

- You have to write your answers in English. Make sure that your answers contain no spelling or grammar errors;
- Submit **Word** documents;
- On top of your exam write your name, student number, the course name, and the number of credits you need (**if you only need 6 credits write “6-CFU exam”; if you need 12 credits write “12-CFU exam/module A”**);
- Use **400-600** words per question and indicate the word count for each answer;
- Read the questions carefully and try to answer them in a precise, nuanced, and complete way. You will be assessed on **your ability to read primary texts carefully and to clearly explain your analysis**. Be **thoughtful, critical**, and **articulate**;
- The answer should have a clear, logical structure, with smooth transitions between sentences and/or paragraphs;
- If you write an introduction and/or a conclusion, keep these short (no more than 20% of the word count for introduction and conclusion together) and make sure each part is relevant; quotations too may not comprise more than 20% per answer – preferably less;
- **Originality is important: find your own references and quotes and formulate your own explanations and arguments. THERE WILL BE AN AUTOMATIC PLAGIARISM CHECK.**

1. Jewish-American writers have been called 'amphibious writers', simultaneously part of two close yet very different worlds. Comment on this statement by referring to the development of Jewish-American literature between the Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries
2. Jewishness and modernity in *Call It Sleep*. Provide a brief overview of the matter. Make sure to refer to the secondary readings to support your points.
3. The US society in the 1980s and its reflections on the Jewish-American tradition. Discuss the issue with reference to David Leavitt's "Family Dancing".
4. Write a comment for the following passage, highlighting its general meaning and its significance within the novel:

A curse on them! He glared about him at the children and half grown boys and girls who crowded the stoops and overflowed into the sidewalks and gutter. The devil take them! What was going to become of Yiddish youth? What would become of this new breed? These Americans? This sidewalk-and-gutter generation? He knew them all and they were all alike — brazen, selfish, unbridled. Where was piety and observance? Where was learning, veneration of parents, deference to the old? In the earth! Deep in the earth! On ball playing their minds dwelt, on skates, on kites, on marbles, on gambling for the cardboard pictures, and the older ones, on dancing, and the ferocious jangle of horns and strings and jiggling with their feet. And God? Forgotten, forgotten wholly. Ask one who Mendel Beiliss is? Ask one, did he shed goyish blood for the Passover? Would they know? Could they answer? Vagabonds! Snipes! Jiggers with their feet! Corrupt generation! Schmielike, his own grandchild, lifting a nickel from his purse. (Ah, but he fetched him a few sterling whacks when he caught him. A few, but good ones.) And his wooden pointers stolen from his cheder. And those brats in the street laughing when he broke his walking stick. An ageing man and they had jeered at him. And that lout especially, may he break his bones before the rest; asking him if he had lost a ball, in the foul water below. He, a rabbi, an ageing man. Hi! Hi! May a tumor in his belly and a tumor in his head grow to be as big as that ball. Mocking an ageing man. Yiddish youth! Turd-worth. Exactly so was his own boyhood in Viina, in Russ-Poland. Ex-a-actly so-o! Others went sliding on sleds. Not he. Others slid on the ice with the goyim. Not he. They stuck pins into each other in the cheder. Not he. Hi! He had scarcely ever laughed even in his youth. Pogroms. Poverty. What was there to laugh at? Reb R'fuhl was his rabbi then. That was a rabbi! No random cuff did you get from him when he was vexed. No mild pinch on the Jowl. Ha, no! When he was angered, he flogged, and when he flogged he took their pants down and spread the flap of their drawers — and all so slowly and with what sweet words. Hi! Ha! Ha! That was a sight to behold! They remembered it those young ones. Not the watery discipline that he enforced. That's what was mining this generation, watery discipline. Hi! And he, himself a rabbi now, he had held the culprit's legs while the straps sank into the white buttocks. There was a kind of pleasure then in hearing another howl, in watching another beaten, seeing the naked flesh squirm and writhe and the crack of the buttocks tighten under the biting thongs. A kind of pleasure, but it had passed now, dulled with over-use he supposed- Hi! Hi! . . .

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1. Objects and postmemory: provide a brief overview of the matter, referring to both the texts in the syllabus and the secondary readings.
2. Is *Everything Is Illuminated* a postmodern novel? discuss the book by referring to the passage(s) that you find relevant to the matter.
3. Forgetting the holocaust as a survival strategy: discuss the issue by referring both the texts in the syllabus and the secondary readings.
4. Write a comment for the following passage, highlighting its general meaning and its significance within the story. You might also want to refer to other episodes from the story:

“It is not about the outfit,” Mark says. “It’s about building life in a vacuum. Do you know what I saw on the drive over here? Supermarket, supermarket, adult bookstore, supermarket, supermarket, firing range.”

“Floridians do like their guns and porn,” I say. “And their supermarkets.”

“Oh my God,” Deb says. “That’s like your ‘Goldberg, Goldberg—Atta’ thing. Just the same, but different words.”

“He likes that rhythm,” Shoshana says. “He does that a lot.”

“What I’m trying to say, whether you want to take it seriously or not, is that you can’t build Judaism only on the foundation of one terrible crime. It is about this obsession with the Holocaust as a necessary sign of identity. As your only educational tool. Because for the children, there is no connection otherwise. Nothing Jewish that binds.”

“Wow, that’s offensive,” Deb says. “And close-minded. There is such a thing as Jewish culture. One can live a culturally rich life.”

“Not if it’s supposed to be a Jewish life. Judaism is a religion. And with religion comes ritual. Culture is nothing. Culture is some construction of the modern world. And because of that, it is not fixed; it is ever-changing, and a weak way to bind generations. It’s like taking two pieces of metal, and instead of making a nice weld, you hold them together with glue.”

“What does that even mean?” Deb says. “Practically.”

Mark raises a finger to make his point, to educate. “Do you know why in Israel all the buses and trucks, why all the taxis, even, are Mercedes?”

“Because they give you a big guilt-based discount?” I say. “Or maybe because Mercedes is the best at building vehicles for the transport of Jews—they have a certain knack?”

“Because in Israel we are sound, solid Jews, and so it is nothing, even right after the war, for us to drive German cars and turn on our German Siemens

radios to listen to the Hebrew news. We don’t need to impose some brand-based apartheid, to busy ourselves with symbolic efforts to keep our memories in place. Because we live exactly as our parents lived before the war. And this serves us in all things, in our relationships, too, in our marriages and parenting.”