

British Literature 3: Final Essay

Throughout British literature, especially in poetry, the theme of the power and the lessons of **time**, of the struggle between **immortality, annihilation and mutability**, is apparent. This theme has special importance in the nineteenth century. In some cases this is an overall philosophical perspective about civilizations (as in Coleridge's Kubla Kahn, Byron's Prometheus and his poet character in Don Juan, Shelley's Ozymandius and Choruses From Hellas and Keats's Ode On A Grecian Urn), and in other works it's a more personal view with general application, as in Mary Shelley's Frankenstein, Coleridge's Rime of the Ancient Mariner, Wordsworth's Tintern Abbey and Ode: Intimations of Immortality, Byron's Stanzas To Music, Percy Shelley's Ode To The West Wind and Keats's La Belle Dame Sans Merci and Ode To A Nightingale and many poems in Blake's Songs of Innocence and Experience. In a four paragraph essay, discuss the passage and effects of time in the works of the nineteenth century authors we have read this trimester. In doing this, consider **immortality, annihilation, and/or mutability** with regard to some of the following issues: **beauty, truth, love, power, nature, art, the works of humans, civilization, the human soul**. **Be sure that you incorporate the views of all six of the main Romantic poets as well as Mary Shelley and Charlotte Bronte into your essay at some point.**

Structure: 1. Begin with an **introductory paragraph** that explains the thesis (main idea) of your essay. Begin this paragraph with a general statement about the time period you are discussing. Assume the reader doesn't know your topic or anything about it. Introduce the authors to the reader. Indicate the themes you will be analyzing in this essay. In your **thesis statement**, state your point about the way in which time and its effects were viewed in the Romantic period.

2. Each of the (**at least 2**) **body paragraphs** should discuss one of the topics listed above **in relation to the overall theme of immortality/mutability/annihilation**. **Within each** of these paragraphs, introduce the topic you are addressing, explain how it is viewed **in at least four of the works (supported by quotes)**, and draw some sort of conclusion about this topic. These should be substantial paragraphs. Be sure that each of the six main Romantic poets and the two novelists are included in at least one of the body paragraphs. **The writers you discuss within a paragraph need not agree!**

3. After providing a minimum of two body paragraphs, close with a **concluding paragraph** that ties together your main ideas. Your summary should connect the main ideas of the body paragraphs to show how they interrelate. You should draw together your conclusions about how the themes you have analyzed shed light what these authors tended to see as immortal, mutable or disappearing without, or with little, trace. **These conclusions should be discussed, not merely mentioned. Indicate what this says about Romantic values.**

Draft Deadline: **Thursday, May 19 by 9 a.m. Proof read to avoid revision!**

This revision and any re-revisions must be in by Thursday, May 26 by 9 a.m. with the marked up draft as you have no essay due that week. If you do it carefully, you're all done with homework. If you don't do it carefully, I will hate you. Forever. And may annihilate you.