I. Read the short story and answer the following questions. 50%

1. Write a summary of the story in no more than 5 sentences. 20%

2. Why was the story entitled “Hills like White Elephants”? In other words, what does this title suggest to you? 10%

3. In the story, the man says to the girl “It’s really an awfully simple operation. It’s not really an operation at all.” (The second grey-shaded highlight.) What is the “it” the man refers to? And how do you know? 10%

4. In the third grey-shaded highlight, who is the speaker? And why is the word “please” repeated seven times? 10%

“Hills like White Elephants”

Ernest Hemingway

The hills across the valley of the Ebro were long and white. On this side there was no shade and no trees and the station was between two lines of rails in the sun. Close against the side of the station there was the warm shadow of the building and a curtain, made of strips of bamboo beads, hung across the open door into the bar, to keep out flies. The American and the girl with him sat at a table in the shade, outside the building. It was very hot and the express from Barcelona would come in forty minutes. It stopped at this junction for two minutes and went on to Madrid.

“What should we drink?” the girl asked. She had taken off her hat and put it on the table.

“It’s pretty hot,” the man said.

“Let’s drink beer.”

“Dos cervezas,” the man said into the curtain.

“Big ones?” a woman asked from the doorway.

“Yes. Two big ones.”

The woman brought two glasses of beer and two felt pads. She put the felt pads and the beer glasses on the table and looked at the man and the girl. The girl was looking off at the line of hills. They were white in the sun and the country was brown and dry.

“They look like white elephants,” she said.

“I’ve never seen one,” the man drank his beer.

“No, you wouldn’t have.”

“I might have,” the man said. “Just because you say I wouldn’t have doesn’t prove anything.”

The girl looked at the bead curtain. “They’ve painted something on it,” she said. “What does it say?”

“Anis del Toro. It’s a drink.”

“Could we try it?”

The man called “Listen” through the curtain. The woman came out from the bar.

“Four reales.”

“We want two Anis del Toro.”

“With water?”

“Do you want it with water?”

“I don’t know,” the girl said. “Is it good with water?”

“It’s all right.”

“You want them with water?” asked the woman.

“Yes, with water.”

“It tastes like licorice,” the girl said and put the glass down.

“That’s the way with everything.”

“Yes,” said the girl. “Everything tastes of licorice. Especially all the things you’ve waited so long for, like absinthe.”

“Oh, cut it out.”

“You started it,” the girl said. “I was being amused. I was having a fine time.”

“Well, let’s try and have a fine time.”
"All right. I was trying. I said the mountains looked like white elephants. Wasn’t that bright?"
"That was bright."
"I wanted to try this new drink: That’s all we do, isn’t it—looking at things and try new drinks?"
"I guess so."
The girl looked across at the hills.
"They’re lovely hills," she said. "They don’t really look like white elephants. I just meant the coloring of their
skin through the trees."
"Should we have another drink?"
"All right."
The warm wind blew the bead curtain against the table.
"The beer’s nice and cool," the man said.
"It’s lovely," the girl said.
"It’s really an awfully simple operation, Jig," the man said. "It’s not really an operation at all."
The girl looked at the ground the table legs rested on.
"I know you wouldn’t mind it, Jig. It’s really not anything. It’s just to let the air in."
The girl did not say anything.
"I’ll go with you and I’ll stay with you all the time. They just let the air in and then it’s all perfectly natural."
"Then what will we do afterward?"
"We’ll be fine afterward. Just like we were before."
"What makes you think so?"
"That’s the only thing that bothers us. It’s the only thing that’s made us unhappy."
The girl looked at the bead curtain, put her hand out and took hold of two of the strings of beads.
"And you think then we’ll be all right and be happy."
"I know we will. You don’t have to be afraid. I’ve known lots of people that have done it."
"So have I," said the girl. "And afterward they were all so happy."
"Well," the man said, "if you don’t want to you don’t have to. I wouldn’t have you do it if you didn’t want to.
But I know it’s perfectly simple."
"And you really want to?"
"I think it’s the best thing to do. But I don’t want you to do it if you don’t really want to."
"And if I do it you’ll be happy and things will be like they were and you’ll love me?"
"I love you now. You know I love you."
"I know. But if I do it, then it will be nice again if I say things are like white elephants, and you’ll like it?"
"I’ll love it. I love it now but I just can’t think about it. You know how I get when I worry."
"If I do it you won’t ever worry?"
"I won’t worry about that because it’s perfectly simple."
"Then I’ll do it. Because I don’t care about me."
"What do you mean?"
"I don’t care about me."
"Well, I care about you."
"Oh, yes. But I don’t care about me. And I’ll do it and then everything will be fine."
"I don’t want you to do it if you feel that way."
The girl stood up and walked to the end of the station. Across, on the other side, were fields of grain and trees
along the banks of the Ebro. Far away, beyond the river, were mountains. The shadow of a cloud moved across the
field of grain and she saw the river through the trees.
"And we could have all this," she said. "And we could have everything and every day we make it more
impossible."
"What did you say?"
"I said we could have everything."
"We can have everything."
"No, we can’t."
"We can have the whole world."
"No, we can’t."
"We can go everywhere."
"No, we can’t. It isn’t ours anymore."
"It’s ours."
"No it isn’t. And once they take it away, you never get it back."
"But they haven’t taken it away."
"We’ll wait and see."
"Come on back in the shade," he said. "You mustn’t feel that way."
"I don’t feel any way," the girl said. "I just know things."
"I don’t want you to do anything that you don’t want to do—"
"Nor that isn’t good for me," she said. "I know. Could we have another beer?"
"All right. But you’ve got to realize—"
"I realize," the girl said. "Can’t we maybe stop talking?"
They sat down at the table and the girl looked across at the hills on the dry side of the valley and the man looked at her and at the table.
"You’ve got to realize," he said, "that I don’t want you to do it if you don’t want to. I’m perfectly willing to go through with it if it means anything to you."
"Doesn’t it mean anything to you? We could get along."
"Of course it does. But I don’t want anybody but you. I don’t want any one else. And I know it’s perfectly simple."
"Yes, you know it’s perfectly simple."
"It’s all right for you to say that, but I do know it."
"Would you do something for me now?"
"I’d do anything for you."
"Would you please please please please please please please please stop talking?"
He did not say anything but looked at the bags against the wall of the station. There were labels on them from all the hotels where they had spent nights.
"But I don’t want you to," he said, "I don’t care anything about it."
"I’ll scream," the girl said.
The woman came out through the curtains with two glasses of beer and put them down on the damp felt pads.
"The train comes in five minutes," she said.
"What did she say?" asked the girl.
"That the train is coming in five minutes."
The girl smiled brightly at the woman, to thank her.
"I’d better take the bags over to the other side of the station," the man said. She smiled at him.
"All right. Then come back and we’ll finish the beer."
He picked up the two heavy bags and carried them around the station to the other tracks. He looked up the tracks but could not see the train. Coming back, he walked through the barroom, where people waiting for the train were drinking. He drank an Anis at the bar and looked at the people. They were all waiting reasonably for the train.
He went out through the bead curtain. She was sitting at the table and smiled at him.
"Do you feel better?" he asked.
"I feel fine," she said. "There’s nothing wrong with me. I feel fine."

II. Read the poem and answer the following questions. 50%
1. What might be the relationship between the addressee (the one who speaks) and the addressee (the one the addressee speaks to)? How do you know? 10%
2. In the poem, what function does the flea play in the relationship between the addressee and the addressee? 10%
3. It is generally agreed that the poem "The Flea" demonstrates the poet John Donne's ability to
take a controlling metaphor and adapt it to unusual circumstances. Discuss what the controlling metaphor is, and how it is elaborated in the poem. 20%

4. According to I. 10 "three lives in one," and II. 12-13, the addressee of this poem seems to allude to a Christian tenet and makes a parody of it. What is the tenet, and how is it parodied? 10%

"The Flea"

Mark but this flea, and mark in this,
How little that which thou deniest me is;
It sucked me first, and now sucks thee,
And in this flea our two bloods mingled be;
Thou know'st that this cannot be said
A sin, nor shame, nor loss of maidenhead,
Yet this enjoys before it woo,
And pampered swells with one blood made of two,
And this, alas, is more than we would do.

Oh stay, three lives in one flea spare,
Where we almost, nay more than married are.
This flea is you and I, and this
Our marriage bed, and marriage temple is;
Though parents grudge, and you, w'are met,
And cloistered in these living walls of jet.
Though use make you apt to kill me,
Let not to that, self-murder added be,
And sacrilege, three sins in killing three.

Cruel and sudden, hast thou since
Purpled thy nail, in blood of innocence?
Wherein could this flea guilty be,
Except in that drop which it sucked from thee?
Yet thou triumph'st, and say'st that thou
Find'st not thy self, nor me the weaker now;
'Tis true; then learn how false, fears be:
Just so much honor, when thou yield'st to me,
Will waste, as this flea's death took life from thee.