

PREPARING TO WRITE THE ESSAY

- Which works of literature must I use?
- Pick and choose an appropriate question for the works you know best.
- Respond to the whole question, not just part of it. Expand the question to include all of the aspects being assessed. Try not to rewrite the question by changing terms. Use the language of the question in your response.
- Avoid narration and generalizations. Retell only what is necessary to illuminate your thesis. General statements need to be made relevant by including specific details. Remember analysis rather than summary. Introductions and conclusions should frame your paper. Try for swift incisive entries and thoughtful exits.
- Assess effects of literary features. Be sensitive to the effect created by the author's choice of words. Show how meaning is created. The reader needs to be led to see "the hand of the writer".
- Use language appropriate to the discussion of the genres you are dealing with.
- Adopt a neutral objective voice without losing your own personal flair.
- Use references and integrate them seamlessly. Use specific detailed quotations and examples where possible.
- Edit and revise as much as time allows.