



A note from the editors...

For another year we have opened our schools' essay competition, and we cannot wait to read your work!

The essays will be assessed by our in-house editorial team, alongside the expertise of esteemed academics from the Modern and Medieval Languages and Linguistics Faculty.

We have two sections, one for arts and culture and another for politics and society. Read on to discover the prompts and the films and books to choose from. Other than that, write as you please!

Submissions should be between 800 and 1,200 words in English and submitted by your teacher to the email address editor@mml.cam.ac.uk.

For winners and runners up, we will publish your article on our website and so when all the essays have been judged we will be back in contact to request permission from your parents - and to share with you the certificates!

Any questions from students or staff please get in contact via email.

Best of luck!

Lucy, Einav and Jude
Editors-in-Chief 2024



Arts and Culture

Below, we have a list of prompts accompanied by a selection of films and texts for both the junior (year 10 and 11) and senior (year 12 and 13) for the arts and culture section of the competition.

We have options for French, Spanish and German. To enter write an essay **in English** of 800 to 1,200 words (as stated above).

Essay prompts for all films and texts

Write a review of your chosen film/text.

Pick a scene you feel is most significant from your chosen text. Discuss why it is significant, and how it contributes to the plot as a whole

Analyse a character from your chosen text What reaction do they provoke from the audience? From other characters?

How much should we consider national context when we analyse foreign works? Discuss with reference to your chosen work.

History is always key to understanding works. Discuss with reference to your chosen work.

How does the soundtrack emphasise the themes of your film?

What theme of your chosen work is most significant and why?

Could this story have taken place in any other country? Why/why not?

Why would you recommend this text to someone who does not speak the language?

JUNIOR CATEGORY

FRENCH

Zazie dans le Metro, Raymond Queneau

Au revoir les Enfants, Louis Malle

Les Conts de Nuit, Michel Ocelot

Les Choristes, Christophe Barratier

Les 400 Coups, François Truffaut

SPANISH

Ocho apellidos vascos, Emilio Martínez-Lázaro

El laberinto del fauno, Guillermo del Toro

También la lluvia, Icíar Bollain

Voces inocentes, Luis Mandoki

Mar adentro, Alejandro Amenabar

GERMAN

Russendisko, Oliver Ziegenbalg

Friendship!, Markus Goller

Sophie Scholl - Die Letzen Tage, Marc Rothemund

Das Vunder von Bern, Sönke Wortmann

Ballon, Michel Herbig

SENIOR CATEGORY

FRENCH

À l'ami qui ne m'a pas sauvé la vie, Hervé Guibert

La Haine, Matthieu Kassowitz

L'Exile et la Royaume, Albert Camus

Portrait de la jeune fille en feu, Céline Sciamma

L'Auberge espagnole, Cédric Kapisch

SPANISH

La casa de los espíritus, Isabel Allende

Crónica de una muerte anunciada, Gabriel García Márquez

La sociedad de la nieve, J A Bayona

Volver, Pedro Almodóvar

Akelarre, Pablo Agüerro

GERMAN

Im Westen nichts Neues, Edward Berger

Goodbye Lenin!, Wolfgang Becker

Lola Rentt, Tom Tykwer

Die verlorene Ehre der Katharina Blum, Heinrich Böll

Fundbüro, Siegfried Lenz



Politics and Society

Below are a list of prompts relating to society and politics. They can be answered with reference to a specific country, or more broadly as a social phenomenon.

For this section you can choose to write in English, Spanish, French or German. Essays should be between 800 and 1,200 words

Essay prompts

Can you be truly fluent in your second language?

Can we live in a world without borders?

What is the significance of minority languages in an increasingly interconnected world?

Is language manipulated in a political sphere? Answer with reference to a specific country

Does globalisation impact cultural development? Answer with reference to a specific country

The existence of one universal language, instead of diverse languages, would improve international relations. Discuss.

Ancient history and mythology can often influence the modern day. Explore the link between the past and present with reference to a specific country

Lost in translation: is meaning doomed to be exclusively found in the native language it belongs to?