

Strategies for Reading French Texts

Summative Assignment 2 Questions

Write an essay of between 1200 and 1500 words on ONE of the questions listed below. Think not only about the text you have chosen, but also about the theoretical ideas we have covered so far as you prepare your answer: authorship and intentionality; history and context; deconstructing texts.

1. 'In *Le Cœur à rire et à pleurer* Condé highlights the benefits and dangers of telling and listening to stories.' How far do you agree?
2. In Conde's *Le Cœur à rire et à pleurer* examine the relationship between personal history and the wider history of the French Caribbean.
3. To what extent and in what ways does Condé use memory in *Le Cœur à rire et à pleurer* to explore issues that are not simply personal, but also cultural, political and social?
4. Abd Al Malik's music has been described as 'un rap conscient et fraternel' (Christine Albanel). To what extent do you agree with this assessment? Answer with reference to AT LEAST THREE songs from the *Gibraltar* album.
5. How far should we take Malik at his word when he asserts that the *Gibraltar* album presents 'moi tout entier dans un disque'? Answer with reference to AT LEAST THREE songs from the *Gibraltar* album.
6. 'Derrière le statut, le vêtement, la couleur de peau, n'est-ce pas qu'on est semblables [...] ?' (Abd Al Malik, 'Saigne', *Gibraltar*, 2006). In what ways does Abd Al Malik seek to raise questions about contemporary French identity in *Gibraltar*? Answer with reference to AT LEAST THREE songs from the album.
7. 'Malik's musical choices on the *Gibraltar* album are as political as his lyrics'. To what extent do you agree? Answer with reference to AT LEAST THREE songs from the *Gibraltar* album.
8. 'The protagonist in each of Renoir's *La Bête humaine*, and Audiard's *Un héros très discret* is deeply flawed, but these flaws are more an indictment of the failings of French society than of the characters themselves.' How far do you agree? Answer with reference to ONE OR MORE of the films studied.
9. Analyse the cinematic techniques employed by film makers in seeking to create sympathetic or interesting characters. Answer with reference to ONE OR MORE of the films studied.
10. Analyse the techniques used by Audiard to show the close and troubling relationship between history and fiction in post-war France in *Un héros très discret*.

11. 'Renoir's adaptation of *La Bête humaine* is a tour de force because it powerfully combines symbolism, metaphor and realism.' How far do you agree? Answer with reference to the film. '

Before you write you should consult:

- The Study Skills Handbook
<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/modernlanguages/applying/undergraduate/frenchmodules/fr118ps/formative-copy/> which contains advice on writing on film and pop music.
- The Study Skills Sessions pages
<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/modernlanguages/undergraduate/skills/> You should pay particular attention to the advice given about referencing.
- The departmental essay-writing conventions page
<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/french/current/ug/assessment/essaywritingconventions>

Presentation

- Your essay should be double spaced and should use a 12 point font size.
- Your essay should include a bibliography of primary and secondary sources, correctly presented in accordance with the conventions outlined in the Study Skills pages above.

Sources

- You should make reference to AT LEAST TWO critical sources in your essay, of which AT LEAST ONE must be taken from the bibliographies given for film and pop music:
 - <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/modernlanguages/applying/undergraduate/frenchmodules/fr118ps/lectureprog/film/>
 - <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/modernlanguages/currentstudents/undergraduate/french/modules/firstyear/strategies/lectureprog/gibraltar>

