

Respond to one of these prompts discussing Jane Eyre. Write 1,500 words minimum, 12-point, double-spaced, MLA appropriate. Include a creative title and edit carefully. Upload to turnitin.com and check to make sure it fully uploads before the due date: Thursday, October 2 by 11:59PM.

1. Discuss the literary movements that affect Jane Eyre: Romanticism, Victorianism, Gothicism, Bildungsroman. How do these literary movements influence Brontë's style and the novel's plot, characters, relationships, social strata and the major conflicts in the text?
2. "I found you full of strange contrasts," says M. Rochester to Jane in Chapter 27. St. John Rivers sees "lines of force" running through Jane. What contrasts and lines of force can we, as readers, see in her? Does Brontë succeed in reconciling those contrasts so that Jane becomes, for the reader, a wholly believable character?
3. Show how Jane Eyre's story is heavily dependent upon the fact that she lives in a restrictive social and economic setting, and consequently has very limited choices. What picture of the English society of the time is painted by the novel? Examine Brontë's critical view of it and how this is revealed in the tone of the novel?
4. In our world of ordinary men and women – living ordinary lives, frittering away their time on petty activities, it raises our spirits to read of individuals of intensity. They awaken our sense of the potential of humans. Discuss this concept in relation to Jane Eyre.
5. Anthony Trollope wrote "It is always dangerous to write from the point of 'I'." What difficulties can arise for both the novelist and the reader when a story is told in the first person. Consider "narrative voice" and explain the decisions taken by Brontë in writing this novel and the effect of those decisions. Consider also the flow of information. Look closely at Jane and her limited understanding of what is happening as you compose your essay.
6. "At every stage in the progress of his tale the novelist must rely on what may be called the 'illuminating incident' to reveal and emphasize the inner meaning of each situation. Illuminating incidents are the magic casements of fiction, its vistas on infinity" (Edith Wharton). Select three 'illuminating incidents' from Jane Eyre and explain how each throw light on both the situation in which they occur and on the meaning of the whole piece of work.
7. "Story involves action. Action towards an end not to be foreseen (by the reader) but also towards an end which, having been reached, must be seen to have been from the start inevitable" (Elizabeth Bowen). Discuss this in relation to Jane Eyre. How do we see invisible threads running through the action of the novel which led directly to the end? How does the author make the end of the novel realistic given the constraints of both the characters and the time period in which the novel takes place?
8. A critic has said that one important measure of a superior work of literature is its ability to produce in the reader a healthy confusion of pleasure and disquietude. Look at Jane Eyre and discuss the sources of pleasure and disquietude experienced by the readers. Consider the three time periods of a novel in composing your answer. Are we modern readers as disquieted as those from Brontë's time would have been?
9. Novels from earlier centuries and novels about distant places take us into worlds different from our own, but if they are to endure, they must have something to say about issue of importance in the world to which we, the readers, will return when we close the novel. Show how issues relevant to today's world are raised in Jane Eyre.
10. Discuss the motifs of imprisonment and freedom in *Jane Eyre*. Your discussion should include both literal and metaphorical instances of imprisonment and freedom in Jane's life and the lives of the supporting characters. What commentary does Brontë make on the human condition with her usage of these motifs?
11. Discuss the intricate nature of religion and spirituality embedded in the plot and characterization of *Jane Eyre*. How do different characters (Helen, St. John, and Brocklehurst, primarily) portray different views of religion? What is Brontë saying about religion through these characters?
12. Brontë's depiction of Jane Eyre the orphaned governess and her alter ego, the madwoman in the attic, has been and continues to be viewed as the prototypical feminist text. Why is *Jane Eyre* such a darling of the feminist community? Is it really a model of feminism? How/To what extent is *Jane Eyre* a feminist novel?
13. Presentiments, dreams, intuition, fortune telling, portentous occurrences in nature (e.g., lightning splitting the oak tree) all are examples of the mystical in *Jane Eyre*. Analyze the use and purpose of mysticism and the supernatural in the novel. Does it emphasize theme? Propel plot? Aid in characterization? Or, is it just part of the gothic and romantic movement?
14. Ethics and morality play a crucial role in the decisions Jane makes. In fact, many times Rochester seeks Jane's advice on theoretical moral dilemmas. Analyze Jane's moral beliefs. From what do they emanate (Religion? Personal experience?)? Are her beliefs the result of youthful idealism? How would you characterize those beliefs? What is more important to Jane, feelings or reason?
15. A Byronic hero can be conceptualized as an extreme variation of the Romantic Hero archetype. Lord Byron wanted to introduce a heroic archetype that would be not only more appealing to readers, but also more psychologically realistic. Both Romantic and Byronic Heroes tend to rebel against conventional modes of behavior and thought and possess personalities which are not traditionally heroic. However, Byronic heroes are marked by a greater degree of psychological and emotional complexity than traditional Romantic Heroes. Byronic Heroes are marked not only by their outright rejection of traditional heroic virtues and values, but also their remarkable intelligence and cunning, strong feelings of affection and hatred, impulsiveness, strong sensual desires, moodiness, cynicism, dark humor and morbid sensibilities. Examine Rochester as a Byronic hero.