

For Students entering Primer – Year 2:

Write an essay in which you describe an experience of beauty you have had in your education. You can write about reading a great book, looking at a lovely picture, studying the wonders of the natural world, or another similar encounter with beauty.

You should answer questions like these: What made your experience beautiful? How did you respond in the moment? How did your experience of beauty help change you as a student? How did your experience of beauty help change you as a person?

Guidelines:

- Your essay should respond directly to the prompt.
- Your essay should be 200-300 words. Include an appropriate title.
- Your essay should be neatly written by hand. Submit a clean final draft without eraser or other marks.
- Your essay should follow the basic rules for punctuation and capitalization. Words should be spelled correctly.
- While you may ask parents or other humans for help, your essay should be your own work. The use of AI writing tools is not allowed.
- Essays will be evaluated for their attention to the prompt and these guidelines, depth of thought, and quality of expression.
- Submit your essay to Headmistress before March 30, 2026 .

Alecia Rolling, Headmistress
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For Students entering Year 3 – Year 5:

Read the following excerpt from Book X of St. Augustine’s *Confessions*:

Too late loved I Thee, O Thou Beauty of ancient days, yet ever new! too late I loved Thee! And behold, Thou wert within, and I abroad, and there I searched for Thee; deformed I, plunging amid those fair forms which Thou hadst made. Thou wert with me, but I was not with Thee. Things held me far from Thee, which, unless they were in Thee, were not at all. Thou calledst, and shoutedst, and burstest my deafness. Thou flashedst, shonest, and scatteredst my blindness. Thou breathedst odours, and I drew in breath and panted for Thee. I tasted, and hunger and thirst. Thou touchedst me, and I burned for Thy peace.¹

Drawing on both this excerpt and your wider knowledge and experiences, write an essay on the relationship between God, education, and beauty.

You should answer questions like these: How can the courses offered by Oxrose in various disciplines help us know, love, and serve God? What can hinder these courses from doing so? How do we avoid these dangers? What role should beauty have in education? How can experiences of beauty contribute to knowledge, love, and service of God? How have you encountered beauty in your education, and what effect has this beauty had on you as a student and person?

Guidelines:

- Your essay should respond directly to the prompt.
- Your essay should be 400-600 words. Include an appropriate title.
- Your essay should be neatly written by hand OR typed in double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font. Submit a clean final draft without eraser or other marks.
- Your essay should follow the basic rules for punctuation and capitalization. Words should be spelled correctly.
- While you may ask parents or other humans for help, your essay should be your own work. The use of AI writing tools is not allowed.
- Essays will be evaluated for their attention to the prompt and these guidelines, depth of thought, and quality of expression.
- Submit your essay to Headmistress before March 30, 2026 .

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¹ *Confessions*, Book X, Chapter 27. Translated by E.B. Pusey. The text is in the public domain and available via Project Gutenberg.