



MIST 2016 PREPARED ESSAY/ORIGINAL ORATORY PROMPTS

Use the following prompts to help compose an insightful and compelling prepared essay or oratory on the topic of this year's theme. You may base your work on original thoughts regarding any of the below topics, feeling free to agree or disagree with the material presented, or choose your own topic related to this year's theme. In either case, be sure to define your topic clearly within your work. Your submission may take the form of a personal narrative, academic dissertation, or persuasive argument. Please note that fictional narratives are appropriate for the Short Fiction competition.

"Every soul will taste death. And We test you with evil and with good as a trial; and to Us you will be returned." Quran 21:35

"The fear of death follows from the fear of life. A man who lives fully is prepared to die at any time." - Mark Twain

"Life asked Death, 'Why do people love me, but hate you?' Death responded, 'Because you are a beautiful lie, and I am a painful truth.'" -Neil Gaiman, *The Sandman*, Vol. 1: Preludes and Nocturnes

It was narrated that Ibn 'Umar said, "O Messenger of God, which of the believers is best?" Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, said, "He who has the best manners among them." He said: "Which of them is wisest?" He said, "The one who remembers death the most and is best in preparing for it. Those are the wisest." (Source: Ibn Majah)

Reflect on the struggles of those who contemplate suicide, as demonstrated in the famous passage from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*: "To be, or not to be, that is the question..."

"With every difficulty comes ease" (94:5-6). "We do not burden any soul with more than it can bear..." (23:62).

"O you who have believed, respond to God and to the Messenger when he calls you to that which gives you life. And know that God intervenes between a man and his heart and that to Him you will be gathered." -Quran 8:24

"Do Not Stand at My Grave and Weep" by Mary Elizabeth Frye

"Ozymandias" by Percy Bysshe Shelley

With tears falling from his eyes at the death of his infant son, Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, said, "The eye weeps and the heart grieves, but we say only what pleases our Lord, and we are grieved for you, Ibrahim." (Source: Abu Dawood)

What quotes from outside the Islamic faith ring true to you regarding life, death, and mortality? Why? How do they compare or contrast to the concepts within Islam?