

Core D | Research Essay Proverbs

** Students may choose an ancient proverb not on this list, but it must be preapproved by tutor.
Biblical proverbs may be used for counter argument but not for main argument.**

Sumerian

- To destroy something is in the power of God. There is no escape.
- If bread is left over, the mongoose eats it. If I have bread left over, a stranger consumes it.
- You don't speak of that which you have found. You speak of that which you have lost.
- Wealth is far away, poverty is near.
- He who possesses many things is constantly on guard.
- Wealth like migratory birds never finds a place to settle.
- There is no baked cake in the middle of the dough.
- To accept a verdict is possible. To accept a curse is impossible.
- What has been spoken in secret will be revealed in the women's quarters.
- If the oars of a boat slip into the water, one must handle it like a raft.
- He who eats too much cannot sleep.
- A heart never created hatred, speech created hatred.
- In marrying a thriftless wife, in begetting a thriftless son, an unhappy heart was assigned to me.
- A thriftless wife living in a house is worse than all diseases.
- Marrying is human. Getting children is divine.

Chinese

- A sharp tongue or pen can kill without a knife.
- Everything has beauty, but not everyone sees it.
- They must often change who would be constant in happiness or wisdom.
- What the superior man seeks is in himself; what the small man seeks is in others.
- Three things cannot be long hidden: the sun, the moon, and the truth.
- Do not dwell in the past, do not dream of the future, concentrate the mind on the present moment.
- You, yourself, as much as anybody in the entire universe, deserve your love and affection.
- Before you embark on a journey of revenge, dig two graves.
- If you know both yourself and your enemy, you can win a hundred battles without jeopardy.
- To know that you do not know is the best. To pretend to know when you do not know is the disease.
- Mastering others is strength. Mastering yourself is true power.
- When I let go of what I am, I become what I might be.
- The swiftest horse cannot overtake a word once spoken.
- A bad word whispered echoes a hundred miles.
- If the first words fail, ten thousand will then not avail.
- To know the road ahead, ask those returning.
- If you hurry through long days, you will hurry through short years.
- Without sorrows no one becomes a saint.
- With virtue you cannot be completely poor; without it you cannot be truly rich.

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Grecian

- It is difficult to argue with the belly, as it has no ears.
- Milk the cow that is nearby, why chase the one that runs away?
- Grey hairs are proof of age, but not of wisdom.
- Win by persuasion, not by force.
- It will not always be summer: gather the harvest while you can.
- The crowd is the most unreliable and witless thing in the world.
- Old things become new with the passage of time.
- War is sweet to those who never tried it.
- Time is a doctor who heals all griefs.
- Better to do a little than a great deal badly.
- The prosperity of a fool is a heavy burden to put up with.
- Misfortunes are less sharp when shared with others.
- Better learn late, than not at all.
- We know nothing for sure: truth is hidden at the bottom of a well.
- In an honorable enterprise, there must be no delay.

Egyptian

- Beautiful discourse is rarer than emerald, yet it can be found among the servant girls at the grindstones.
- Know those who are faithful to you when you are in low estate.
- The wise man is great through his own merits.
- When you speak, know that which can be brought against you.
- All conduct should be so straight that you can measure it with a plumb-line.
- Follow your heart all your life, do not commit excess with respect to what has been ordained.
- If he who listens, listens fully, then he who listens becomes he who understands.
- For every joy there is a price to be paid.
- Man, know yourself... and you shalt know the gods.
- True teaching is not an accumulation of knowledge; it is an awaking of consciousness which goes through successive stages.
- People bring about their own undoing through their tongues.
- If one tries to navigate unknown waters one runs the risk of shipwreck.
- Every man is rich in excuses to safeguard his prejudices, his instincts, and his opinions.
- In every vital activity it is the path that matters.
- Each truth you learn will be, for you, as new as if it had never been written.
- The only active force that arises out of possession is fear of losing the object of possession.
- If you defy an enemy by doubting his courage you double it.
- Peace is the fruit of activity, not of sleep.

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Roman

- If you have overcome your inclination and not been overcome by it, you have reason to rejoice.
- If you have a garden and a library, you have everything you need.
- It is easier to find men who will volunteer to die, than to find those who are willing to endure pain with patience.
- An angry man is again angry with himself when he returns to reason.
- Fear is proof of a degenerate mind.
- Every new beginning comes from some other beginning's end.
- There is no such thing as pure pleasure; some anxiety always goes with it.
- Say not always what you know, but always know what you say.
- The beginnings of all things are small.
- Money is the soul (or sinew) of war.
- We can't all of us do everything.
- The cause of fear is ignorance.
- Let us live, since we must die.
- A great fortune is a great slavery.
- The first and greatest punishment of the sinner is the conscience of sin.

Anglo-Saxon

- A friend is useful, far or near; the nearer the better.
- It does no good to tell all truths or blame all wrongs.
- A coward can only do one thing: what he fears.
- One should not be too soon fearful nor too soon joyful.
- Man acts as he is when he may do as he will.
- He hopes for nothing, who does not think about home.
- He never knows the pleasure of sweetness, who never tastes bitterness.
- Patience is half of happiness.
- He is blind in both eyes who does not look with the heart.
- The more generous the household, the more noble the guests.
- The whole army is brave when the general is brave.
- The fuller the cup, the more carefully it must be carried.

Norse

- About his intelligence no man should be boastful, rather cautious of mind
- The cowardly man thinks he'll live forever if he keeps away from fighting; but old age won't grant him a truce even if spears spare him.
- The unwise man is awake all night, and ponders everything over; when morning comes he is weary in mind, and all is a burden as ever.
- Never reproach another for his love.
- Affection is mutual when men can open *all* their heart to each other.
- If aware that another is wicked, say so: *make no truce or treaty with foes.*
- No more dependable friend can a man ever get than a store of common sense.
- A bad rower blames the oar.
- Where you recognize evil, speak out against it, and give no truces to your enemies
- Cattle die, kinsmen die; the self must also die. I know one thing which never dies: the reputation of each dead man

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African (non-Egyptian)

- He that beats the drum for the mad man to dance is no better than the mad man himself.
- The death of an old man is like a burning library.
- He who runs after good fortune runs away from peace.
- If you pick up one end of the stick you also pick up the other.
- You have little power over what's not yours.
- An intelligent enemy is better than a stupid friend.
- Even the best cooking pot will not produce food.
- When the roots of a tree begin to decay, it spreads death to the branches.
- Be a mountain or lean on one.
- A flea can trouble a lion more than a lion can trouble a flea.

Pre-Columbian (Central & South America)

- Not here is our house, not here do we live, you also will have to go away.
- The earth is slippery, slick.
- Drunkenness, rage, and madness are similar, but the first two are voluntary and transformable, the third permanent.
- He who envies the good draws evil from them for himself, just as the spider draws poison from flowers.
- The noble and courageous man is known by his patience in adversity.
- One who cannot govern his house and family will be much less competent to govern a state, and should not be given power over others.
- He who seeks to count the stars before knowing how to count the sums and knots of the ledgers deserves derision.
- Envy is a worm that gnaws and consumes the entrails of the envious.
- It is not good to look at the clouds or your work will not progress.

Native American

- They are not dead who live in the hearts they leave behind.
- Day and night cannot dwell together.
- It is better to have less thunder in the mouth and more lightning in the hand.
- Don't be afraid to cry. It will free your mind of sorrowful thoughts.
- When we show our respect for other living things, they respond with respect for us.
- If we wonder often, the gift of knowledge will come.
- Those that lie down with dogs, get up with fleas.
- When you were born, you cried and the world rejoiced. Live your life so that when you die, the world cries and you rejoice.
- A good soldier is a poor scout.
- We will be known forever by the tracks we leave.
- There is nothing as eloquent as a rattlesnakes tail.
- Remember that your children are not your own, but are lent to you by the Creator
- It is less of a problem to be poor than to be dishonest.
- Walk lightly in the spring; Mother Earth is pregnant.
- A brave man dies but once, a coward many times.