

Civ Essay Prompt

FORMAT

Time: You will have thirty minutes to address the prompt below in the form of a short essay.

Length: Your paper should be at least 2 pages (depending on the size of your handwriting)

Content: Your essay must contain the following elements: 1) a thesis (underlined in text), 2) an analysis of the elements in the thesis, 3) supporting evidence (examples from course readings), and 4) a connective synthesis of the different elements in your argument. Your essay also must reflect a sense of order and avoid major grammatical errors.

(See attached rubric for details)

PROMPT

The quotations below offer **several interpretations of the role of storytelling in our understanding of history, civilization, and culture.**

- “Very few things happen at the right time, and the rest do not happen at all: the conscientious historian will correct these defects.”- Herodotus
- “Poets and story-tellers are guilty of making the gravest misstatements when they tell us that wicked men are often happy, and the good miserable; and that injustice is profitable when undetected, but that justice is a man’s own loss and another’s gain.” - Plato
- “All great literature is one of two stories; a man goes on a journey or a stranger comes to town.”- Leo Tolstoy
- “Only the story can continue beyond the war and the warrior. It is the story that outlives the sound of war-drums and the exploits of the brave fighters...The story is our escort; without it we are blind... It is the thing that makes us different from cattle.”- Chinua Achebe

This semester you have read a number of different texts. Some were told by bards and poets, others by historians and philosophers. Using one of the quotations above, **develop an argumentative essay on the role of storytelling in our understanding of civilization and/or the human experience.** Build on the ideas from the quotations to construct an argument about the relationship between culture, history, and storytelling. In your essay, **use three examples** from the readings assigned this semester as evidence for your interpretation of this relationship. This evidence can include historical events and primary sources covered in the course.

Be as specific as you can and provide as many details from the course as possible in addressing this prompt.