

British Literature and Composition

Unit 2

Battle: Physical and Psychological Struggle

Part I:

How does conflict shape and define the individual? Discuss how a significant conflict, emotional struggle, or opposing force has influenced your identity or that of another person (one you know personally or one about whom you have learned).

Part II:

Choose to respond in a detailed paragraph to one quotation below that defines battle. Discuss what the quotation means to you, supporting your ideas with evidence from current events, history, literature, or personal experience.

Cowards do not count in battle; they are there, but not in it.

—Euripides (485-406 B.C.E.), *Meleager*

As for life, it is a battle and a sojourning in a strange land; but the fame that comes after is oblivion.

—Marcus Aurelius (121-180), *Meditations*

The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong.

—Ecclesiastes 9.11

Nothing except a battle lost can be half so melancholy as a battle won.

—Duke of Wellington, *Despatch* (1815)

But whether on the scaffold high
Or in the battle's van,
The fittest place where man can die
Is where he dies for man!

—Michael Barry, *The Dublin Nation* (1844)

Life is a battle between faith and reason in which each feeds upon the other, drawing sustenance from it and destroying it.

—Reinhold Niebuhr, *Leaves from the Notebook of a Tamed Cynic* (1930)

The mother's battle for her child—with sickness, with poverty, with war, with all the forces of exploitation and callousness that cheapen human life—needs to become a common human battle, waged in love and in the passion for survival.

—Adrienne Rich, *Of Women Born* (1976)