

FINAL EXAMINATION, FDN 5840 Spring 2011
Appalachian State University
Dr. Gayle M. Turner

Directions:

Please answer each question with a short paragraph or paragraphs. The final two questions should be answered in approximately one double-spaced page of 250 words or less each. You will answer eight questions: six short answer and two single page essays.

Your ability to give concise, thoughtful, and appropriate responses is one of the qualities that will be evaluated. Remember, though answering questions at this level of complexity requires a subjective response, your answers must nevertheless reflect the knowledge base of the course as expressed in the readings, lectures, and class discussions. The questions may require that you analyze, synthesize, and evaluate.

Remember that you are required to *not* consult with anyone else regarding your answers to these questions *once you begin writing*. You may use only your texts and your own class notes while writing your answers.

Due date and time: Sunday, May 1, at midnight.

Required format: Email attachment to gayle@gayleturner.net; Microsoft Word format.

1. In your word processing program, select File > Save as > (Choose MS Word format in the drop-down selection box) > your_first_name_last_name.doc.
2. In the subject line of the email, write "FDN 5840 Exam."

Short Answer (Six questions. Answer each one. 50 points each.)

1. Briefly state two of the research based arguments with which you are familiar that are frequently offered as evidence that the pervasive use of tracking and ability grouping in schools is not in the best interest of all students.
2. Explain the philosophical difference between "truth" and "Truth," as discussed in lecture and in your readings.
3. In *The Poisonwood Bible*, the character Nathan Price has a particular understanding of truth. How might Nathan Price define truth? Do you believe this approach serves him well? Why or why not?
4. There is a conflict of cultures in *The Poisonwood Bible*. Think about how Adah, Leah, Ruth May, Rachel, Orleanna, and Nathan each deal very differently with this conflict. Choose one character to analyze. How would your chosen character define the cultural conflict? Would you argue that your chosen character behaves as a pragmatist might? A realist? A relativist? Use Rorty's definitions of the three approaches as they were presented in class. Your answers, obviously, will not be definitive. You must, however, support your perspective with analysis based on lecture, discussion, and reading.
5. How might the fictional character Ishmael describe educators' acceptance of the SAT and other standardized tests as sorting devices? (Yes, I know this is hard. The question requires you to consider conceptions of culture as explored in this course, and how "boundaries at the edges of thought" influence our behavior.)

6. How might Rorty explain what Paul Cuadros attempted to do by writing *A Home on the Field*? You must use ideas from Rorty's work in particular, but feel free to draw on other readings from the course that might be helpful.

Short Essay (Choose one question to answer from the four choices listed below. Answer in 250 words or less for each if possible. 100 points.)

7. a. What does Lisa Delpit mean by "the culture of power"? How much access have you personally had to this culture? What, according to Delpit, are some of the things white middle-class teachers (and administrators) do which may have a negative educational impact on children of color, and children from families with a low socio-economic status? Why does this happen? Are you persuaded by her analysis? Why or why not?

7. b. What is power, and what is the origin and nature of that power which is held by administrators and teachers? (Base your answer around the novels or other readings you have studied in this class. Examples: *Poisonwood Bible*, "Science as Solidarity," *A Home on the Field*, Lisa Delpit's work, and so on.)

7. c. Dewey states in "The Influence of Darwin on Philosophy" that Darwin's *Origin of the Species* opened "the gates of the garden of life". Give two of the reasons he offers to support this statement. Are you persuaded by his argument? Why or why not?

7. d. In "The School and Social Progress," Dewey writes:

The difference that appears when occupations are made the articulating centers of school life is not easy to describe in words; it is a difference in motive, of spirit and atmosphere... There is no obvious social motive for the acquirement of mere learning, there is no clear social gain in success thereat. Indeed, almost the only measure for success is a competitive one, in the bad sense of that term—a comparison of results in the recitation or in the examination to see which child has succeeded in getting ahead of others in storing up, in accumulating the maximum of information. So thoroughly is this the prevalent atmosphere that for one child to help another in his task has become a school crime.

What does Dewey mean by the word "occupation" used in this context? How does it differ from our more common modern usage? In addition, explain in your own words what you believe Dewey's point to be. Do you agree or disagree with his point about school atmosphere and intent? Support your perspective.

Short answer: 1-6: 50 points each

Short essay: 100 points

Total: 400 points

A reminder regarding how the course will be graded:

1. You begin the course with an "A." To keep the "A":
 - Attend and participate in each class in a meaningful and intelligent manner that reflects the thoughtfulness of your engagement with the assigned texts, your classmates, and the instructor.
 - Write a rigorous and thoughtful mid-term and final, and deliver it to me in the required digital format on time.

2. Each component above carries the following weight:

Mid-term = 33%

Final = 33%

Class participation = 34%

Class discussion board participation = ?% (this will be folded into class participation in general because I didn't insist on online posts, and not all of you chose to use the board regularly.)

3. Class participation and the online discussion forum are both Pass/Fail portions of the course.