

Example Exam

Identifications (10%):

1)
The latest Gospel in this world is, Know thy work and do it. "Know thyself": long enough has the poor "self" of thine tormented thee; thou wilt never get to "know" it, I believe! Think it not thy business, this of knowing thyself; thou art an unknowable individual: know what thou canst work at; and work at it, like a Hercules!

Answer: Thomas Carlyle, *Past and Present*

2)
You should not take a fellow eight years old
And make him swear to never kiss the girls.
I'm my own master, paint now as I please--
Having a friend, you see, in the Corner-house!

Answer: Robert Browning, "Fra Lippo Lippi"

3)
How often has man returned to his home with a mind confused by the many voices, which in the mart, the exchange, or the public assembly, have addressed themselves to his inborn selfishness, or his worldly pride; and while his integrity was shaken, and his resolution gave way beneath the pressure of apparent necessity, or the insidious pretences of expediency, he has stood corrected before the clear eye of woman, as it looked directly to the naked truth, and detected the lurking evil of the specious act he was about to commit.

Answer: *The Women of England*, Sarah Stickney Ellis

4)
"Morning and evening
Maids heard the goblins cry:
"Come buy our orchard fruits,
Come buy, come buy:"

Answer: "Goblin Market" by Christina Rossetti

5)
It is at these times that you realize the blessings of a good thick skirt. Had I paid heed to the advice of many people in England and adopted masculine garments, I should have been spiked to the bone and done for. Whereas, save for a good many bruises, here I was with the fullness of my skirt tucked under me, sitting on nine ebony spikes some twelve inches long, in comparative comfort.

Answer: Mary Kingsley, *Travels in West Africa*

6)
"You are to be in all things regulated and governed," said the gentleman, "by fact. We hope to have, before long, a board of fact, composed of commissioners of fact, who will force the people to be a people of fact, and of nothing but fact. You must discard the word Fancy altogether . . . This is fact. This is taste."

Answer: Charles Dickens, *Hard Times*

7)

Those who find ugly meanings in beautiful things are corrupt without being charming. This is a fault.

Those who find beautiful meanings in beautiful things are the cultivated. For these there is hope.

They are the elect to whom beautiful things mean only beauty.

Answer: Oscar Wilde, Preface to *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

8)

In the first place, the opinion in favour of the present system, which entirely subordinates the weaker sex to the stronger, rests upon theory only; for there never has been trial made of any other: so that experience, in the sense in which it is vulgarly opposed to theory, cannot be pretended to have pronounced any verdict. And in the second place, the adoption of this system of inequality never was the result of deliberation, or forethought, or any social ideas, or any notion whatever of what conduced to the benefit of humanity or the good order of society. It arose simply from the fact that from the very earliest twilight of human society, every woman owing to the value attached to her by men, combined with her inferiority in muscular strength) was found in a state of bondage to some man.

Answer: *The Subjection of Women*, John Stuart Mill

9)

All's yours and you,-
All, coloured with your blood, or otherwise
Just nothing to you. Why, I call you hard
To general suffering. Here's the world half blind
With intellectual light, half brutalised
With civilization, having caught the plague
In silks from Tarsus, shrieking east and west
Along a thousand railroads, mad with pain
And sin too! . . . does one woman of you all,
(You who weep easily) grow pale to see
This tiger shake his cage?-does one of you
Stand still from dancing, stop from stringing pearls
And pine and die, because of the great sum
Of universal anguish?

Answer: Elizabeth Barrett Browning *Aurora Leigh*

10)

The belief in God has often been advanced as not only the greatest, but the most complete of all the distinctions between man and the lower animals. It is however impossible, as we have seen, to maintain that this belief is innate or instinctive in man. On the other hand a belief in all-pervading spiritual agencies seems to be universal; and apparently follows from a considerable advance in man's reason, and from a still greater advance in his faculties of imagination, curiosity and wonder . . . The idea of a universal and beneficent Creator does not seem to arise in the mind of man, until he has been elevated by long-continued culture.

Answer: Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man*

Short Answer (30%): Choose Three (out of five)

3) In Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*, how does he play with the idea of earnestness and how do the ideas communicated in that play relate to Wilde's own constructions of art and, in particular, the Victorian dandy (his living art).

4) Charles Dickens's *Hard Times* is very much concerned with the pros and cons of the Industrial Revolution in England. Choose one character and explain how Dickens uses that particular character to comment on what was currently problematic about industrial practices and theories AND what could be done to begin to solve those problems.

5) In the *League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*, Alan Moore depicts his characters as conforming to certain Victorian types/ identities. Choose one character from the book and highlight the ways in which that character is a particular type of Victorian. Be sure to define the type/ identity you are discussing in the beginning of your answer.

Take-Home Essay Questions (choose 1 out of 6 options)

1) Darwin's *The Descent of Man* was very influential throughout the Victorian period. Choose a work that was published after the publication of Darwin's piece and explore how Darwin's work on evolution as shown in *The Descent of Man* influenced the other work you have chosen.

2) Oscar Wilde's prose and dramatic work had a great deal of influence on how other aesthetics defined art and life. Choose another work from this movement and explore how it interacts with Wilde's ideas as expressed in the Preface to *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and/or *The Importance of Being Earnest*.

3) Although the Fin de Siècle is usually seen as period of great turmoil and change in opposition to the rest of the Victorian period, the 1890s is still very much part of the period. Compare and contrast an earlier Victorian work with one from the Fin de Siècle and be sure to show how they are both alike and different