

## Essay Questions for Romanticism

\*Directions: Choose one of the topics below and write an 800-1000 word essay. Include a minimum of three properly cited quotes from the text. An outline is required.

1. William Blake uses animals and people to write his *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience*. Please pick on poem of his and use concrete details in discussing how that person/animal falls into the category of being innocent or experienced. Is there anything in the poem in particular that symbolizes innocence or experience? Do you agree with Blake's placement? Please analyze the poem and decide in which book it belongs, and discuss why.
2. Using Wordsworth's three poems, "The World Is Too Much With Us," "I Wandered Lonely As A Cloud," and "Tintern Abbey," please discuss Wordsworth's attitude towards the modern world. As you read, it is obvious that Wordsworth worshipped nature, but find concrete details in all three poems that describe what about the world he hates, and how it can be mended or soothed by nature.
3. Does Percy Bysshe Shelley's poem, "Ozymandias," display pride as being a good or bad thing? Recall other literary works where pride is discussed and use concrete details in comparing how pride has evolved through literature (From R&E to Romanticism). What is Shelley saying about the pride of people/civilizations? Why is it important as relating to the restoration and enlightenment—how did the topic of pride manage to filter into romanticism as well?
4. In "Ode To A Grecian Urn," John Keats presents beauty as being eternal if it is represented in a form of art. Everything being preserved in the present time, the lovers, and seasons on the urn will last forever. However, consider the fact that in life and history, change is inevitable and eternal beauty is ever-elusive. In the conclusion of the ode, Shelley writes that beauty is truth and truth is beauty; that is all that is ever necessary. Is this accurate? If beauty is all that is ever needed, then why would generations strive for anything else?