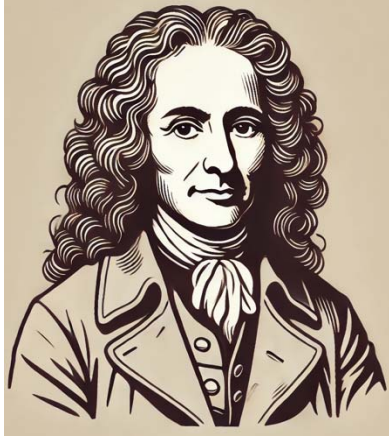


Name _____



Candide by Voltaire

"Candide" is a satirical novella written by the French philosopher and writer Voltaire, originally published in 1759. It is a classic work of Enlightenment literature that uses humor and wit to criticize and satirize various aspects of society, including religion, philosophy, government, and human nature.

The story follows the adventures of Candide, a young and naïve man who is taught by his mentor, Pangloss, that "all is for the best in the best of all possible worlds."

This optimistic philosophy, a parody of Leibniz's optimism, leads Candide into a series of misadventures and disasters that take him around the world.

Throughout his journey, Candide encounters a wide array of characters, each representing different facets of society. He witnesses the hypocrisy of the clergy, the cruelty of the aristocracy, the irrationality of philosophy, and the folly of blind optimism. Despite the hardships he endures, Candide maintains his optimism and the belief that the world is inherently good.

Key themes and ideas in "Candide" include:

- **Optimism vs. Realism:** The novella explores the contrast between Pangloss's unwavering optimism and the harsh realities of the world. Voltaire uses Candide's experiences to challenge the notion of a perfectly ordered world.
- **Religious Hypocrisy:** Voltaire criticizes the hypocrisy of religious institutions and their involvement in worldly affairs. Characters like the Grand Inquisitor and the Old Woman exemplify this theme.
- **Social Critique:** The novella satirizes various aspects of society, from the excesses of the aristocracy to the corruption of the legal system. Voltaire's sharp wit exposes the absurdities and injustices of the time.
- **Philosophical Irony:** Through the character of Pangloss, Voltaire lampoons the irrationality of philosophical systems that cling to optimistic beliefs in the face of evidence to the contrary.
- **Human Resilience:** Despite the hardships and suffering Candide endures, he remains remarkably resilient and optimistic. This resilience is a central theme of the novella.

"Candide" is known for its witty and memorable aphorisms, such as "If this is the best of all possible worlds, what are the others?" It offers a biting critique of the prevailing ideologies and institutions of the 18th century, while also celebrating the human capacity to endure and find meaning in an imperfect world.

