Fitzwilliam College Ancient World and Classics Essay Competition 2021

Fitzwilliam College is pleased to release the questions for the 2021 Ancient World and Classics essay competition. Please clearly indicate on your submission which question you have chosen.

1. “When ancient literature is set in a mythological past, it is always about an historical present.” Discuss with reference to any ancient text or texts of your choice.

2. Are the realities of a) women’s or b) children’s lives visible in the evidence we have from the ancient world?

3. Did racism exist in the ancient world?

4. How useful is the study of Pompeii to our understanding of Roman daily life?

5. "In the ancient world, the sea always linked rather than divided people." Discuss.

6. What is the best argument for the truth of Plato’s Theory of Forms? What is the best argument against it?

The Ancient World is broadly conceived here in terms of both region and date, and can include e.g. the Ancient Near East, Egypt, or the Vikings/Anglo-Saxons where appropriate.

Competition Rules

This essay competition is for Lower Sixth Formers or Year 12 students (or equivalent). International applicants are welcome but the essay must be written in English. Applicants will be required to enter their details online and to upload one PDF copy of their essay electronically or post a hard copy to:

Schools Liaison Officer
Fitzwilliam College
Cambridge
CB3 0DG
by 10am on 30 April 2021. Further submission information is available on the essay competition website: https://www.fitz.cam.ac.uk/admissions/events-prospective-students/essay-competitions.

Your submission must be entirely your own work. When submitting your essay you will need to provide contact information for one of your teachers and if necessary we may contact them to verify that your submission is entirely your own work. Students are only permitted to enter one competition and may only submit one entry to their chosen competition. There is a strict limit of five submissions per school for each essay competition. If more than five students from the same school enter the same competition, a teacher from that school will be contacted and asked to select the five entries; failure to do so will result in all submissions from the school to that competition being disqualified.

Essays should be less than 2500 words long, and contain a list of works consulted and cited at the end. This bibliography is excluded from the word limit, but any footnotes are included. Applicants must ensure that pages are numbered and that their full name is on each page.

Prizes:
The prize fund (per competition) is £300 with a first prize of £200 and highly commended applicants being awarded a £25 book voucher. We are hoping to host a prize giving ceremony in August.

For further information about the competition or the Classics course, please contact:

Dr Sara Owen, Admissions Tutor and Director of Studies in Classics:
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