

Question 1:

'In Novel X, fashion is by no means trivial. Rather it is inextricably related to the representation (and the experience) of women in the novel. Discuss.

This is the most straightforward type of question. It contains a proposition, which means that an argument is already implied in the question. Your answer might:

- consider the points 'for' and 'against' the proposition before coming to a conclusion. The conclusion might be 'for' or 'against', a qualified 'for' or 'against' (with some reservations), or it might even suggest that the premises of the proposition are inaccurate and come to another conclusion altogether (still related to the initial proposition).
- argue simply 'for' or 'against'. In this case your argument would need to be split into 3-4 distinct points which build together to form a convincing case. It would be a good idea to acknowledge the possibility of other readings as well, however, perhaps in the introduction.

Question 2:

'Discuss the treatment of power in texts by TWO OR MORE authors.'

This question contains an idea, but no proposition. A reasonable essay might simply identify 3-4 main points concerning the treatment of power and discuss each text comparatively in relation to them. However, a much better essay would create its own proposition and pursue a clear argument. For example, your invented proposition here might be:

- a) in text A, power is more explicitly examined in relation to questions of gender and the domestic sphere than in text B, which is more concerned with aspects of violence and the public sphere; or
- b) power is the overarching concern of both texts, which becomes the common denominator for many of their other themes (gender, race, violence).

Question 3:

'Compare the importance of TWO OR MORE of the following in the poetry of Y:

- (i) ***the soul;***
- (ii) ***art, music, or poetry;***
- (iii) ***appearances or illusions;***
- (iv) ***love;***
- (v) ***dreams.'***

This is perhaps the hardest kind of question to answer, although it might initially seem the simplest. A reasonable essay might simply choose three of these, addressing each one in a separate paragraph. However, a much better essay would examine the relationship between two or more of these themes, and construct a clear argument.

For example: a) in the poetry of Y, relationships of love only succeed in dreams, while in reality they are beset by deception, with no substance beyond appearances;

or b) Y's explorations of the soul and of dreams are always carried out in the context of the reflexive theme of poetry-writing.