

## EN2D0 and EN3D0: Essay 2 questions, 2022-23

Essays of 3,000 words (Level 5) or 4,000 words (Level 6) are due on **Tuesday, 2nd May 2023** (Week 2 of Term 3). As before, the following topics are intended to offer only suggested directions for your thinking and research; feel free to develop your own topic in consultation with me beforehand, and note that the first set of essay questions continues to be available for this essay.

1. Review the critical response to Naomi Klein's *This Changes Everything* and develop a thesis concerning the 'environment' emerging around its reception. (Note that in the course of this review you may engage with any aspect of the work itself.)
2. Is Amitav Ghosh right to argue that world literature has failed to meet the challenge of the Anthropocene? Discuss, with examples.
3. Fast disasters vs. slow violence: choose a particular environmental crisis and examine the literary, cultural and journalistic responses to it. What are the implications of immediate (event-based) vs. gradualist (cumulative) understandings of ecological damage in current environmental discourse?
4. Caribbean ecopoetics: write a comparative essay on the connections between language (including language politics) and ecology in any two texts by Caribbean writers.
5. The weather of world-ecology: analyse literary evocations of 'the weather' – including particular meteorological phenomena such as rain, drought, fog, storms, etc. – from the standpoint of political and/or historical ecology.
6. Radical walking: discuss the poetics and politics of modern walking as a form of eco-praxis. Examples might include: André Breton and the surrealists, Guy Debord and the situationists, the Ramblers Association, the Suffragettes, the Jarrow marchers, Michel de Certeau, W. G. Sebald, Richard Long, Iain Sinclair, Rebecca Solnit.
7. Interdisciplinary ecocriticism: write a comparative ecocritical study of two works in different media and/or genres, e.g. literature and film, poetry and visual art, fiction and music.
8. Petrocultures: write a comparative analysis of the material and symbolic presence of oil or coal in any two works of world literature.
9. Slum ecologies: analyse the dynamics of representing 'city nature' within the context of what urban theorist Mike Davis calls a 'planet of slums.'
10. Discuss the ways sexuality is configured within discourses of what is 'natural,' as reflected in any literary or cultural artifact of your choosing.
11. Write an essay on the role of social media in the production of the (worldwide) web of life. How might we read online platforms such as Twitter and Facebook as world-ecological?

12. Discuss the rhetoric and philosophy underpinning contemporary environmental movements. Groups to consider might include Greenpeace, Ende Gelände, 350.org, Via Campesina, Earth Liberation Front, Dark Mountain, Youth Strike for Climate, Extinction Rebellion and Just Stop Oil. In what ways do these groups attempt to link theory (or mission) and practice (or tactics/strategies)?
13. Future natures: write an essay on dystopian (or utopian) projections of the world-ecology after the age of the four 'cheaps' (Moore): resources, energy, food and labour.
14. Clifi and beyond: analyse writing (in any genre) that seeks to encompass the large-scale processes of global climate change.
15. Global South and Global North: compare two works, from low- and high-income regions respectively, addressing ecological crisis. How do they differ, and what do these differences imply concerning the relations of culture, political economy and environmental justice?
16. Foodways: write an essay on the literary-cultural registration of food as an index to questions raised by the production of nature.
17. Comparative superstorms: using the optic of boundary-disrespecting storms such as Hurricanes Katrina and Sandy, explore the implications of tracking their representation in different literary-cultural works.
18. Analyse the use of concepts such as 'adaptation,' 'resilience' and/or 'sustainability' in contemporary ecological discourse. Are these concepts adequate for meeting the challenges raised by the Anthropocene/Capitalocene?
19. Write an essay on the ecological history and/or ecological footprint of the University of Warwick.
20. Using Anna Tsing's focus on 'the possibility of life in post-capitalist ruins,' write an essay drawing on notions of salvage, recuperation, 'entanglement' and precarity as tools for imagining a future beyond the horizon of the neoliberal present.