

Mr. Francis
American Studies

English Regents Part 4: The Critical Lens

Your Task:

Write a critical essay in which you discuss Mark Twain's Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (1884) and Frederick Douglass's Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass (1845) from the particular perspective of the statement that is provided for you in the **Critical Lens** (choose one). In your essay, provide a valid interpretation of the statement, agree *or* disagree with the statement as you have interpreted it, and support your opinion using specific references to appropriate literary elements from *each* text. You may use scrap paper to plan your response.

Critical Lenses:

1. "Whosoever does wrong, wrongs himself..."
—Marcus Aurelius (The Meditations of the Emperor Marcus Antoninus)
2. "...although the world is full of suffering, it is full also of the overcoming of it."
—Helen Keller (Optimism, 1903)
3. "...we pay a price for everything we get or take in this world..."
— L. M. Montgomery (Anne of Green Gables, 1908)

Guidelines:

Be sure to

- Provide a valid interpretation of the critical lens that clearly establishes the criteria for analysis
- Indicate whether you agree *or* disagree with the statement as you have interpreted it
- Use the criteria suggested by the critical lens to analyze *each* text
- Eschew plot summary. Instead, use specific references to appropriate literary elements (for example: theme, characterization, setting, point of view) to develop your analysis
- Organize your ideas in a unified and coherent manner
- Specify the title and author of the literature
- Follow the conventions of standard written English

Please use standard MLA format. The essay must be double-spaced, with one-inch margins all around. Please use a 12-point, Times New Roman font. All papers must have an appropriate and creative title. Length guideline: 2-3 pages. No coversheets.

You will be expected to submit a one-page proposal. You must complete a full rough draft to be peer edited in class. The proposal and your peer-edited rough draft should be attached with a staple to your final drafts.

Adapted from the New York State English Language Arts Regents Examination.