

# Humanism and the role of the spirit argumentative essays examples

[Art & Culture](#), [Renaissance](#)



The world is a very different place than it was when people first came out of medieval times. If a person from that period were to step into today's world, they would surely die from fright. Many people do not go to church and democracy has long since replaced the monarchies of that time. However, if they were to read popular literature and watch popular television shows and films, that individual would find themselves right at home. Conversely, a person who time travelled from the edge of reason might find this world to be a cultivation of their ideals. People are all educated and free to live life based on their own choosing. However, storytelling is opposite to their preferences, focusing on the heart rather than the head. Much like during the Renaissance, the world is bound for some form of revolution of the spirit. Many people in this world are downtrodden and taken advantage of, so stories of heroes make sense because they inspire hope in the hearts of those exposed to them. The differences between these two literary styles and their tie to today's preferences is best demonstrated by looking at King Lear, Utopia, Gulliver's Travels, and Fantomina.

In Shakespeare's King Lear, the title character loses his mind as he tries to pass his kingdom on fairly to his daughters. The work is a tragedy because Lear is so good and the outcome is such a disappointment. The author was, in some way, commenting on the evils in the world. This is a work that many understand today. Doing the right thing is not always easy because of greed and envy. It is illegal in many places to feed people who are homeless. It is enough to drive someone mad, as happened to Lear.

Thomas Moore's Utopia is similarly accessible today. In the story, Moore depicts society as he wants it to function. He is driven by his current world's

tendency toward corruption and warfare. Again, this is a trend prevalent in today's society. Wars are fought, essentially, over oil or ownership of small strips of land that could easily be shared. These wars are not fought based on the opinion of the common person, but based on the decisions of the people "in charge." In some ways, people seemed powerless to Moore and seem to be in a similar predicament today, hence the need to visualize a brighter future.

The Age of Reason was marked by the rise of democracy and power in the hands of the people. *Gulliver's Travels* and *Fantomina* are a reflection of this. Gulliver ends up in an unfamiliar place and is surrounded by a strange group of people. He approaches the situation scientifically. He is empowered.

*Fantomina* is the same. Rather than portraying the typical damsel in distress found in love stories, the protagonist takes matters into her own hands, pursues and wins the man she loves. She is empowered. There is no need to make these characters larger than life because their life is enough. If people today were treated fairly—earning living wages, for example—stories today may reflect a similar level of personal empowerment.

Literature, as any art, is a reflection of the society from which it springs.

Today's world is flawed and in need of change, much like the writing of the Renaissance, which inspired a major movement of personal empowerment.

First, though, the evils of the existing world had to crumble, as shown by

*King Lear* and *Utopia*. If the change happens and is successful, stories of personal empowerment like *Gulliver's Travels* and *Fantomina* may come

back into the zeitgeist. There would have been no Age of Reason without the

Renaissance. Just as the latter paved the way for the former, literature of today is paving away for whatever is coming next.