

**ECON 231 Sample Midterm Questions
Fall Term 2011**

"The first time that falling food prices were associated with rising population levels was during the British industrial revolution." Write a short essay in which you explain why you agree or disagree with this statement.

"Rapid population growth may be advantageous to manufacturing industries because it increases the demand for manufactured products, while simultaneously keeping wages low." Write a short essay in which you explain why you agree or disagree with this statement.

Write a short essay in which you explain why the British government's 18th century social security scheme that paid benefits to those who experienced periods of very low income, may have had an impact on the incidence of marriage and the timing of the British fertility transition.

According to the Becker model, parents have children until the expected present value of the marginal benefits from having children equal the expected present value of marginal costs. Write a short essay in which you explain why these marginal benefits fell and the marginal costs rose during the British industrial revolution.

Write a short essay outlining the predictions of the Malthusian model of pre-modern economic growth, and comparing these predictions to the overall pattern of British population levels and wages over the period 1250 to 1700.

Write a short essay in which you describe the open field system and discuss the various aspects that may have led to inefficiencies. Be sure to review McCloskey's argument for the persistence of the open field system, notably the scattering of plots, and illustrate why improvements in credit markets may have contributed to the replacement of the open fields with enclosed fields.

Provide a critical review of the evidence and argument presented by Allen that the shift from open fields to enclosed fields was due to a change in the distribution of rents between landlords and tenants, rather than an increase in the total return from the land.

Clark argues that a decline in the interest rate was largely responsible for the decision to enclose the open fields, based on a model and evidence relating to the cost of enclosure. Discuss his model and explain why in Clark's framework the interest rate plays such an important role.