

COMPOSITION EXAMINATION

INSTRUCTIONS:

Choose one (1) of the topics listed below and write a single, coherent essay. Before writing, take time to think about the topic, organize your thoughts, and develop a thesis.

Time allotted: 100 minutes

1. One of the most practical ways of communicating learning is by writing. Indeed, without writing man could never have developed the sciences and technologies. Such writing obviously serves a great purpose. But what is the purpose of literary writing? Are novels, short stories, and poems, for example, less or more valuable than the writings of science and technology?
2. Alexander Pope wrote in his "Essay on Man," "A little learning is a dangerous thing. Drink deep from that Pyrean Spring, or drink not at all." Is this true? Is being half-educated or half-informed on a subject more dangerous than being ignorant altogether?
3. We are attracted to things that give us pleasure and repulsed by things that are painful. But which do we learn more from, pleasure or pain? Discuss pleasure and pain in terms of your learning experiences and tell us which has played a more significant role in your education.
4. At the colleges and universities of today, men still tend to major in the applied sciences, while the majority of women seem to prefer the arts. Why do you suppose this to be the case? Is there something inherently masculine about the applied sciences and something intrinsically feminine about the arts?