

**DUE DATE:** This is due 2/4 during class, and you can use it on the timed writing later in the week (it will be extremely helpful). If you miss the class deadline, but turn it in before midnight, there will be a small point deduction (-5 points). If you turn in the assignment before midnight of 2/5 there will be a larger point deduction (-10 points). If you turn in the assignment at any point after that, there will be a substantial point deduction (-20 points; this is a flat deduction, not a cumulative one based on the number of days late). If you turn in the assignment late, but do not want points deducted, you may earn back credit by completing doubling the work on steps 1-3 (writing about four themes and conflicts instead of two).

## ***Emma* by Jane Austen**

**STEP ONE:** Choose any TWO of the following topic areas to generate a paragraph length description about what Jane Austen is claiming. This should merely be a description of her position on these issues, not evidence or explanation. Remember, you are describing the point-of-view of the novel, not your personal feelings about these issues. Do not be afraid to describe complexities in this point-of-view; this may involve ambivalences or even contradictions. This should be an overview, not a fully developed position. It does not require evidence.

### Economic and Social Class

Guiding questions: *Is it wise to have intimate relations too far outside of one's class? Why or why not? How should one relate to money? What role does money play in people's lives and people's happiness? If one's social and economic classes are not aligned, what are the results? If one possesses more wealth than others, how should one relate to those who have less?*

### Gender

Guiding questions: *What is the scope of women's lives during this time period? Does Austen mostly approve, or is there room for improvement? How does courtship temporarily give women more control over their lives? How is courtship still ultimately a power imbalance? What are the excesses of men and the excesses of women; which are worse? If ultimately women take a subordinate position, is this mostly good or mostly bad?*

### Self-knowledge

Guiding questions: *How does one's biases or point-of-view sometimes blind one to the truth? How do understanding one's strengths and weaknesses lead to maturity? In what ways do people blind themselves to what should be obvious, and how does this affect their happiness?*

### Self-improvement

Guiding questions: *What is the process of self-improvement, and what is required to gain wisdom about oneself or the world around oneself? To what extent is this process driven by experience or luck? To what extent is this process driven by a better understanding of oneself? Is this a process that one undergoes alone, or does it require the interaction of others?*

**STEP TWO:** For EACH of the above two descriptions of theme, describe a specific conflict within the novel that develops the theme. Describe this conflict and how the resolution (or non-resolution) demonstrates that you are describing the novel's position correctly.

**STEP THREE:** For EACH of the above descriptions of a specific conflict, describe a turning point or defining moment within the novel that develops each of the conflicts. Briefly explain why this moment is so important and what the character in question learns (or fails to learn) from that event in the book. This will be more useful to you if one of these descriptions is about the ending of the novel.

**STEP FOUR:** Unrelated to the other steps (although they may inform this answer), write a paragraph describing one moral lesson that the protagonist learns over the course of novel. More specifically, if you view the novel as a Bildungsroman (a novel of character formation and maturation), in what obvious way is the protagonist wiser at the end of the book, having gained some knowledge about themselves or the way that the world works? Note that this greater awareness doesn't necessarily translate into greater happiness. Don't overcomplicate this. You are just describing what the character learns about the way the world works.

### ***Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë**

**STEP ONE:** Choose any TWO of the following topic areas to generate a paragraph length description about what Charlotte Brontë is claiming. This should merely be a description of her position on these issues, not evidence or explanation. Remember, you are describing the point-of-view of the novel, not your personal feelings about these issues. Do not be afraid to describe complexities in this point-of-view; this may involve ambivalences or even contradictions. This should be an overview, not a fully developed position. It does not require evidence.

#### Love versus Autonomy

Guiding questions: *To what extent do human connections matter to one's happiness or self-definition? Can (or should) people discover themselves in isolation? If one does form human connections to others, does that also entail subordinating oneself or one's point-of-view to others? If one does compromise one's point-of-view, is this desirable or undesirable in terms of self-knowledge and happiness?*

#### Spiritual Duty

Guiding questions: *What is the proper balance between personal desire and spiritual duty? Is this an either/or conflict, and should one seek only one or the other? What happens when one chooses either personal desire or spiritual duty? Are the results of either course of action mostly positive or mostly negative?*

#### Economic and Social Class

Guiding questions: *Are hierarchies of class mostly good (proving social stability) or mostly bad (proving oppressive)? To what extent can material wealth trade off with spiritual understanding? At the same time, is this conflict either/or, or is there some kind of balance that can be struck? Are social divisions within society supportive or destructive of human aims? To what extent do they matter in determining the course of people's lives?*

#### Gender

Guiding questions: *What is the scope of women's lives during this time period? Does Brontë mostly approve, or is there room for improvement? To what extent do women suffer as a result of their gender? Do women deserve a voice in determining the course of their own lives? If so, is this the same thing as claiming that the two genders should be equal in rights and responsibilities?*

**STEP TWO:** For EACH of the above two descriptions of theme, describe a specific conflict within the novel that develops the theme. Describe this conflict and how the resolution (or non-resolution) demonstrates that you are describing the novel's position correctly.

**STEP THREE:** For EACH of the above descriptions of a specific conflict, describe a turning point or defining moment within the novel that develops each of the conflicts. Briefly explain why this moment is so important and what the character in question learns (or fails to learn) from that event in the book. This will be more useful to you if one of these descriptions is about the ending of the novel.

**STEP FOUR:** Unrelated to the other steps (although they may inform this answer), write a paragraph describing one moral lesson that the protagonist learns over the course of novel. More specifically, if you view the novel as a Bildungsroman (a novel of character formation and maturation), in what obvious way is the protagonist wiser at the end of the book, having gained some knowledge about themselves or the way that the world works? Note that this greater awareness doesn't necessarily translate into greater happiness. Don't overcomplicate this. You are just describing what the character learns about the way the world works.

## ***Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens**

**STEP ONE:** Choose any TWO of the following topic areas to generate a paragraph length description about what Charles Dickens is claiming. This should merely be a description of her position on these issues, not evidence or explanation. Remember, you are describing the point-of-view of the novel, not your personal feelings about these issues. Do not be afraid to describe complexities in this point-of-view; this may involve ambivalences or even contradictions. This should be an overview, not a fully developed position. It does not require evidence.

### **Ambition**

Guiding questions: *Is ambition mostly good or mostly bad? More pertinently (since the question is too simple), at what point does ambition become a negative trait, and what is the proper balance between it and one's duty toward others? On balance, which is more important: social improvement or moral improvement? Are the two necessarily in conflict with one another, or is it possible to achieve both? If it is possible, how does one go about achieving the proper balance?*

### **Appearances and Reality**

Guiding questions: *Think about these concepts: happiness, love, beauty, wealth, and criminality. Does how society defines them necessarily align with their true nature? To what extent do social constructs interfere with true understanding? How do these social constructs drive people to "improve" themselves in self-destructive ways?*

### **Economic and Social Class**

Guiding questions: *Are hierarchies of class mostly good (proving social stability) or mostly bad (proving oppressive)? To what extent can material wealth trade off with moral understanding? At the same time, is this conflict either/or, or is there some kind of balance that can be struck? Are social divisions within society supportive or destructive of human aims? To what extent do they matter in determining the course of people's lives?*

## Love

Guiding questions: *Think about love in four ways: friendship and the value of forming human connections, familial duty and the value of remaining true to one's family, romantic love and the value of forging partnerships based on mutual support and understanding, and self-love and the dangers of isolating oneself from human connections. To what extent should love be unconditional and based in personal loyalty? To what extent can love become obsessive and destructive? To what extent does forming human connections improve people's lives?*

**STEP TWO:** For EACH of the above two descriptions of theme, describe a specific conflict within the novel that develops the theme. Describe this conflict and how the resolution (or non-resolution) demonstrates that you are describing the novel's position correctly.

**STEP THREE:** For EACH of the above descriptions of a specific conflict, describe a turning point or defining moment within the novel that develops each of the conflicts. Briefly explain why this moment is so important and what the character in question learns (or fails to learn) from that event in the book. This will be more useful to you if one of these descriptions is about the ending of the novel.

**STEP FOUR:** Unrelated to the other steps (although they may inform this answer), write a paragraph describing one moral lesson that the protagonist learns over the course of novel. More specifically, if you view the novel as a Bildungsroman (a novel of character formation and maturation), in what obvious way is the protagonist wiser at the end of the book, having gained some knowledge about themselves or the way that the world works? Note that this greater awareness doesn't necessarily translate into greater happiness. Don't overcomplicate this. You are just describing what the character learns about the way the world works.

## ***Tess of the d'Urbervilles* by Thomas Hardy**

**STEP ONE:** Choose any TWO of the following topic areas to generate a paragraph length description about what Thomas Hardy is claiming. This should merely be a description of her position on these issues, not evidence or explanation. Remember, you are describing the point-of-view of the novel, not your personal feelings about these issues. Do not be afraid to describe complexities in this point-of-view; this may involve ambivalences or even contradictions. This should be an overview, not a fully developed position. It does not require evidence.

## Fate

Guiding questions: *To what extent are people in control of their own lives? Is there any sense of divine justice or providence? Are outcomes based on moral decisions that people make, or is this process more arbitrary? More specifically, do people get what they deserve? If there is a God, is he beneficent or indifferent?*

## Modernity

Guiding questions: *What has been gained and what has been lost by changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution? Which is more desirable, material or spiritual happiness, and to what extent has modernity changed the relative value of each? With the emergence of the middle classes, to what extent does the emergence of middle class morality affirm or negate life, and what role does hypocrisy play in this process? Is organized religion (the guiding principle of middle class morality) mostly a force for good or ill in society, and how is it opposed to nature? More generally, how do new developments in society work to undermine older connections to nature? Is this a good or bad thing?*

## Economic and Social Class

Guiding questions: *Are hierarchies of class mostly good (proving social stability) or mostly bad (proving oppressive)? To what extent can material wealth trade off with moral understanding? At the same time, is this conflict either/or, or is there some kind of balance that can be struck? Are social divisions within society supportive or destructive of human aims? To what extent do they matter in determining the course of people's lives?*

## Gender

Guiding questions: *What is the scope of women's lives during this time period? Does Hardy mostly approve, or is there room for improvement? To what extent do women suffer as a result of their gender? To what extent is society privileged toward males and male points-of-view? In particular, how does this impact thinking about sexuality or sexual desire, and to what extent are social attitudes towards these ideas worth defending or preserving?*

**STEP TWO:** For EACH of the above two descriptions of theme, describe a specific conflict within the novel that develops the theme. Describe this conflict and how the resolution (or non-resolution) demonstrates that you are describing the novel's position correctly.

**STEP THREE:** For EACH of the above descriptions of a specific conflict, describe a turning point or defining moment within the novel that develops each of the conflicts. Briefly explain why this moment is so important and what the character in question learns (or fails to learn) from that event in the book. This will be more useful to you if one of these descriptions is about the ending of the novel.

**STEP FOUR:** Unrelated to the other steps (although they may inform this answer), write a paragraph describing one moral lesson that the protagonist learns over the course of novel. More specifically, if you view the novel as a Bildungsroman (a novel of character formation and maturation), in what obvious way is the protagonist wiser at the end of the book, having gained some knowledge about themselves or the way that the world works? Note that this greater awareness doesn't necessarily translate into greater happiness (especially true for Hardy, who is much more cynical than the other three authors). Don't overcomplicate this. You are just describing what the character learns about the way the world works.