AP Persuasive Essay Prompts

The *Heart of Darkness* revealed a theme of the base nature of humanity. However, Conrad wrote this against the backdrop of an imperialistic Britain. In our 21st century world, surely first world countries would never stoop to brutality. In your essay, defend or refute this idea.

A major theme in *Great Expectations* is social class in Victorian England clashing with one’s expectations: an upper class gentleman may be a cold monster while a felon may have a character of value. In our 21st century world, it seems certain that 1st world countries have closed the gap between the wealthy and underprivileged statuses to ensure equal treatment in education, employment, and justice. In your essay, defend or refute this idea.

*A Doll’s House* revealed the idea that a woman may have more than one role to satisfy her in life, and that every woman’s path to success and what “success” means to her may not look the same. However, in the end, whether male or female, we are all humans of value who should have equal advantages. In your essay, defend or refute the idea that we have finally arrived at gender equality.

A recurring theme in *Jane Eyre* is religion, as characterized by 3 major (but also majorly differing) secondary characters: Mr. Brocklehurst, Helen Burns, and St. John Rivers. However, in her trademark autonomy and strong-mindedness, Jane ultimately rejects each standard of religion in lieu of forming her own ideas of faith. In your essay, defend or refute the notion that organized religion is a defunct, outdated philosophy.

*The Importance of Being Earnest* mocks the notion that morality is a set body of rules which should govern society’s conduct (hence, the importance of NOT being earnest). Every character who underscores the importance of honesty (Lane, Jack, Dr. Chasuble, Gwendolyn, and Miss Prism) end up being revealed hypocrites or naïve. In your essay, defend or refute the claim that morality is an old-fashioned concept best left behind in our brave new world.

Your essay must include:

Claim(s)

Reasons

Evidence: Aim for 4

Counterclaims

Response

Consider the types of propaganda and persuasive strategies which would work best to help persuade your audience.