

VOCABULARY

You will need to select twenty of your student's vocabulary cards for him to define. His definitions should be complete and accurate, though they need not be word-perfect. Check his answers against the cards you used. (We recommend that you give 30 minutes for this section, and that each vocabulary term be worth 1 point.)

NOTE: If your student is not making vocabulary cards this year, we recommend that you divide the extra twenty points between the ten short answer questions (2 extra points per question).

SHORT ANSWER

30 minutes for these questions (3 points each)

- What are the two main differences (one of content and one of form) between prose and poetry? (1.5 points each)
 - Form: Prose and poetry are arranged differently on the page. Whereas prose is displayed in units of sentences which make up paragraphs and fill a page up to the margins, poetry is arranged in units of lines that make up stanzas and usually do not fill a page. These lines may or may not break off in the middle of a sentence.*
 - Content: Though both ways of writing can tell a story, make an argument, or describe a person, place, or thing, their manners of doing it are fundamentally different. Poetry is more condensed—indeed one of the surest marks of poetry is that it uses the fewest possible words to make the greatest possible impact on the reader, usually by employing images or figures of speech or by using words in more than one sense. Prose is more elongated. A prose description will use more words, and usually will use them more simply, than poetry.*
- Describe each of the following literary techniques (1 point each) and explain the differences between them (1 point): symbol and personification.
 - Symbol: A symbol is a detail in a work of literature that has a literal meaning and also stands for something else. Symbolic characters are included, but they are relatively rare in story genres. A symbol adds a secondary meaning to a concrete non-personality (thing, place, etc.). NOTE: Students may also mention that the secondary meanings of symbols tend to have a narrowing effect on characters, reducing them to something more like signposts and less like personalities.*
 - Personification: Personification is a figure of speech in which human attributes are given to something non-human, such as animals, objects, or abstract qualities (Words of Delight 516).*
 - Differences: The act of symbolizing and the act of personifying are each able to transform an object, but in different ways. The act of symbolizing adds a secondary meaning; it makes a concrete detail in a story refer to something beyond itself. The act of personifying adds personality to the detail in the story, but does not necessarily make it refer to something beyond itself.*
- Name the major changes that occurred in the areas of literacy, publishing, and patronage in England between 1603 and 1715 (1 point for each area). What was each like before 1603? How had each changed by 1715? What were some of the causes of these changes?
Students' answers should include the following basic information, but need not be as detailed:
 - Literacy: Before 1603, literacy among all but the elite in England (and most of Europe) was very low, but literacy nearly tripled between 1600 and 1800. Three reasons for these changes were the emphasis on education in the Reformation, the development of new educational methods in the Renaissance, and the spread of the printing press.*
 - Publishing: Although the printing press was first developed before 1603, it was tightly regulated in most European countries, so that only certain, government-approved works could be printed. By 1715, however, there was a growing trend to relax censorship. Some reasons for this were the English Civil War and the ever-increasing pressure on governments to allow people to express their thoughts freely.*
 - Patronage: Before 1603, most artists relied on the patronage of a nobleman, and most authors wrote primarily for the nobility. By 1715, authors were much more likely to publish their own works; patronage had become much less common, and authors wrote for a wider reading public. The growth in literacy among normal people, the printing press, and the decrease in censorship were all causes.*

4. Explain what a “Metaphysical style” and a “Metaphysical poet” are, and name two seventeenth-century authors who could be considered Metaphysical poets.
- *The Metaphysical style is often characterized as one in which unusual comparisons of images and philosophical ideas are referenced or explored.*
 - *The term “Metaphysical poet” is intended to describe a poet whose style is intellectually complex, witty, and difficult, and who includes references to philosophical ideas, or explores philosophical issues in his poetry.*
 - *Any two of the following Metaphysical poets would be correct:*
 - John Donne
 - George Herbert
 - Andrew Marvell
 - Henry Vaughan
 - *The Metaphysical conceit is an extended comparison (metaphor or simile) that may govern part or all of a poem and is more notable for the intellectual ingeniousness or audacity of the connection drawn between two things than for the natural strength of the connection itself.*
5. Explain what a “Cavalier style” and a “Cavalier poet” are, and name two seventeenth-century authors who could be considered Cavalier poets.
- *The Cavalier style is witty and sophisticated. It also tends to imitate the elegant simplicity and clarity of style found in classical works.*
 - *We might define a Cavalier poet as a royalist, usually a courtier, whose poetry reflects the values of the court.*
 - *Any two of the following Cavalier poets would be correct:*
 - Ben Jonson
 - Thomas Carew
 - Robert Herrick
 - Sir John Suckling
 - *The term “metaphysical” refers to the philosophical realm, whereas “Cavalier” is a political word used to distinguish those loyal to King Charles I from the “Roundheads” who supported the Puritan Parliament.*
6. Define the dactylic, spondaic, and iambic foot (half a point each), tell which of them was (or were) most often used in seventeenth-century English poetry (half a point), and explain why this was the case (1 point).
- *A dactylic foot is a metrical foot consisting of one emphasized syllable and two unemphasized syllables, marked as - - -.*
 - *A spondaic foot is a metrical foot consisting of two equally emphasized syllables, marked as - -.*
 - *An iambic foot is a metrical foot consisting of one unemphasized syllable followed by one emphasized syllable, marked as - -.*
 - *The iamb was the most used meter.*
 - *The popularity of the iamb in seventeenth-century English literature was probably a result of two things: first, the rising interest in vernacular languages during the Renaissance, and second, the fact that the iamb fit naturally with the patterns and rhythms of English speech. Though some poets took delight in composing poems in pure Latin (including the dactylic and spondaic feet), most in this era seemed glad to adapt classical forms to their mother tongue (and native metrical patterns).*
7. For each of the three men listed below, provide the dates of his life, at least two facts about his life, and the name and genre of one of his famous works (information about the life dates, life, and famous work is worth 1 point for each author).

NOTE: Any facts and works drawn from the Author Index entry for each of these authors would be suitable as answers. The answers on the following page are our sample answers.

Miguel Cervantes

- **Lifetime:** 1547-1616. *Led the adventurous life of a soldier; captured by pirates; wrote several romance plays, which failed; was 58 when he published the first part of Don Quixote.*
- **Famous Work:** *His most famous work is easily Don Quixote, a realistic romance written in prose.*

John Milton

- **Lifetime:** 1608-1674. *Highly educated, Puritan, thoroughly supported Cromwell’s government; was blind when he finished Paradise Lost*
- **Famous Work:** *Paradise Lost (epic poem) is Milton’s most famous work.*

John Bunyan

- **Lifetime:** 1628-1688. *A Puritan pastor; sent to prison for 12 years due to his religious convictions.*
- **Famous Work:** *Pilgrim’s Progress (allegorical story) is certainly Bunyan’s most famous work.*

8. What are the two essential elements that define the genre of allegory (each worth 1 point), and what is the purpose of allegory (worth 1 point)?
- *Elements: The two essential elements are 1) the concrete story and 2) the abstract or spiritual reality to which it corresponds.*
 - *Purpose: The general purpose of allegory is to make a concrete story that exactly corresponds to a non-concrete reality and explains or clarifies the meaning of that reality.*

9-10. Most writers in the West during the seventeenth century loved classical works and sought to imitate them. Name and describe three genres of poetry in England that were either revived from classical texts during the Age of Reason, or continued in the Age of Reason from the Renaissance or Middle Ages (3 genres, each worth 2 points).

NOTE: Your student need not provide a full genre description for each of these genres. Instead, he should write about one paragraph with information such as the origin of the form, its major characteristic(s), and the eras in which it was popular.

- **Epigram (Revived Classical Genre):** *The epigram was originally a brief and frequently biting or satirical poem, often including a twist at the end. However, it can be used for sincere praise, compliments, or even mourning dead loved ones. Invented by Greeks and used by Romans, some of its early authors were Martial, Lucan, and Catullus. Ben Jonson and John Donne were two seventeenth-century poets who wrote epigrams.*
- **Ode (Revived Classical Genre):** *The ode is an “exalted lyric poem that celebrates a dignified subject in a lofty style” (Ryken, Words of Delight 516). The ode is like a shorter, non-narrative version of an epic poem, in that its tone expresses the same lofty grandeur. In content, odes praise and celebrate themes, people, or occasions of nobility, excellence, and greatness. Ancient masters of the ode included Pindar and Bacchylides (Greeks), and Horace and Catullus (Romans).*
- **Elegy (Revived Classical Genre):** *This is a lyric poem about, often addressed to, and usually exalting a particular person with whom the speaker in the poem shares a close relationship. Elegies can mourn a dead loved one, praise a living beloved, or can even satirize pleading, admonishing, etc.*
- **Emblem Poem (Revived Classical Genre):** *In English, the emblem is a (usually brief) poem in which the arrangement of the lines themselves forms a pictorial image (or “emblem”) of the topic on which it is written. The form seems to be derived from a group of Latin and Greek emblem poems (though in these the picture was set beside the words rather than formed by them).*
- **Sonnet (Continuing Renaissance Genre):** *The sonnet, which had developed in the Renaissance, continued to be a popular form in the early part of the seventeenth century in the hands of poets like Donne and Herbert. In England, the sonnet had two forms. The Italian sonnet was composed of an octave and sestet, the English, of three quatrains and a couplet.*
- **Carpe Diem Poem (Continuing Genre):** *From a Latin phrase meaning “seize the day,” this is a form distinguished by content rather than form in that it emphasizes the shortness of life and the need to seize pleasures while living. The carpe diem poem is hardly a new concept and was not even invented by the Greeks or Romans; in fact, Egyptians were writing verses on this theme before the Romans were a civilization. However, English poets caught the trick of it from poets such as Horace, who used the phrase carpe diem in an ode that expresses the same theme. This sort of poem was first adapted in England during the early English Renaissance (late 1500’s) and continued into the seventeenth century.*
- **Verse Epistle and Verse Satire (Continuing Genre):** *Verse epistles and satires are simply letters and satires written in verse rather than in prose. The ancients again were famous for these, but there had been verse satires (such as Piers Plowman) and verse epistles written in the intervening ages between the Greco-Romans and the seventeenth century, so these forms were not as freshly derived from classical sources.*
- **Song (Continuing Genre):** *A poetic “song” is a brief lyric poem which is (in theory at least) written to be sung. It was popular throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, and its popularity continued in the seventeenth century.*
- **Hymn (Continuing Genre):** *A poetic hymn is a brief lyric poem which is (in theory at least) written to be sung and is religious in content. It was popular throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, and continued its popularity in the 1600’s.*
- **Meditative Religious Lyric (Continuing Genre):** *This sort of lyric is a brief non-narrative poem in a variety of forms, whose chief characteristic is that it presents the speaker’s religious thoughts or feelings and is often addressed to God. Like the song and hymn, the meditative religious lyric had been popular for many centuries. In some ways, however, it seems that the religious fervor of the seventeenth century gave fresh passion to an outpouring of such poems from the pens of authors like Donne, Herbert, Marvell, and Vaughan.*

SHORT ESSAY

20 minutes to answer one of these questions. (15 points)

1. From what you learned in class, show how *Don Quixote* could be described as belonging to the genre of romance, belonging to the realistic mode, and a work that mocks the conventional romances in Cervantes's era (give examples).

Points an Excellent Answer Might Include

- Many suggested genres for *Don Quixote*: novel, romance, satire
- Can argue that *Don Quixote* is a romance in form, since it contains a number of adventurous episodes which, in Quixote's imagination, are knightly, courtly, and magical adventures
- Because it does not include any real knights or real magical or supernatural events and personalities, it might be called realistic in mode.
- Cervantes wrote that he meant to ridicule the conventional romances of his day.
- Many of the episodes are meant to parody and ridicule the implausibility of typical "romantic" elements in stories. Your student should give one or two examples, which may include some of the following:
 - The cliché requirement that every knight must have a lady love
 - The implausible existence of elixirs and ointments that can heal any wound
 - The cliché of enchantments which keep knights from performing deeds
 - The implausible idea that knights stay up all night thinking of their ladies and never seem to need to sleep
 - Don Quixote's joust with the windmills (which he mistakes for giants) exposes the cliché of knights' thirst for glory and battle.

Sample Answer

It can be hard to define Don Quixote. Some call it the first novel, and others see it as a romance or satire. In reality, it is a little bit of all of these. Although Don Quixote belongs to the genre of the romance, its mode is realistic and many details in the story show that through it Cervantes was actually mocking the conventional romances of his era.

Don Quixote belongs in the romance genre. It is like a romance in its form. For instance, it contains a series of adventures, which makes the pattern of its plot much like the medieval romances. Also, it can be claimed that the content of the story is like that of a romance. Don Quixote is filled with brave knights, monsters and giants, and noble ladies, all of which the main character insists are real.

While it fits the form of a romance, however, Don Quixote's mode is realistic. Even though the title character believes in the world of romance, the reader knows that his maiden is not noble, his giants are windmills, his elixirs are not life-giving, his magical enemies are not real, and Don Quixote himself has never been knighted. Nothing actually happens—except in Quixote's brain—that is not part of reality as it ordinarily appears to our earthly senses.

The clash between the story's genre and mode is part of Cervantes' goal for Don Quixote, which is to mock the characteristics of the romances of his time. Such mockery is evident throughout Don Quixote, as for example when the Don explains to a fellow traveler that it is absolutely unheard-of for any knight to be lacking a lady-love. Here Cervantes is poking fun at a convention of romance, which is that every knight has his lady. And this is only one example—Cervantes continually parodies and mocks common elements of chivalric romances such as elixirs that can heal any wound, knights who stay up all night thinking of their ladies yet never seem to need to sleep, etc.

Thus, though in form Don Quixote belongs to the romance genre, the mode of the story is realistic, and though at times Don Quixote arouses a bit of nostalgia for the lost world of romance, Cervantes succeeds brilliantly in his original goal of mocking the genre and its characteristics.

2. Explain the interpretation you learned about the “Fall,” “Justification,” and “Salvation” themes in *Paradise Lost* by telling what each one is and naming episodes in the poem in which Milton builds this theme.

Points an Excellent Answer Might Include

Fall Theme

- This is the theme that those who rebel from the created hierarchy are wrong, have thrown away their happiness, and have ultimately lost Paradise.
- Milton builds this theme in the characters and artistic details of the story by:
 - Demonstrating through Satan, Adam, and Eve’s failed experiments in living (their rebellion, disobedience, pride, and resulting misery) that to occupy one’s rightful place in the created hierarchy, rather than trying to rebel against authority, is really best and happiest.
 - Contrasts these failed experiments with the glad obedience of Abdiel and the Son; showing the blessedness of joyful and humble obedience in fulfilling one’s hierarchical role.

Justification Theme

- This is the theme that God was not wrong to allow the Fall and loss of Paradise, which was part of His sovereign plan. It is Milton’s way of answering the question, “If God knew how to prevent the Fall (omniscience) and could have prevented it (omnipotence), and if He loves us (divine love), then why didn’t He prevent it?”
- Milton builds this theme in the characters and artistic details of the story by:
 - Showing how God made all things (including mankind and Satan) good, but also made them morally free, with the ability to withstand temptation but with the freedom to fall, as we see in His conversations with the Son (for example in Book III). God is therefore not responsible for the fall of His creatures.
 - Including an extrabiblical episode in which God even goes out of His way to warn Adam and Eve against sin, by sending Raphael to them in Book V.

Salvation Theme

- This theme is closely connected to justification theme, and says that God is not only faultless for the Fall, but also supremely merciful in extending grace for salvation to mankind.
- Milton builds this theme in the characters and artistic details of the story by:
 - Showing how even before the fall God and the Son have arranged salvation for mankind (Book III).
 - Including an extrabiblical episode of prophecy in Books XI-XII, in which the angel Michael unfolds God’s plan of salvation to Adam.

Sample Answer

Throughout his great epic, Paradise Lost, Milton weaves themes about the fall, justification, and salvation. When we recognize these themes, we get a better picture of what Paradise Lost is really about.

The theme regarding the Fall grows out of the understanding that those who rebel from the created hierarchy are in the wrong. Milton builds this theme throughout the poem in at least two ways. First, he demonstrates to the reader through Satan, Adam, and Eve’s failed experiments in living (their rebellion, disobedience, pride, and resulting misery) that to obey one’s natural superior is really best and happiest. Second, by contrasting these failed experiments with the glad obedience of Abdiel and especially of the Son, Milton shows the blessedness of joyful and humble obedience in a subordinate role, which Milton emphasizes throughout the poem.

The justification theme explains that God was not wrong in allowing the Fall and subsequent loss of Paradise. Although he allowed Satan and Adam and Eve to defy him, it was all in His sovereign plan. Milton builds this theme by showing in the conversation between God and the Son in Book III that God made all things (including mankind and Satan) good, but He also made them morally free. God is therefore not responsible for their fall, since He gave them both the liberty to choose right and the ability to withstand temptation. Milton uses the conversations between God and the

Son to show man's inexcusable responsibility for his own fall and therefore the blamelessness of God. He even includes extra-biblical warnings from God through Raphael (in Book V) so as to remove all possible blame from God.

The salvation theme is closely connected to the justification theme. It makes it clear that not only was God faultless for the Fall, but He also provided grace in salvation for all mankind. From the very beginning of the poem, Milton builds this theme by repeatedly references God's sovereignty over every thing that exists, as well as His ability and intention to make every evil turn out for good. In Book III the Son volunteers to save mankind, even before the fall has occurred. The sweeping prophecy of salvation in Books XI-XII demonstrates again the theme that God is merciful and will provide salvation for mankind.

Thus, the themes of the fall, justification, and salvation are apparent throughout *Paradise Lost* and are at the very heart of its meaning. When we understand these themes, we see that Milton believes that God is both just and merciful and that man has great hope if he trusts in Him.

LONG ESSAY

40 minutes to answer one of these questions. (35 points)

1. "The content and form of imaginative literature changed a great deal between the beginning of the Middle Ages and the end of the Age of Reason." Write an essay that defends or opposes this statement, considering European authors' portrayal of reality (especially with regard to the supernatural world), their expressed values, and the artistic forms that they used.

Points an Excellent Answer Might Include

Middle Ages

- Reality includes supernatural beings who are at work in the world; everything exists according to a system of created hierarchy, having natural superiors, inferiors, and equals, and all are subject to God.
- Values include humility, obedience, wisdom and justice, care for those beneath you in the natural hierarchy, reverence, devotion to God, platonic love, courage, honor, devotion to one's lord, etc. Values largely drawn from the Bible, classical pagan literature, and barbarian cultures that conquered Rome.
- Forms tended to be precise and intricate. Hierarchy and variety within unity were important, as seen in Dante's *Divine Comedy*. Supernatural characters appear in romances and other forms.
- Summary: Broadly, medieval authors were interested in pattern, especially the patterns of hierarchy and variety in unity. Literature of this era reflects deep belief in supernatural personalities and a created hierarchy. Authors valued thoughts and deeds that were in accordance with their understanding of God-given reason, hierarchy, and virtues found in "barbarian" or classical pagan cultures (such as courage in war, personal honor and glory, and faithfulness to one's feudal lord).

Renaissance

- Reality: No major changes in view of reality until about the time of the Protestant Reformation, which changed people's view of the saints and places like purgatory. The Reformation also disrupted the basic unity of worldview that had existed in Roman Catholic Europe. Changes in way people viewed mankind also began to develop as a result of humanism, but these had more effect on literature in the Age of Reason.
- Values: Continued to value much of the Medieval Model, but also a gradually increasing emphasis on the individual human being and a value for eloquence as a result of humanism.
- Forms: Continued many medieval forms but also revived some classical forms and invented many more (like the sonnet); golden poetry in England; emphasis on eloquence and vernacular languages
- Summary: The Renaissance is characterized by a basic similarity in content to medieval literature, though also by new attitudes towards romantic love and individual human personalities. In terms of form, it was an age that took exuberant delight in eloquence, vernacular languages, and the adaptation of forms to suit them.

Points an Excellent Answer Might Include (cont'd)**Age of Reason**

- Reality: Literature less a means of celebrating a single model as a way to explore ideas, or even as a way of persuading others of the rightness or wrongness of a specific worldview. Content began to show not only the effects of Protestantism but also of scientific discoveries made by Galileo, Newton, and others. Diminishing interest in magical persons and events as belief in governing supernatural personalities was gradually replaced by belief in impersonal natural laws.
- Values: Precise, scientific understanding; following classical models (balance, restraint, wit, eloquence); mixed group of authors, some intensely religious who emphasized humility and adoration of God (Donne, Herbert, Bunyan), others like Cavaliers who valued aristocratic way of life, lavish hospitality, glittering court life, and flirtations; some idealized romantic love.
- Forms: Revived classical forms (ode, elegy, satire, emblem and carpe diem poems), vernacular languages, persuasive eloquence; emphasis on restraint, wit, and elegance in forms; forms developed in order to discuss topics like philosophy, romantic love, public men and events, and society.
- Summary: Authors made a definite break with the Medieval Model and began to discuss different topics. Many classical forms were adapted to convey this new content. Classical standards of grace, precision, and poise were idealized.

Sample Answer

The content and form of imaginative literature changed a great deal between the beginning of the Middle Ages and the end of the Age of Reason. Three of the most important changes were those which occurred in European authors' portrayal of reality (especially with regard to the supernatural world), their expressed values, and the artistic forms that they used.

The most obvious and deep change between medieval and Age of Reason literature was the portrayal of reality. The medieval view of reality emphasized a created hierarchy that included both earthly and supernatural beings, all ordered according to their position in the universe and all subordinate to God. Among these beings were saints, angels, demons, fairies, and figures like Fortune, Nature, and Reason (who may have been personifications of abstract ideas, but may also have been believed in as actual beings), and all of these creatures figured prominently in medieval literature.

As the Middle Ages gave way to the Renaissance, there was through humanism a growing focus on human beings and their affairs, but the basic view of reality remained the same. People still believed in supernatural beings, and literature still reflected this belief. A greater shift began to occur, however, with the Protestant Reformation, which broke the unified, Catholic worldview and opened the door for a multitude of ideas about reality.

By the era of the Age of Reason, the view of reality had been almost completely transformed. No longer focusing on supernatural beings and the great created hierarchy, authors in the Age of Reason were influenced by scientific discoveries by men like Galileo and Newton, which proved that the external universe is not as it had been perceived in the Middle Ages. Age of Reason authors tended to emphasize the natural and human and sought to understand man with the same precision that the scientific method made it possible to understand the natural world.

These changes in the view of reality are also reflected in a shift in what men valued. Medieval men had valued humility and submission to hierarchy, both human (kings) and divine (God). Their values largely grew out of their understanding of the Bible and those classical authors available to them. In the Renaissance, men continued to value much of the Medieval Model, but the growing emphasis on man born from the study of newly-available classical works brought with it a new value for the individual. Many Renaissance works, such as Shakespeare's Henry V, are devoted to the study of remarkable individuals and their accomplishments.

Another Renaissance value was eloquence. Renaissance authors were particularly interested in speaking eloquently in their own, vernacular languages, and they revived many classical principles to guide their writing. This value for eloquence carried over into the Age of Reason and, indeed, characterized that era. As in the Renaissance, Age of Reason authors placed a great value on following classical models. Along with these similarities, Age of Reason authors had their differences. Some of them emphasized religion and faith, like John Donne and George Herbert. Others, such as the Cavaliers prized royalism and the aristocratic lifestyle in their poetry.

Finally, the forms in which authors embodied their views of reality and values in the Age of Reason differed greatly from the forms used in the Middle Ages. Typical medieval forms included the romance and the allegory, both of which lend themselves to the portrayal of supernatural or personified beings and often showed the value of hierarchy. Dante's *Divine Comedy*, for instance, is profoundly hierarchical and displays a beautiful pattern of variety within unity—another principle central to medieval forms. In the Renaissance, this principle was retained but used in new ways. The Renaissance delight in eloquence led to the development of “golden poetry,” which mixed a delight in complex patterns with the sounds and rhythms of a particular language. Also there was a growing emphasis on the adoption and adaption of classical forms. In the Age of Reason, the desire to follow classical forms resulted in a new emphasis on balance, restraint, and wit. Classical forms were revitalized to explore such topics as philosophy, public men and events, and society as a whole.

Taken altogether, it is clear that imaginative literature in the Age of Reason differed greatly from that in the Middle Ages. The changing view of reality, values, and forms led to a new emphasis on the natural and human, though many authors (Donne, Herbert, Milton, Bunyan, etc.) still focused on the relationship between men and God. In the Age of Reason, authors of imaginative literature made a definite break with the Medieval Model and began to discuss decidedly different topics and themes, using classical forms that had been adapted to portray this new content. Though it shows a relationship to what came before, imaginative works in the Age of Reason demonstrates that European literature had undergone profound change since the Middle Ages.

- In the class plans on Milton's *Paradise Lost*, one preeminent value discussed was the hierarchical dance of beings, which is centered on the throne of God. This glad hierarchy is beautifully displayed in all unfallen beings, both created and uncreated (shown most perfectly in the uncreated Son); it is shown to be fragile because of the free choice that God gives His creatures; and in the lives of Satan, Adam, and Eve, Milton shows us that he believes the sin of pride to be its worst enemy. Write an essay that defends or opposes this interpretation of the natural hierarchy.

Points an Excellent Answer Might Include

Hierarchy Defined

- Every being has a different value and some natural superior as well as inferior. “The goodness, happiness, and dignity of every being consists in obeying its natural superior and ruling its natural inferiors” (C.S. Lewis, *A Preface to Paradise Lost* 73). This is the hierarchy of kind, also known as the natural or created hierarchy, since it originates from the ultimate superior and Creator, God.
- The created hierarchy is valued in *Paradise Lost*; the Fall occurs because man rebels against it.

Hierarchy among Unfallen Beings

- Adam and Eve: Adam has the higher role as first created human, king, husband, and leader. The unfallen Eve beautifully fills a subordinate role as second created human, queen, wife, and helper.
- Though He is uncreated, the Son submits to the Father (and the Father gives dominion to the Son).
- Adam bows to Raphael as a superior; Raphael acknowledges Adam's rule over earth and honors both Adam and Eve.
- Hierarchy everywhere presented as good, right, and blessed.

Hierarchy's Fragility

- God gives freedom to the angels and man to choose to obey or to disobey, to maintain or break the hierarchy.
- Because Satan, Adam, and Eve are given the ability to sin as well as the ability to obey, they are responsible for their actions. They are able to resist temptation, but they do not.
- God is still just and good, because it is man's (and Satan's) sin that undermines the hierarchy, and God is able to overcome sin and evil, offer salvation to mankind, and restore the hierarchy.

Points an Excellent Answer Might Include (cont'd)**Hierarchy's Enemy: Pride**

- Satan fell because of pride, believing that he deserved God's place.
- Eve similarly fell because of her pride and through Satan's temptation; she wanted to be like God.
- Pride is necessarily an enemy of the hierarchy, because it asserts that a person deserves more than his God-given role and position.
- Pride is the lie that a person is worth more or deserves more than he actually does; pride seeks to diminish God's worth and merit.
- Pride blinds one to the truth: Satan could no longer see that God is supremely glorious and valuable and thinks that the created hierarchy is unfair and oppressive; Eve believed that she knew better than God and should be above obedience to His commands.
- Pride ends in misery and evil, the opposite of obedience to the hierarchy, which brings happiness and good.

Sample Answer

John Milton's Paradise Lost places great value on the created hierarchy, the idea of an order in creation such that every being is created with a certain worth, and each is blessed, good, and happy when it submits to those that are greater than it and rules those that are beneath it. This glad hierarchy is beautifully displayed in all unfallen beings; it is shown to be fragile because of the free choice that God gives His creatures; and in the lives of Satan, Adam, and Eve, it is shown that the sin of pride is the hierarchy's worst enemy.

Throughout Paradise Lost, every unfallen being, as well as God Himself, participate in the natural hierarchy. Among the angels, there are clear divisions, and the lesser angels submit to the greater. One relationship in the hierarchy that Milton particularly focuses on is that of Adam and Eve. Adam is the first created human, the leader, husband, and king of earth, under God. Eve is the second human being. She is follower, wife, and helper to Adam. Milton portrays these roles as beautiful—Eve is particularly beautiful, both physically and in her submission to her husband. Together, Adam and Eve are able to tend the garden, fulfilling the purpose that God gave them. The other relationship that is of primary importance is that between the Father and Son. Throughout the poem, Milton shows the Son's submission to the Father but also the Son's mighty rule over creation. Though the Son is not created, He, too, bows to the Father, giving the Father glory and also receiving glory for His submission.

In addition to its beauty and goodness, Milton portrays the fragility of the natural hierarchy. Its fragility stems from the fact that God made man (and angels) with the ability to choose to obey or disobey Him. If they choose to disobey, they are rebelling against God's authority and thereby rejecting the natural hierarchy. Because Adam and Eve have this free will, Milton shows that they are responsible for their choices. The destruction of the hierarchy is on their heads, not God's, because He gave them the ability to do good and to resist temptation, if they so choose. Milton emphasizes the fragility of the hierarchy when he has Raphael warn Adam against Satan and his evil intentions. Nevertheless, with one sin, Adam and Eve do break the fragile hierarchy, following Satan in his rebellion against God. Yet, though they may transgress the hierarchy, but they cannot ultimately overthrow God. He has the gift of grace and salvation, and can restore the hierarchy. Ultimately, then, the gift of free choice is for God's glory. God is glorified when His creatures freely desire to obey Him, and He is glorified when, if they disobey, He is still shown to be supreme.

While the hierarchy itself is good and while God is not threatened by the broken hierarchy, there is still a great tragedy in Adam and Eve's decision to rebel against it. This tragedy is rooted in the fact that their rebellion stems from pride. Pride is, in the end, no less than a complete deception about the nature of reality, built on the belief that someone deserves more than what God has given him—ultimately, that someone thinks he really deserves more glory than God Himself. Pride ends in the destruction of the one who wrongly believes that he is better than God.

The horror of pride is most apparent in the character of Satan. Throughout the poem, Milton portrays the self-deception of Satan, who falsely believes that he deserved God's place and that he is fighting for liberty against the tyrant, God. In reality, Satan has fallen from his glorious position as an archangel of God to the pit of Hell, where he is now a horrid toad-like demon, rather than a glorious angel. In his pride, Satan is blinded to the truth about reality. Likewise, Adam

and Eve face destruction and eternal blindness to the glory of God through their pride. But God is merciful. When they humble themselves, God extends to them a vision of the promise of a Savior, and they have hope that one day there will be a complete and perfect restoration.

Paradise Lost is profoundly centered on the natural hierarchy, portraying the blessedness of keeping it, its fragility, and the danger of its worst enemy, pride. Yet although Adam and Eve rebel against the hierarchy and lose the blessedness of obedience, the story of Paradise Lost points us to God's mercy and sovereign ability to save and restore us, and the hierarchy, through His Son, Jesus Christ.