

Short Essay on Eighteenth-Century Literature

Select *one* of the following prompts, and respond to it in short essay form of approximately 500–800 words. Focus on creating a thesis statement that responds to the prompt, including relevant quotations, and referring to the texts you have studied as evidence. Once you have completed your short essay, you may self-grade your writing based on the point system provided in the Guide to Responding; for your reference, the score for the prompt you choose is out of 100 points.

1. Compare and contrast the use of irony in Dryden’s “Mac Flecknoe” with either Pope’s *The Rape of the Lock* or Swift’s “A Modest Proposal.” In composing your answer, be sure to define the key terms of irony, mock epic, and satire; specify who is the target of the irony; and describe what characteristics or ideas are held up for ridicule in each text.
2. How does Samuel Johnson’s *Rasselas* define the good life? How does the plot sustain that idea? How is that characterization of the good life related to other key texts and ideas (you should relate it to at least two other works) from the eighteenth century?

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