

### **Essay: (3-5 full pages, not including the Works Cited page)**

The essay will serve as outside-of-class practice for the kind of argument you'll need to write in-class for the essay question on each exam. Your essay should use evidence (quotes, examples) from at least **four** of the writers (at least two Puritan writers and at least two Enlightenment writers) we have read, in order to prove or disprove the following claim:

Puritan writers consistently emphasized the sovereignty of God over one's station in life, along with resignation to God's will; Enlightenment writers, however, emphasized striving to better one's condition.

Your essay should have a title that hints at your argument and a thesis that makes the argument clear (if your paper is in agreement with the above statement, it can serve as your thesis; if you disagree, revise the statement to more accurately reflect your view).

The essay should follow a clear organization with multiple paragraphs, each paragraph with its own distinct focus. Use transitions not only between paragraphs, but also to show relationships between sentences.

Use relevant quotations from all four writers to prove your point, integrate those quotations smoothly into your sentences, and use quotation marks and MLA parenthetical citation to indicate quoted material and its source. No outside sources are required for this assignment, but you should make good use of relevant quotations from your primary works. If you do use ideas or quotations from any outside sources, these sources **must** be cited; failure to do so is plagiarism.

### **Grading Criteria for the Essay:**

**An F essay** does not meet the minimum requirements for the assignment in at least one area.

**A D essay** meets the minimum requirements for the assignment; however, it has major flaws in one or more of the following areas: demonstrated understanding of Puritanism and the Enlightenment, thesis, support, organization, citation format, or grammar and style.

**A C essay** meets the minimum requirements of the assignment and shows decent competence in its understanding of Puritanism and the Enlightenment. It has an arguable thesis and uses relevant quotations and examples from the primary sources to support the thesis. The paper may have some inconsistencies with the thesis, and/or it may be less than thoroughly convincing in its support. The paper has a recognizable organization, but paragraphs may not be fully and consistently developed, and/or transitions and topic sentences may be lacking. The sources are documented appropriately, though there may be minor errors in format. The writing style is clear, and though there may be grammar issues, they do not distract significantly from the argument.

**A B essay** has some aspects that go beyond decent competence. The discussion of Puritanism and the Enlightenment shows that the writer not only understand the main characteristics of each period but can apply them to analysis of specific literary works. The support for the thesis is not

only thorough but goes beyond the obvious, and it is smoothly integrated into the writer's argument. The organization is consistent, and transitions and topic sentences are present. The writing style is clear and concise, and any grammar or format errors are very minor.

**An A essay** contributes something significant and interesting to the readers' understanding of the literary works in question. The discussion of Puritanism and the Enlightenment shows both a sophisticated understanding of the characteristics of each period and an acknowledgment of individual differences among writers. The argument is clearly stated in the thesis, and the use of support is sophisticated, including the incorporation of counterarguments. The transitions serve as bridges between ideas without calling attention to themselves as transitions. The writing style makes use of varied syntax, interesting word choice, and is engaging and memorable.

## **Puritanism**

“This was near the place of that supposed river they came to seek, unto which they went and found it to open itself into two arms with a high cliff of sand in the entrance but more like to be creeks of salt water than any fresh, for aught they saw; and that there was good harborage for their shallop, leaving it further to be discovered by their shallop, when she was ready. So, their time limited them being expired, they returned to the ship lest they should be in fear of their safety; and took with them part of the corn and buried up the rest. And so, like the men from Eshcol, carried with them of the fruits of the land and showed their brethren; of which, and their return, they were marvelously glad and their hearts encouraged.”—William Bradford (1620)

“God almighty in his most holy and wise providence, hath so disposed of the condition of mankind, as in all times some must be rich, some poor, some high and eminent in power and dignity; others mean and in submission.”—John Winthrop (1630)

“After a short time I changed my condition and was married, and came into this Country, where I found a new world and new manners, at which my heart rose. But after I was convinced it was the way of God, I submitted to it and joined to the church at Boston.”—Anne Bradstreet

“And when I could no longer look,  
I blest His name that gave and took,  
That laid my goods now in the dust.  
Yea, so it was, and so ‘twas just.  
It was his own, it was not mine,  
Far be it that I should repine;  
He might of all justly bereft  
But yet sufficient for us left.”—Anne Bradstreet

## **Enlightenment**

“From the poverty and obscurity in which I was born, and in which I passed my earliest years, I have raised myself to a state of affluence and some of celebrity in the world. As constant good fortune has accompanied me even to an advanced period of life, my posterity will perhaps be desirous of learning the means which I employed, and which, thanks to Providence, so well succeeded with me. They may also deem them fit to be imitated, should any of them find themselves in similar circumstances.” —Benjamin Franklin

“After a foreigner from any part of Europe is arrived, and become a citizen; let him devoutly listen to the voice of our great parent, which says to him, "Welcome to my shores, distressed European; bless the hour in which thou didst see my verdant fields, my fair navigable rivers, and my green mountains!--If thou wilt work, I have bread for thee; if thou wilt be honest, sober, and industrious, I have greater rewards to confer on thee--ease and independence. I will give thee fields to feed and clothe thee; a comfortable fireside to sit by, and tell thy children by what means thou hast prospered; and a decent bed to repose on. I shall endow thee beside with the immunities of a freeman. If thou wilt carefully educate thy children, teach them gratitude to God, and reverence to that government, that philanthropic government, which has collected here so many men and made them happy. I will also provide for thy progeny; and to every good man this ought to be the most holy, the most powerful, the most earnest wish he can possibly form, as well as the most consolatory prospect when he dies. Go thou and work and till; thou shalt prosper, provided thou be just, grateful, and industrious." J. Hector St. John de Crevecoeur

“’Twas not long since I left my native shore  
The land of errors, and Egyptian gloom:  
Father of mercy, ’twas thy gracious hand  
Brought me in safety from those dark abodes.  
Students, to you ’tis giv’n to scan the heights  
Above, to traverse the ethereal space,  
And mark the systems of revolving worlds. . . .  
Improve your privileges while they stay,  
Ye pupils, and each hour redeem, that bears  
Or good or bad report of you to heav’n.”—Phillis Wheatley

“Should you, my lord, while you peruse my song,  
Wonder from whence my love of Freedom sprung,  
Whence flow these wishes for the common good,  
By feeling hearts alone best understood,  
I, young in life, by seeming cruel fate  
Was snatch’d from Afric’s fancy’d happy seat:  
What pangs excruciating must molest,  
What sorrows labour in my parent’s breast?  
Steel’d was that soul and by no misery mov’d  
That from a father seiz’d his babe lov’d:  
Such, such my case. And can I then but pray  
Others may never feel tyrannic sway?”—Phillis Wheatley