

COMPOSITION EXAMINATION

Instructions: Write two short essays (300-400 words each) on two of the three topics listed below. Remember to think carefully through your topic and organize your ideas in a manner that clearly develops your thesis.

1. George Bernard Shaw once observed that most people would never have "fallen in love" if they hadn't read about it first in a novel. Today, I suppose, we might change this statement to reflect the influence of romantic movies on sexual relations and expectations. Do you think that romance in the movies has influenced you or others in their romantic expectations and experience? If so, how?

2. Matthew Arnold advised that we should all have clearly in our memory a reservoir of great literary works ("touchstones") with which we can compare and judge the quality of a new literary work that we come in to contact with. What are the great works in your literary memory by which you judge other poems, short stories, or novels, and why are these particular works in your collection of literary "touchstones" (masterpieces)?

3. Almost all parents raise their children to be honest and always tell the truth. However, it is also true that most parents are not entirely honest with their children for their own good, as it were. What lies did your parents tell you, and/or what lies will you tell your own children one day?