

ENLT 212: Masterpieces of English Literature II
Spring 2000
Cabell 124 MWF 11-11:50am
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Office: Bryan 215 Office hours: MW 10-11am, F 12-1pm

GOALS

- To learn the main features of canonical Romanticism, Victorianism, and Modernism.
- To analyze how each movement compares to the others.
- To evaluate whether the concept of periodization and the methods of literary history are useful approaches to interpreting literature.
- To practice writing effective academic papers on literature, including short close readings and longer textual comparisons.

TEXTS

These texts are in the UVa bookstore; you must buy and use these editions.

- William Blake, Songs of Innocence and of Experience (Oxford and New York: Oxford UP, c1967).
- William Wordsworth and Samuel Coleridge, Lyrical Ballads, eds. R. L. Brett and A. R. Jones, 2nd ed. (1798, 1800; London and New York: Routledge, c1991).
- Alfred Tennyson, Tennyson's Poetry, ed. Robert W. Hill, Jr., 2nd ed. (New York and London: Norton, 1999).
- George Eliot (Marian Evans), The Mill on the Floss, ed. Carol T. Christ (New York and London: Norton, 1994).
- Oscar Wilde, The Importance of Being Earnest and Other Plays, ed. Peter Raby (Oxford and New York: Oxford UP, 1998).
- T. S. Eliot, The Waste Land, ed. Valerie Eliot (San Diego and New York: Harcourt Brace, c1971).
- Virginia Woolf, Mrs. Dalloway (San Diego and New York: Harcourt Brace, c1981).
- Joseph Gibaldi, MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 5th ed. (New York: Modern Language Association, 1999).

REQUIREMENTS

8 1-page close reading papers.....	25%
2 6- to 8-page papers.....	50%
Final exam.....	25%

CLOSE READING ESSAYS

For every author, you will write and turn in a one-page essay on a short passage from that author's writing. These essays should not be loose, unstructured "responses"; rather, you should strive to carefully examine an interesting passage, and then use what you see to arrive at some theory, some interpretation, some hypothesis, or even some conclusion about the text as a whole. This kind of short essay is called a "close reading." Read the attached instructions carefully!

Essays are due in class on Wednesdays, or in my box in Bryan 219 by 4pm at the latest. When an author's works take up two weeks, you may turn in your close reading either the first or second Wednesday, as you choose. The average of the 8 grades will count for 25% of your course grade.

ESSAYS

You will write two longer essays comparing specific themes or images in works by two authors. These essays will make an argument about the two authors in the context of their period. You might, for instance, compare the treatment of London in Blake's work with the treatment of London in Woolf's work: how does a Romantic treat the city, and how does a Modernist treat it? What does this say about Romanticism? About Modernism? You might also compare two authors in the same period: How does religious doubt work in Tennyson? In George Eliot? What features of Victorian doubt appear in both authors? How much difference do individual perspectives make?

You will be encouraged to come up with topics on your own, but I will also suggest topics. Again., remember that the purpose of these two longer papers is to define the characteristics of one or more of the literary periods, the "isms" Romanticism, Victorianism, and Modernism, using the work of the authors we read as evidence for your argument.

The essays should be 6-8 pages long, typed and double-spaced in a 10- or 12- point font with 1-inch margins at the top, bottom, and sides. All sources must be cited according to the guidelines of the Modern Language Association (MLA); see section M of A Writer's Reference. Pages should be numbered, but no title pages, please--simply put your name, the date, and my name (Amanda French or Ms. French) on the first page of the essay, single-spaced, in the top left-hand corner. Essays will be due on a rotating basis beginning Monday, February 14; I will pass out a sign-up sheet.

PLAGIARISM

If you turn in plagiarized work, you will fail the assignment, you will almost certainly fail the course, and you might well be expelled from the University. Don't risk it.

ATTENDANCE

If you are absent more than four times without **written permission from your dean**, your course grade will be lowered at least 1/3, e.g. from a B to a B-.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS

Most of your editions have editorial apparatus--introductions, commentaries, footnotes, end notes and such--that I have not listed in the assigned reading here. Even though they are not "assigned," you would be foolish not to read as much of this added material as you can; they are terrific aids to understanding. In particular, if you're having trouble with a word, phrase, or allusion, you should immediately and automatically check at the bottom of the page and at the back of the book for help. If the editor hasn't helped you, check a dictionary or other reference. **You must not only read the works, you must do your best to understand them.** Many of your editions also include contemporary reviews or critical articles on the literary works; these are also great resources.

INTRODUCTION

Wed 1/19: Introductions and syllabus

Fri 1/21: Discussion of literary periods and of the relationship of history and literature.

ROMANTICISM

Mon 1/31: Songs of Innocence "Introduction," "The Shepherd," "The Ecchoing Green," "The Lamb," "The Little Black Boy," "The Blossom," "The Chimney Sweeper," "The Little Boy Lost," "The Little Boy Found," "Laughing Song," "A Cradle Song," "The Divine Image," "Holy Thursday," "Night," "Spring," "Nurse's Song," "Infant Joy," "A Dream," "On Another's Sorrow."

Wed 2/2: Songs of Experience "Introduction," "Earth's Answer," "The Clod and the Pebble," "Holy Thursday," "The Little Girl Lost," "The Little Girl Found," "The Chimney Sweeper," "Nurse's Song," "The Sick Rose," "The Fly," "The Angel," "The Tyger."

Fri 2/4: Songs of Experience "My Pretty Rose Tree," "Ah! Sun-flower," "The Lilly," "The Garden of Love," "The Little Vagabond," "London," "The Human Abstract," "Infant Sorrow," "A Poison Tree," "A Little Boy Lost," "A Little Girl Lost," "To Tirzah," "The School-Boy," "The Voice of the Ancient Bard," "A Divine Image."

Mon 2/7: "Preface" (1800/1802), pp. 241-272, including italicized sections, especially the long one beginning with footnote 50 on p. 254.

Wed 2/9: "Lines Written at a Small Distance from My House" p. 58, "We are Seven" p. 66, "Lines Written in Early Spring" p. 69, "Expostulation and Reply" p. 104, "Strange fits of passion have I known" p. 153, "Song" p. 154, "A slumber did my spirit steal" p. 154, "Three years she grew in sun and shower" p. 198.

Fri 2/11: "Lines Written a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey" p. 113.

Mon 2/14: "The Rime of the Ancient Marinere" p. 9.

Wed 2/16: "Frost at Midnight," "Kubla Khan" (xerox)

Fri 2/18: "Christabel" (xerox)

VICTORIANISM

Mon 2/21: "Mariana" p. 36, "The Lady of Shalott" p. 41.

Wed 2/23: "The Kraken" p. 35, "The Lotos-Eaters" p. 76, "The Palace of Art" p. 55.

Fri 2/25: "Ulysses" p. 82, "Tithonus" p. 102, "Locksley Hall" p. 115, "The Charge of the Light Brigade" p. 307.

Mon 2/28: In Memoriam A. H. H. Prologue and sections 1-27, pp. 203-22; "In Memoriam" (T. S. Eliot) pp. 621-7.

Wed 3/1: In Memoriam A. H. H. sections 28-77, pp. 222-49.

Fri 3/3: In Memoriam A. H. H. sections 78-131 and epilogue, pp. 249-91.

Mon 3/6: The Mill on the Floss Book First, pp. 7-110.

Wed 3/8: The Mill on the Floss Book Second, pp. 111-60.

Fri 3/10: The Mill on the Floss Books Third and Fourth, pp. 161-240.

SPRING BREAK -- read ahead in The Mill on the Floss!

Mon 3/20: The Mill on the Floss Book Fifth, pp. 241-92.

Wed 3/22: The Mill on the Floss Book Sixth, pp. 293-390.

Fri 3/24: The Mill on the Floss Book Seventh, pp. 391-423.

Mon 3/27: The Importance of Being Earnest Act I, pp. 253-71.

Wed 3/29: The Importance of Being Earnest Act II, pp. 272-94.

Fri 3/31: The Importance of Being Earnest Act III, pp. 295-307.

MODERNISM

Mon 4/3: The Waste Land Intro pp. ix-xxix, Section I "The Burial of the Dead" pp. 133-7.

Wed 4/5: The Waste Land Section II "A Game of Chess" pp. 137-8.

Fri 4/7: The Waste Land Section III "The Fire Sermon" pp. 139-43.

Mon 4/10: The Waste Land Section IV "Death by Water" p. 143.

Wed 4/12: The Waste Land Section V "What the Thunder Said" pp. 143-6.

Fri 4/14: The Waste Land Manuscripts [3-131]. (Just skim through these.)

Mon 4/17: Mrs. Dalloway Foreword pp. vii-xiv, pp. 3-48 (start to "as Peter Walsh shut the door").

Wed 4/19: Mrs. Dalloway pp. 48-83 ("Remember my party" to "'what matter they?'")

Fri 4/21: Mrs. Dalloway pp. 83-117 ("Since she was so unhappy" to "approaching his door").

Mon 4/24: Mrs. Dalloway pp. 117-151 ("The sound of Big Ben" to "So that was Dr. Holmes").

Wed 4/26: Mrs. Dalloway pp. 151-94 ("One of the triumphs of civilization" to the end).

Fri 4/28: Second discussion of literary periods and of the relationship of history and literature.

Mon 5/1: Conclusion

CLOSE READING ESSAY INSTRUCTIONS

A "close reading," in English major-speak, is a piece of writing in which a fairly general hypothesis is derived from a small, carefully examined sample of language. Close readings are inductive in nature: in other words, they move from intent factual observation to hypothesis. What's called the scientific method is simply induction--scientists observe and describe phenomena and eventually generate conclusions from their observations. (Deductive reasoning, by contrast, moves from general principles to conclusions; logical syllogisms are examples of deductive reasoning.)

The goal of this paper is to say one enlightening thing about the general properties of the text based on neurotically specific analysis of an interesting passage. I will grade these on the basis of a) how well you can observe and describe, with precision, characteristic features of the text, and b) how well you can move from these observations to worthwhile comments on the text as a whole. Claims should be thoroughly supported with evidence, and your main point should be, well, interesting. Bad idea to bore the teacher.

I will distribute topic suggestions for these close readings--you are free to do one of these, or to ignore them. All of the assignments, however, will share the same structures of inductive reasoning--all will be close readings. Below, I give a series of guidelines for producing a good close reading.

- 1) Find an interesting passage of no more than six lines of poetry or prose and type it out at the top of your paper. Copy it exactly, right down to the punctuation, and do not under any circumstances cut-and-paste from the web! Transcribing helps you concentrate on the text.
- 2) Then, describe and discuss what you found interesting or characteristic about this particular passage. You might ask yourself one of the following questions: How does a particular word or kind of word contribute to the meaning? What does a particular image or group of images imply about the author's mindset? Why is this particular bit structured in precisely this way? Explain your answer to one such question in your paper, making sure to support your claim with quoted evidence from the transcribed passage, and from elsewhere in the text if necessary.
- 3) The paper should of course be typed in a 10- or 12-point font, double-spaced with 1-inch margins, spell-checked and otherwise mechanically clean. As for length, I refuse to count or measure obsessively: "about a page," with whatever interpretation you like to put on that phrase, is fine. Make one really interesting, really well-supported point, whether it takes you half a page or nearly two.
- 4) Bring your assignment to class on Wednesday, or put it in my mailbox in Bryan 219 no later than 4pm on Wednesday. The 8 grades for the close readings will be averaged, and this average will count for 25% of your course grade.