions for each of the poems in this chapter. Who is the narrator? What is the poet describing? Discuss the narrator's experience in terms of perceptions and emotions. Can you see any ideas and themes in the poems? Please list specific elements of the poem to support your argument.
	3	Sei Shonagon (966-1017)	Book 2, 1059-1086
		Author	Please write a brief author biography.
		Literary Terms	Please briefly define key literary terms. zuihitsu ("random jottings")
	Essay Topics	E1. Please provide an overview of Pillow Book.  E2. Discuss the courtship, flirting customs of the court ladies when they are on leave.	
4	Murasaki Shikibu (973-1030)	Book 2, 1086-1147	
	Author	Please write a brief author biography.	
	Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description of plot, themes, main characters, character analysis of Genji.	

	Literary Terms	Please briefly define key literary terms.	
	Essay Topics	E1. Discuss the courtship customs of the eleventh Century Japanese society. Do you see any societal restrictions, punishment against courtship, flirting, multiple love affairs and multiple marriages in the form of polygamy for men or women? What are the gender differences as far as forming multiple relationships? Does Genji have any concept of sin or guilt or regret about establishing many love and marriage relationship? Do the Japanese aristocracy of that age follow their attractions freely by courting all women regardless of their marital status? Do they believe in free-love or free-courtship?	
<b>II</b>		<b>Middle Ages</b>	
	5	Tale of Heike (1371)	Book 2, 1148-1174
	Author	Please write a brief author biography.	
	Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description of plot, themes, main characters, character analysis of Kiyomori.	
	Literary Terms	Please briefly define key literary terms. gunki monogatari (war tales)	
	Essay Topics	E1. Discuss the heroic code, military ethics and values of the twelfth century Japanese society. What are the warriors' duty and responsibilities? Describe the instances of the acts of courage, loyalty, and responsibility of the warriors. E2. Discuss the theme of transience and impermanence of the world. Describe the influence of Buddhism on the worldview of the Japanese people in the Tale of Heike.	
	6	Zeami Motokiyo (1364-1443) Atsumori	Book 2, 1175-1179 Book 2, 1180-1186
	Author	Please write a brief author biography.	
	Literary Analysis	Please provide a character analysis of Atsumori.	
	Literary Terms	Please briefly define key literary terms. Noh Drama	
	Essay Topics	E1. Please provide an overview of Noh drama.	
<b>III</b>		<b>Early Modern Japan</b>	
	7	Tokugawa Era Ihara Saikaku (1642-1693)	Book 4, 624-630 Book 4, 631-649
	Author	Please write a brief author biography.	
	Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description of key stories and include any ideas and themes.	
	Literary Terms	Please briefly define key literary terms. "floating world" genre	
	Essay Topics	E1. Describe the social norms and expectations in the case of adultery of women in the seventeenth century Japan of the ordinary classes. What are the consequences of adultery? Compare and contrast with social norms of the aristocracy of Genji's days in eleventh century Japan.	
	8	Matsuo Basho (1644-1694)	Book 4, 650-684

The Narrow Road through Backcountry

	Author	Please write a brief author biography.	
	Literary Terms	Please briefly define key terms. haiku, Zen Buddhism, renga, kasen	
	Essay Topics	E1. Discuss Basho's "mystical identification" with nature. Explore the possibility that Basho's quest was to achieve complete absorption of one's ego into the infinite and gorgeous universe.	
	9	Chikamatso Monzaemon (1653-1724) The Love Suicides at Amijima	Book 4, 685-718
	Author	Please write a brief author biography.	
	Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description of plot, themes, main characters, character analysis of Jihei, critical scenes.	
	Literary Terms	Please briefly define key literary terms. jōruri (puppet plays); Kabuki; sewamono (domestic play)	
	Essay Topics	E1. What do the lovers' suicides suggest about attitudes about life, death, suicide, and sacrifice? What is Buddhism's view of lovers' suicide? E2. Discuss the theme of duty vs. desire in this play. E3. Why does Osan help her husband to be with another women?	
<b>IV</b>	10	<b>Modern Japan</b> Meiji Period Takizawa Bakin (1767-1848) Mori Ogai (1862-1922) The Dancing Girl Higuchi Ichiyo (Higuchi Nitsuko) (1872-1896) The Thirteenth Night	Book 5, 1070-1076 Book 5, 1076-1083 Book 5, 1083-1102 Book 5, 1103-1118
	Author	Please write a brief author biography.	
	Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description of key stories and include any ideas and themes.	
	Literary Terms	Please briefly define key terms. novel, Meiji	
	Essay Topics	E1. Discuss the conflict of duty vs desire for Shino and Hamaji in "Hakkenden." E2. Discuss the conflict of duty vs desire for Oseki in "The Thirteenth Night." E3. Discuss the conflict of duty vs desire for Ota and Elise in the "The Dancing Girl."	
	11	Tanizaki Junichiro Aguri	Book 6, 460-472
	Author	Please write a brief author biography.	
	Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description of the story and include any ideas and themes.	
	Literary Terms	Please briefly define key literary terms. feminism	
	Essay Topics	E1. Discuss Okada's attraction for Aguri. Is it love or lust or obsession or quest for beauty that attracts Okada to Aguri. Why	

	does he want her to wear western clothes?	
12	Kawabata Yasunari "The Moon on the Water" "Snow"	Book 6, 659-671
Author	Please write a brief author biography.	
Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description of the stories and include any ideas and themes.	
Literary Terms	Please briefly define key literary terms. Neo-Sensualism	
Essay Topics	E1. Discuss the dying man's mentality and experience in "The moon on the water"? Describe the pursuit of beauty of Kyoto's first husband. E2. Discuss the need for solitude and escapism in "Snow." Describe Sankichi's experience at his "dream hotel."	
13	Tamura Ryuichi	Book 6, 529-532
Author	Please write a brief author biography.	
Essay Topics	E1. Please answer the following questions for each of the poems in this chapter. Who is the narrator? What is the poet describing? Discuss the narrator's experience in terms of perceptions and emotions. Can you see any ideas and themes in the poems? Please list specific elements of the poem to support your argument.	
14	Abe Kobo "The Red Cocoon" and "The Stick"	Book 6, 914-923
Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description of the stories and include any ideas and themes.	
Literary Terms	Please briefly define key literary terms. surrealism, absurdism, alienation	
Author	Please write brief author biography for Abe Kobo.	
Essay Topics	E1. Discuss the use of surrealism, the loss of identity and alienation in Abe Kobo's works. Describe the idea of metamorphosis in "The Red Cocoon" and "The Stick."	
15	Takenishi Hiroko The Rite Oe Kenzaburo Hiroshima Notes	Book 6, 967-971 Book 6, 971-990 Book 6, 765-766 Book 6, 766-769
Literary Terms	Please briefly define key literary terms. existentialism, essay	
Author	Please write brief author biographies for Takenishi and Oe.	
Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description of the story, the main theme, the main characters, character analysis of the main character (Aki).	
Essay Topics	E1. How do the characters in "The Rite" respond to the traumatic experience of Atomic Bomb? How do they try to avoid feeling loss and sorrow? Why is it important for Aki to grieve and mourn of the loss in Hiroshima? E2. Please provide an overview of the essay, Hiroshima Notes.	

E3. Please discuss existentialism in Oe. Please defend your position with examples.

**V**

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**Finals**  
Review, Essay, Exam