

University of Colombo, Sri Lanka

Faculty of Arts

Second Year Examination in Arts (Study Stream), Semester 2, 2019

ENG 2234 – Rhetoric and Style

Two Hours

Answer all three (03) questions.

1. The following is part of a fictional letter from a homeowner to a friend. Read it and answer the following questions (10 marks).

"Of the two leading real estate firms in our town — Adams Realty and Fitch Realty — Adams Realty is clearly superior. Adams has 40 real estate agents; in contrast, Fitch has 25, many of whom work only part-time. Moreover, Adams' revenue last year was twice as high as that of Fitch and included home sales that averaged \$168,000, compared to Fitch's \$144,000. Homes listed with Adams sell faster as well: ten years ago I listed my home with Fitch, and it took more than four months to sell; last year, when I sold another home, I listed it with Adams, and it took only one month. Thus, if you want to sell your home quickly and at a good price, you should use Adams Realty."

Extracted from the GRE pool of argument topics

- (a) What is the writer's main argument? (1 mark)
- (b) What are the weaknesses in the argument? (4 marks)
- (c) How can the argument be improved? (5 marks)

2. Do you agree with the view that "a short story must have a single mood and every sentence must build towards it" to be rhetorically effective? Discuss, drawing on one short story studied in the course (20 marks).

3. Answer one of the following questions (20 marks):

EITHER

- (a) Fear-arousing rhetoric is at times used to support political purposes. At the same time, it has been said by a world-famous politician that "the only thing we have to fear is...fear itself". Discuss how effective fear is in the transmission of political messages.

OR

- (b) Donawerth notes that in the late Renaissance period in England and France, women revised classical rhetorical theory, viewing rhetoric as modelled on conversation rather than public speech. Do you agree that genres of conversation can be regarded as rhetoric? Comment, giving reasons for your answer.
