

Common Reading Program 2015 Essay Competition Writing Prompts

The Common Reading Program is sponsoring an essay competition in conjunction with the Common Reading book, *Oryx and Crake*, by Margaret Atwood. Four scholarship prizes will be awarded for the Spring semester 2016:

First Prize: \$500 scholarship

Second Prize: \$250 scholarship

Third and Fourth Prizes: \$125 scholarships

Eligibility:

Student must be a first-semester SCSU or SCTCC Connections student this fall, continuing on for their studies at SCSU in Spring 2016, and they must submit an essay to the Common Reading Program Essay Competition according to the guidelines laid out herein.

Students may choose 1 of the prompts below:

- A. Margaret Atwood has been clear about her view that Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) are not good or bad in themselves, but rather it's a matter of the choices we make related to them. "We can tinker and produce great things; we can tinker and produce horrible things," she said in [an interview with the *New York Times*](#). Drawing on your reading of the book and some original research on GMOs, develop an argument about the extent to which GMOs should or shouldn't be regulated by governments and international bodies.
- B. Compare and contrast Jimmy and Glenn's support systems as they transition from high school to college (e.g., family; the physical, social, and emotional college environments; new relationships; values of the educational institution; college support services), focusing primarily on their experiences as first-year college students. If you can, you should ground your discussion in terms of some account of human development (e.g., Behaviorism (Watson) or another theory or something like Maslow's hierarchy of needs) and/or college student development (e.g., Chickering 7 vectors of identity development or Arnett's theory of emerging adulthood, or something else entirely). Which of these young men has better prospects for their future and why?

To be eligible to win, essays must respond to all aspects of the prompt chosen from the above options.

Selected essays will demonstrate the following standards: Essays should be a maximum of 5 pages, double spaced. They must be free of spelling and grammatical errors. They must be well-written and organized. They will demonstrate a clear engagement with the common reading book and display evidence of a thoughtful engagement with themes introduced by the book.

Submission details:

Submissions must adhere to the following:

- **Four copies** of the essay must be submitted for **blind review**. This means that each copy of the essay should have a title, but be free of all identifying information (i.e., name, tech ID number, and so on).
- Your submission **should include a separate cover sheet** which includes your personal information: Name, Tech ID Number, HuskyNet email address, Local phone number, and Essay Title.
- Submissions should be sent via campus mail or hand delivered to the Common Reading Program, Centennial Hall 208.

Submission deadline is: Monday, November 9, at 4 PM in Centennial Hall 208.

Late submissions will not be considered.