

New York City College of Technology
English Department
ENG 1101 Final Examination
Part 2 – Form B

Choose A or B and write a well-developed, clearly organized essay of about five paragraphs.

- A. In the article “Social Networking in the 1600s,” Tom Standage compares coffee houses from 400 years ago to modern day social networking sites and points out their common bond: “the mixing of people and ideas.” Write an essay in which you discuss Standage’s observation about people in coffeehouses being free to intermingle without regard to social or economic status—and how this was essential to the birth of new ideas. Explain how this “mixing of people and ideas” also exists in today’s social media world. Use examples from Standage’s article, along with outside evidence (news events, something you’ve read about or viewed, and/or your personal experience) to argue that social media sites of today (like coffee houses from the 1600s) give us a neutral space where we can exchange thoughts and ideas. In the course of writing your essay, refer to Standage’s essay and clearly state the argument he is making.
- B. In his article “Social Networking in the 1600s,” Tom Standage compares coffee houses from 400 years ago to modern day social networking sites. There is, however, a significant difference between coffee houses (of any era) and social media sites: that distinction is actual human interaction. Think of your experiences with virtual “face-time” (participation on social media sites, enrollment in on-line classes, blogs etc.) as compared to actual face time (social gatherings, actual classrooms, community events). What does face-to-face connectivity accomplish that virtual reality simply cannot? Write an essay where you argue that actual human interaction (in a physical space) is essential to the “mixing of both people and ideas.” In the course of writing your essay, you may refer to your own experiences, and/or something you’ve read about or viewed to support your ideas. In addition, clearly state Standage’s argument and why you disagree with it.