 Sample Thesis Statements and Essay Response

1. **TOPIC:** Compare and contrast the settings of Fitzgerald’s “Babylon Revisited” and Faulkner’s “A Rose for Miss Emily.”
   **THESIS:** Fitzgerald’s “Babylon Revisited” is set in Paris during the Great Depression, while Faulkner’s “A Rose for Miss Emily” takes place in the South during the 1920’s. However, both stories weave back and forward in time through retrospection and flashback.

2. **TOPIC:** Explain Thorstein Veblen’s theory of conspicuous consumption.
   **THESIS:** The theory of conspicuous consumption postulates that the upper classes flaunt their status by displaying luxury commodities and engaging in leisure activities.

3. **TOPIC:** Define and illustrate the term “freedom of the press.”
   **THESIS:** The term “freedom of the press” refers to the constitutional guarantee of the press’s right to publish opinions without being answerable to government interference or public pressure.

4. **TOPIC:** Explain how tides are produced in the earth’s oceans Account for Seasonal variation.
   **THESIS:** The earth’s gravitational forces are responsible for producing Tides in the earth’s oceans.

ESSAY EXAM RESPONSE (from McWhorter, Successful College Writing)

**ESSAY EXAM QUESTION:** Distinguish between fads and fashions, explaining the characteristics of each type of group behavior and describing the phases each usually goes through.

Fashions and fads, types of collective group behavior, are distinct from one another in terms of their duration, their predictability, and the number of people involved. Each type follows a five-stage process of development.

A fashion is a temporary trend in behavior or appearance that is followed by a relatively large number of people. Although the word fashion often refers to a style of dress, there are fashions in music, art, and literature as well. Trends in clothing fashions are often engineered by clothing designers, advertisers, and the media to create a particular “look.” The hip-hop look is an example of a heavily promoted fashion. Fashions are more universally subscribed to than fads. Wearing athletic shoes as casual attire is a good example of a universal fashion.
A fad is a more temporary adoption of a particular behavior or look. Fads are in-group behavior.