



Love in the Time of Cholera Essay Prompts

Select one of the following essay prompts, and answer it in a well-developed, grammatically flawless essay:

1. Love in the Time of Cholera opens with a suicide. Jeremiah de St. Amour kills himself in order to escape the humiliations of aging. As he explains to his lover, “he had made the irrevocable decision to take his own life when he was sixty years old.” Most of the characters fear aging. Age seems to threaten both the dignity and memories of the characters. How does the novel both counter and exacerbate such fears?
2. Garcia-Marquez prefers to describe himself as a realist writer. Yet, he novel is clearly not realism in the sense that Tolstoy’s work was. As Gene H. Bell-Villada explains, “‘reality’ for GGM consists not only of everyday events and economic hardships, but also of such things as popular myths, beliefs, and home remedies—not just the facts, but what ordinary people say or think about the facts.” What do you make of the more hyperbolic moments in Love in the Time of Cholera, such as the number of Florentino’s affairs and his visit to Olimpia Zuleta’s grave?
3. Early in the novel, a woman who cleans rooms at a brothel describes the remnants of love in vivid detail. In many respects, much of the novel seems to link love to loss. How are the sacrifices that are made by men different from those made by women? Are the losses suffered by men more sentimental? Explore how GGM differentiates the loss associated with love.
4. Select another passage or series of passages and analyze GGM’s tone, and the impact of that tone on the meaning of the work as a whole. Do not use the same passage as the last essay!
5. **[CREATIVE OPTION! GASP!]** Find a 1-2 page section of Love in the Time of Cholera and re-write it in the narrative voice used by Leo Tolstoy in Resurrection or find a 1-2 page section of Resurrection and re-write it in the narrative voice used by GGM in Love in the Time of Cholera.