

**Identifying Information**

- 1) Student name
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- 3) Course
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**Header: Name and page number**  
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Johnson 1

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Professor McFarlane  
English 1000  
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**Essay Title**

*"And Jack Bush Breathes and Belongs"*

The Function of Eighteenth-Century Fiction

The works of fiction, with which the present generation seems more particularly delighted, are such as submit less in its true state, diversified only by accidents that daily happen in the world, and influenced by passions and qualities which are really to be found in conversing with mankind.

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This kind of writing may be termed not improperly the comedy of manners, and is to be conducted nearly by the rules of comic poetry; the province is to bring about natural events by easy means, and to keep up variety without the help of wonder: it is therefore precluded from the machines and expedients of the heroic romance, and the reader enjoys pleasure to watch every scene from the natural view, not brought to being too soon from mystery: it may neither bewilder the government in domestic, nor lodge them in imaginary countries.

I remember a remark made by Voltaire upon Fontenelle, that all his writings are filled with the same images, and that if you take from him his lilies and his roses, his garrets and his dryades, he will have nothing left that can be called poetry. In like manner almost all the fictions of the last age will remain,

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