

※ 考生請注意：本試題不可使用計算機。請於答案卷(卡)作答，於本試題紙上作答者，不予計分。

Essay Questions

Choose FIVE from the following seven questions and answer them with well-organized paragraphs with clearly-defined topic sentences. Relate your arguments to specific literary texts from British literature and support your ideas with concrete evidence. Indicate clearly which question you are responding to by writing the question number at the beginning of your answer. Write on the provided answer book. (Each question is worth 20 points.)

1. Since the Anglo-Norman period, the stories of King Arthur and the knights of Round Table have inspired both contemporary and later-generation British writers (such as Thomas Malory, Geoffrey Chaucer, Edmund Spenser, Alfred Tennyson, William Morris, and more) to express their moral, social, or political ideas or ideals by adapting or extending elements of the so-called "Arthuriad." Elaborate on this topic by citing at least two literary authors with examples drawn from their works.
2. The downfall of the heroes in William Shakespeare's major tragedies can of course be explained with the Aristotelian idea of "tragic flaw." However, besides personality defects, forces in the social and political conditions surrounding these heroes are also at play in contributing to their eventual misfortunes. Choose at least two of the Bard's tragedies to validate the claim with solid textual examples.
3. John Milton models his composition of *Paradise Lost* after such Classical epics as Homer's and Virgil's works. Of course, as a Christian poet with the background of past involvement in a republican revolution, he also moves away from the conventions established in the Classical epics and their underlying values. To what extent does *Paradise Lost* follow and diverge from the traditional epic conventions and for what ideological reasons does Milton deviate from the conventions?
4. Gothic narrative is a popular genre that first rose up in the second half of the eighteenth century. What are the trademark features of the Gothic in terms of its plot design, characterization, background setting, etc.? How was its popularity related to the social, cultural, and political environments of the time? How does the features of the genre influence the composition of verse and prose narratives in the nineteenth century?
5. In British literature there is a continual tradition of writers consciously creating imaginary alternative worlds as the backdrop against which their narratives unfold. The tradition can be traced as far back as Thomas More's *Utopia*, all the way through Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, George Orwell's *1984*, and even down to J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series—to name a few. Although these imagined worlds can be so different from their respective creators' real worlds that their existence may defy known laws of physical and human sciences, these writers still have their own real

worlds in mind when they are imagining the alternative ones. Choose at least two such writers and discuss how their imagined worlds reflect and comment on the social, cultural, and political situations of the real worlds.

6. For more than one thousand years London has been the center of all kinds of activities in England, in Great Britain, and even in the former British Empire. So many writers have written about it or used it as the narrative backdrop so that the city has taken on various kinds of character traits—as if the city were a living creature in many London accounts. Choose at least two literary texts in which London features prominently and discuss how the representations of the city influence the design of the story plots or the characters.
7. Scientific discoveries and technological innovations can change human conditions so fundamentally and drastically that people living through them may have to adapt with difficulties while enjoying the benefits they bring along. British people have gone through such changes several times in their history and literary works have registered the experiences accordingly. Discuss the works of at least two authors who respond to the changed conditions.