

ENGLISH 200: INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE

Fall 2021

Mara Lowhorn

Class Meeting Time/Location: TBD

Office Hours: TBD

Office: CH 5C

Mara.Lowhorn602@topper.wku.edu

Required Texts

Mays, Kelly. *The Norton Introduction to Literature*. Portable Thirteenth, W. W. Norton & Company, 2019.

ISBN: 978-0393420463

All readings for this class will come from this book, or they will be provided on Blackboard.

Colonnade Program Description

English 200 provides an introduction to a variety of literature at the college level. Assignments encourage critique and analysis and give students introductory knowledge of key literary terms, concepts, and reading strategies. Students apply this knowledge in discussing and writing about literary texts and consider how literature inscribes the human experience. Because these classes emphasize the reading of primary texts, instructors will focus on literacy skills to supplement content coursework.

Learning Outcomes Met by This Course

English 200 helps to fulfill the Arts and Humanities (AH) Colonnade requirement. Upon completion of this English 200, students will demonstrate the ability to

1. Utilize basic formal elements, techniques, concepts and vocabulary of specific disciplines within the Arts and Humanities.
2. Distinguish among various kinds of evidence by identifying reliable sources and valid arguments.
3. Demonstrate how social, cultural, and historical contexts influence creative expression in the Arts and Humanities.
4. Evaluate the significance of human expression and experience in shaping larger social, cultural, and historical contexts.
5. Evaluate enduring and contemporary issues of human experience.
6. Read, comprehend, and analyze primary texts independently and proficiently.

ENG 200. INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE. (3) Prerequisite: ENG 100. Introductory study of fiction, poetry, and drama demonstrating techniques by which literary artists reflect human experience. Substantial student writing about literature will be required. Equivalent to ENGL 200C. Colonnade F-AH| AH

Important Dates

August 23: First day of classes

August 30: Add/Drop date

September 6: Labor Day (University closed)

October 14-15: Fall Break (No Classes)

November 1: Withdrawal deadline

November 24-26: Thanksgiving Break (University Closed)

December 6-10: Finals Week

December 14: Final grades posted by noon

CLASS POLICIES**Late Work**

No late work will be accepted. If you have extenuating circumstances, contact me BEFORE an assignment is due. I cannot help you after the deadline has passed.

Make-Up Work

Make-up work will not be accepted. In-class exercises cannot be made up due to absences because their purpose is to get you engaging and interacting with the course material *in the classroom*.

Attendance/Tardiness (for a MWF course)

Over the course of the semester, you are allowed to miss 3 classes without penalty. This is 1 full week of class. For each additional absence (the 4th and 5th absences), you will be docked 5% of your final grade for the class. If you have 6 absences, you will automatically fail the course.

I do not make a distinction between excused/unexcused absences. If you have extenuating circumstances, contact me BEFORE you miss class.

If you are late to class, make sure to come talk to me after class to make sure I noted your attendance. If you are tardy 3 times, this counts as 1 absence. Please come to class on time out of respect for me and your fellow classmates.

Attendance/Tardiness (for a TR course)

Over the course of the semester, you are allowed to miss 2 classes without penalty. This is 1 full week of class. For each additional absence (the 3rd and 4th absences), you will be docked 5% of your final grade for the class. If you have 5 absences, you will automatically fail the course.

I do not make a distinction between excused/unexcused absences. If you have extenuating circumstances, contact me BEFORE you miss class.

If you are late to class, make sure to come talk to me after class to make sure I noted your attendance. If you are tardy 3 times, this counts as 1 absence. Please come to class on time out of respect for me and your fellow classmates.

Participation

Participation includes coming to class prepared, contributing to the class discussion, following course expectations, actively listening and engaging with course material, and completing in-class exercises such as free-writes.

Required Supplies/Equipment

A notebook and/or paper and something to write with – generally, I do not allow technology/laptops in the classroom except on days when we are workshopping papers.

Peer Reviews

For each paper you write, you will be expected to participate in a small group workshop of your draft during class time. These workshops will take place at various stages of the writing process – the brainstorming/outlining phase, the researching/idea developing phase, and the actual drafting phase.

Student/Instructor Conferences

For this class, I am requiring students to meet with me at least once to have a conference about 1 of your assigned essays. While I encourage you to meet with me to discuss all 3 essays (and any assignment you need help with, for that matter), I am only requiring 1 conference with me. There will be a sign-up sheet for conferences in class at the beginning of each unit, but you can always email me to set-up a meeting time as well. Failure to show up to scheduled conferences will result in a 10% deduction from your essay grade.

Writing Center Visits

For this class, I am requiring students to visit the Writing Center for assistance on 1 of your assigned essays (though I *encourage* you to visit the Writing Center for all 3). Like your peers, the Writing Center tutors can help you through any stage of the writing process. You will be required to show proof of your visit, or else points will be deducted from your final grade.

GRADE INFORMATION

Assignments

There will be a total of 10 Discussion Board posts assigned over the course of the semester. This will count as homework to be done outside of class, but we will discuss the responses during class time. This will count as homework to be done outside of class, but we will discuss the responses during class time. There will be prompts to guide your writing, and they will usually ask for some sort of reflection on what we have read about, written about, or talked about for class.

Additionally, there will be a total of 10 free-writing exercises assigned over the course of the semester. These will be completed and turned in during class time, and they cannot be made up. Submission of free-writing activities will also count toward in-class participation. Again, there will be prompts to guide your writing.

Quizzes

Periodically we will have quizzes over the readings that were assigned for class. These will be completed and turned in during class time, and they cannot be made up. There will be a total of 10 quizzes over the course of the semester.

Essays

In this course, students must write three formal essays, all of which must contain documented research. The cumulative word count for all formal writing in this course will be at least 3,600 words.

Essay #1 will be 1,200 words, Essay #2 will be 1,200 words, and Essay #3 will be 1,200 words.

Essay Submission

In order to pass this class, students must complete and properly turn in ALL the assigned essays assigned for the course. Failure to turn in an essay results in an automatic “F” for the class. The only way to get full credit for an essay is to submit it via Blackboard. Emailed essays will not be accepted.

Grade Breakdown

Essay #1:	250 points
Essay #2:	250 points
Essay #3:	250 points
Quizzes:	50 points total (10 quizzes, 5 points each)
Discussion Board posts:	50 points total (10 DB posts, 5 points each)
Free-Writing Exercises:	50 points total (10 exercises, 5 points each)
Participation:	100 points
<u>1,000 POINTS TOTAL!</u>	

In other words, essays are worth 75% of your final grade, homework/in-class assignments are worth another 15% of your final grade, and participation is worth 10%.

Final Revision Portfolio

Not happy with the grade you got on your essays? Think you can do better? Your optional “final” in this class will be to turn in a portfolio of your revised papers. Using the suggestions for revisions you received from the instructor, your peers, and/or the Writing Center tutors, you have the opportunity to revise your papers to the best of your abilities – if you want to.

You will be eligible for additional half credit toward the grade your essay originally received. Full credit (100s) will not be given for revisions. For example, if you received a 90% on your essay, you could potentially earn a 95% after revisions. If you received a 70%, you could potentially earn an 85%.

If you are satisfied with the grades you previously received, you do not have to submit a final portfolio. Again, this opportunity is optional.

Exams

There will be no exams/tests in this class.

Extra Credit

There will be no opportunities for extra credit in this class – other than the final revision portfolio for half credit.

Program Assessment Notice

As part of a university-wide accreditation study, a small sample of papers will be collected from randomly-selected individuals in all ENG 200 classes this semester. The papers will be examined anonymously as part of a program assessment; results will have no bearing on student assessment or course grades.

Resolving Complaints about Grades

The first step in resolving a complaint about grades is for the student to attempt to resolve the problem directly with the course instructor. See the Student Handbook, available at <http://www.wku.edu/handbook/> for additional guidance.

ADA Accommodation Statement

In compliance with University policy, students with disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact the Student Accessibility Resource Center located in Downing Student Union, Room 1074. The SARC can be reached by phone number at 270-745-5004 [270-745-3030 TTY] or via email at sarc.connect@wku.edu. Please do not request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a faculty notification letter (FNL) from The Student Accessibility Resource Center.

Title IX/Discrimination and Harassment Statement

Western Kentucky University (WKU) is committed to supporting faculty, staff and students by upholding WKU's Sex and Gender-Based Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (#0.070) and Discrimination and Harassment Policy (#0.2040). Under these policies, discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct based on sex/gender are prohibited. If you experience an incident of sex/gender-based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator, Deborah Wilkins, 270-745-5398 or Title IX Investigators, Michael Crowe, 270-745-5429 or Joshua Hayes, 270-745-5121. Please note that while you may report an incident of sex/gender based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual

misconduct to a faculty member, WKU faculty are “Responsible Employees” of the University and MUST report what you share to WKU’s Title IX Coordinator or Title IX Investigator. If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you confidentiality, you may contact WKU’s Counseling and Testing Center at 270-745-3159.

POTENTIAL COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: Introduction

- To Literature
- To the class
- To each other
- To upcoming fiction unit

Week 2: Fiction – Short Stories

- Raymond Carver “Why Don’t You Dance?”
- Jess Walters “Mr. Voice”
- Mary Hood “How Far She Went”

Week 3: Fiction—Short Stories, continued

- Zora Neale Hurston “Sweat”
- Kate Chopin “The Story of an Hour”
- Assign Essay 1 over short fiction.

Week 4: Fiction—Short Stories, continued

- Edgar Allan Poe “The Fall of the House of Usher”
- Nathaniel Hawthorne “Young Goodman Brown”
- Charlotte Perkins Gilman “The Yellow Wallpaper”

Week 5: Fiction—Novellas

- Nella Larsen “Passing”
- Sandra Cisneros “The House on Mango Street”

Week 6: Wrap-up Fiction/Intro to Drama

- Essay 1 due
- Introduce drama unit
- Susan Glaspell “Trifles”

Week 7: Drama

- Lorraine Hansberry “A Raisin in the Sun”
- Assign Essay 2 over drama.

Week 8: Drama, continued

- August Wilson “Fences”

Week 9: Drama, continued

- William Shakespeare “Twelfth Night”

Week 10: Wrap-up Drama/Intro to Poetry

- Essay 2 due
- Introduce poetry unit
- Li-Young Lee “Persimmons”

Week 11: Poetry (Modern)

- Gwendolyn Brooks “The Bean Eaters” and “we real cool”
- Adrienne Rich “Diving into the Wreck”
- Dylan Thomas “Do Not Go Gentle into that Good Night”
- Ezra Pound “In a Station of the Metro”
- William Carlos Williams “The Red Wheelbarrow”
- Pablo Neruda “Every Day You Play”
- Assign Essay 3 over poetry.

Week 12: Poetry (Romantic)

- Samuel Taylor Coleridge “Frost at Midnight”
- Emily Dickinson “Hope is the Thing with Feathers”
- Sylvia Plath “Mad Girl’s Love Song”
- William Wordsworth “I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud”
- John Keats “To Autumn”
- Edgar Allan Poe “Annabel Lee”

Week 13: Poetry (Form)

- John Keats “Ode on a Grecian Urn” (Ode)
- William Shakespeare “Shall I Compare Thee to a Summer’s Day?” (Sonnet)
- Elizabeth Barrett Browning “How Do I Love Thee?” (Sonnet)
- Seamus Heaney “Two Lorries” (Sestina)
- Theodore Roethke “The Waking” (Villanelle)
- Haikus, elegies, ballads, etc.

Week 14: Poetry (Local)

- Essay 3 due.
- Robert Penn Warren “Evening Hawk” and “True Love”
- Mary Ellen Miller “The Poet’s Wife Speaks,” “Butterscotch,” and “Arrival”
- Savannah Sipple “WWJD/ on prayer,” “WWJD/ on letting go,” and “WWJD/ about love”
- Wendell Berry “The Country Town in Early Summer Morning” and “The Apple Tree”

- Frank X. Walker “Monarchy” and “The Bison Run with Chango”

Week 15: Finals Week

- Revision portfolios due (optional).

ENG 200 Fall 2021 – Essay 1

FICTION UNIT

Due: In class on Monday, September 27. (Hard copies only.)

Assignment: Write a literary analysis essay synthesizing 2 or 3 readings from our fiction unit. Formulate a clear, concise argument regarding the stories' representation of the concept of home.

Topics could be, but are not limited to:

- “Home” as a place.
- “Home” as other people.
- Broken homes – literally and/or metaphorically.

The guiding question to consider is, “What does ‘home’ mean in these stories, and what effect does it have on the story overall?” Using specific textual evidence (in the form of direct quotes and paraphrasing), discuss how devices such as plot, character, setting, theme, etc., contribute to the representation of your chosen topic.

We will be having brainstorm sessions during class to decide on topics, as well as workshops for outlines and thesis statements.

Important Details:

- Must be at least 1,200 words total. MLA formatting does not work toward word count.
- You are expected to focus on no more than 3 of our assigned readings. To be able to effectively write about more than 3 stories would require a higher word count/page count than is expected of this assignment.
- This essay is worth 250 points total.

Things to Include:

- A strong, clear thesis statement. We will discuss thesis statements in class beforehand. We will be workshopping thesis statements along with our discussion of outlines.
- Proper MLA formatting. Be sure to include MLA heading, a title, a Works Cited page, and page numbers. Again, we will go over this in class, but there will also be examples posted to Blackboard. OWL @ Purdue is always a good source of information as well. https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_formatting_and_style_guide.html
- Do NOT include outside sources. Online research may sway you too much and overpower your insight. Simply focus on our reading list, think back to class discussions, and let your critical thinking skills shine through.

Course Policy Reminders

Plagiarism

Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated. It will result in a failing grade on the essay as well as disciplinary action. If you have questions about citations, do not hesitate to ask! I'm happy to help, and it's always better to be safe than sorry.

Student/Instructor Conferences

For this class, I am requiring students to meet with me at least once to have a conference about 1 of your assigned essays. While I encourage you to meet with me to discuss all 3 essays (and any assignment you need help with, for that matter), I am only requiring 1 conference with me. There will be a sign-up sheet for conferences in class at the beginning of each unit, but you can always email me to set-up a meeting time as well. Failure to show up to scheduled conferences will result in a 10% deduction from your essay grade.

Writing Center Visits

For this class, I am requiring students to visit the Writing Center for assistance on 1 of your assigned essays (though I *encourage* you to visit the Writing Center for all 3). Like your peers, the Writing Center tutors can help you through any stage of the writing process. You will be required to show proof of your visit, or else points will be deducted from your final grade.

Writing Center Information

The Writing Center is located in Cherry Hall 123 on the main campus and also offers online consultations for students who live at a distance or who cannot visit during our operating hours. Our writing tutors have been trained to provide helpful feedback to students at all phases of a writing project: they can help you brainstorm ideas, structure your essay, clarify your purpose, strengthen your support, and edit for clarity and correctness. But they will not revise or edit the paper for you. See instructions of the website www.wku.edu/writingcenter for making online or face-to-face appointments. Or call (270) 745-5719 during operating hours (also listed on website) for help scheduling an appointment.

Final Revision Portfolio

You will be given the opportunity to revise this paper for inclusion in your final portfolio.

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ENG 200 Fall 2021 – Essay 2

DRAMA UNIT

Due: In class on Monday, October 25. (Hard copies only.)

Assignment: Write a literary analysis essay synthesizing 2 readings from our drama unit. Formulate a clear, concise argument regarding the plays' representation of one of the following issues:

- Gender
- Race
- Class
- Power

The guiding question to consider is, “What are the plays saying about gender/race/class/power, and how are they saying it?” Using specific textual evidence (in the form of direct quotes and paraphrasing), discuss how devices such as plot, character, setting, theme, etc., contribute to the representation of your chosen topic.

We will be having brainstorm sessions during class to decide on topics, as well as workshops for outlines and thesis statements.

Important Details:

- Must be at least 1,200 words total. MLA formatting does not work toward word count.
- You are expected to focus on no more than 2 of our assigned readings. To be able to effectively write about more than 2 plays would require a higher word count/page count than is expected of this assignment.
- This essay is worth 250 points total.

Things to Include:

- A strong, clear thesis statement. We will discuss thesis statements in class beforehand. We will be workshopping thesis statements along with our discussion of outlines.
- Proper MLA formatting. Be sure to include MLA heading, a title, a Works Cited page, and page numbers. Again, we will go over this in class, but there will also be examples posted to Blackboard. OWL @ Purdue is always a good source of information as well. https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_formatting_and_style_guide.html
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ENG 200 Fall 2021 – Essay 3

POETRY UNIT

Due: In class Monday, November 22. (Hard copies only.)

Assignment: Write a literary analysis essay synthesizing 2 or 3 readings from our poetry unit. Formulate a clear, concise argument regarding the poems' representation of the literary era/movement or region in which they were written. Included on our reading list were examples of Modernism, Romanticism, and Southern poetry.

The guiding question to consider is, "How are these poems representing the time or place in which they were written?" Using specific textual evidence (in the form of direct quotes and paraphrasing), discuss how devices such as imagery, form, metaphor, etc., contribute to the representation of your chosen topic. You will also need to do some outside research on the literary tradition/movement/region—2 scholarly sources are required for this assignment.

We will be having brainstorm sessions during class to decide on topics, as well as workshops for outlines and thesis statements. We will also have a virtual tour of WKU Libraries and practice doing outside research!

Important Details:

- Must be at least 1,200 words total. MLA formatting does not work toward word count.
- You are expected to focus on no more than 3 of our assigned readings. To be able to effectively write about more than 3 poems would require a higher word count/page count than is expected of this assignment.
- This essay is worth 250 points total.

Things to Include:

- A strong, clear thesis statement. We will discuss thesis statements in class beforehand. We will be workshopping thesis statements along with our discussion of outlines.
- Proper MLA formatting. Be sure to include MLA heading, a title, a Works Cited page, and page numbers. Again, we will go over this in class, but there will also be examples posted to Blackboard. OWL @ Purdue is always a good source of information as well. https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_formatting_and_style_guide.html
- At least 2 outside sources about your chosen era/movement/region of poetry. These need to be scholarly journal sources. We will have an in-class refresher on how to access journal articles through databases on the WKU Libraries site.

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Quiz #9: Poetry Forms
Week 13

1. Explain what a sestina is.
2. Give an example of a villanelle.
3. What type of meter usually appears in a sonnet?
4. What is the difference between an ode and a ballad?
5. Write your own haiku.

**English 200 – Fall 2021
Unit One Exam: Fiction**

This exam is NOT open book/open note. You will not be expected to use direct quotes, but do make sure to use clear textual evidence that shows you have read the assigned stories. Be specific in your responses.

You are expected to answer ALL questions on this exam.

PART ONE:

Comprehension – Short Answer (2 points per question, 20 points total)

Respond to these questions using texts we read for class in at least 1 complete sentence each. There will be one question over each of the stories from the reading list, for a total of 10.

1. In “Young Goodman Brown,” after the minister and Deacon Gookin ride by, what happens to Goodman Brown?
2. In “The Yellow Wallpaper,” what is a similarity between the narrator’s room and the wallpaper pattern?
3. In “The Story of an Hour,” from what ailment does Mrs. Mallard suffer at the end of the story?
4. In “The Fall of the House of Usher,” what confession does Usher make to the narrator during the final storm?
5. In *The House on Mango Street*, how were the narrator’s previous homes different than the house on mango street?
6. In “Mr. Voice,” what is the opening line of the story?
7. The closing line of “How Far She Went” is “...close enough to put her hand forth. . . and touch her granny’s back where the faded voile was clinging damp, the merest gauze between their wounds.” What are the “wounds” that are referred to in this final line of the story?
8. In “Why Don’t You Dance?” where did the man’s wife go? Why is he alone?
9. In *Passing*, what does it mean “to pass”?
10. In “Sweat,” what is Delia’s worst phobia?

PART TWO:

Analysis (10 points per question, 30 points total)

Respond to these questions using texts we read for class in at least 5 complete sentences each.

1. Of all the texts we read, which story's protagonist do you find the least relatable and why? Describe their character development and behavior. What actions did they take in their story that you did not agree with, and what would you have done differently?

2. Pick one text from the reading list and analyze the role setting plays within the story. Does setting have a big impact on the plot/characters/theme, etc.?

3. Analyze a motif that can be found in one of our texts. Describe the role the motif plays within the story and the overall significance of it. What is the author saying by setting up the recurring theme within the story? What effect does the motif have on the characters, and how does it influence the story's development?

PART THREE:

Synthesis (25 points per question, 50 points total)

Respond to these questions using texts we read for class in at least 3 complete, well-organized paragraphs of 5 sentences each.

1. Compare and contrast the two novellas we read (Larsen's "Passing" and Cisneros's "House on Mango Street"). Draw connections within the stories' plot, characters, theme, representation of gender/race/class, etc. Come to a clear conclusion about the differences between the two texts and what they represent.

2. Which stories best convey the concept of the "broken home"? Focus on 3 stories to analyze and put them into conversation with one another. Draw connections within the stories' plot, characters, theme, etc.

English 200—Fall 2021
Final Exam: Cumulative

This exam is NOT open book/open note. You will not be expected to use direct quotes, but do make sure to use clear textual evidence that shows you have read the assigned stories. Be specific in your responses.

You are expected to answer ALL questions on this exam.

PART ONE:

Annotation – Poetry (15 points per response, 30 points total)

Using your skills of annotation and analysis, examine the following poems (not from our class reading list) and respond to the prompts below each one.

1. A Miracle for Breakfast – Elizabeth Bishop

At six o'clock we were waiting for coffee,
waiting for coffee and the charitable crumb
that was going to be served from a certain balcony
--like kings of old, or like a miracle.
It was still dark. One foot of the sun
steadied itself on a long ripple in the river.

The first ferry of the day had just crossed the river.
It was so cold we hoped that the coffee
would be very hot, seeing that the sun
was not going to warm us; and that the crumb
would be a loaf each, buttered, by a miracle.
At seven a man stepped out on the balcony.

He stood for a minute alone on the balcony
looking over our heads toward the river.
A servant handed him the makings of a miracle,
consisting of one lone cup of coffee
and one roll, which he proceeded to crumb,
his head, so to speak, in the clouds--along with the sun.

Was the man crazy? What under the sun
was he trying to do, up there on his balcony!
Each man received one rather hard crumb,
which some flicked scornfully into the river,
and, in a cup, one drop of the coffee.
Some of us stood around, waiting for the miracle.

I can tell what I saw next; it was not a miracle.
A beautiful villa stood in the sun
and from its doors came the smell of hot coffee.
In front, a baroque white plaster balcony
added by birds, who nest along the river,
--I saw it with one eye close to the crumb--

and galleries and marble chambers. My crumb
my mansion, made for me by a miracle,
through ages, by insects, birds, and the river
working the stone. Every day, in the sun,
at breakfast time I sit on my balcony
with my feet up, and drink gallons of coffee.

We licked up the crumb and swallowed the coffee.
A window across the river caught the sun
as if the miracle were working, on the wrong balcony.

Form:

Rhyme Scheme:

Meter:

Images:

Metaphors/Similes:

Analyze the poem in 3-5 complete sentences:

2. Death, Be Not Proud – John Donne

Death, be not proud, though some have called thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so;
For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow
Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst thou kill me.
From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,
Much pleasure; then from thee much more must flow,
And soonest our best men with thee do go,
Rest of their bones, and soul's delivery.
Thou art slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,
And poppy or charms can make us sleep as well
And better than thy stroke; why swell'st thou then?
One short sleep past, we wake eternally
And death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die.

Form:

Rhyme Scheme:

Meter:

Images:

Metaphors/Similes:

Analyze the poem in 3-5 complete sentences:

PART TWO:

Synthesis (35 points per question, 70 points total)

Respond to these questions using texts we read for class in at least 3 complete, well-organized paragraphs of 5 complete sentences each.

1. Referring to one story and one play from our reading list, write about the importance of genre. What was the significance of telling the plot of the story in the form of a story, and the plot of a play in the form of a play? Think about characters and setting, and also think about the logistics of the plays' live performances.

2. Referring to one story, one play, and one poem from our reading list, write about the importance of point of view. Consider who the narrators of each text are, and what role they play within the work. What is the significance of the point of view from that particular narrator?

Mara Lowhorn

David LeNoir

English 516

20 April 2021

Portfolio Rationale

Sequencing of Units

When making my syllabus, I chose to sequence the course schedule around units, based on literary genres. The first unit of the semester will be about fiction, focusing on a selection of eight short stories and two novellas. The second unit of the semester will be about drama, focusing on a selection of four plays. The third and final unit of the semester will be about poetry, focusing on a selection of over 30 poems. Each unit will last about 4-5 weeks, depending on when essay due dates lie on the calendar. I intentionally organized the units in this order. My aim is to foster an appreciation, if not a love, for literature in my students. I believe it will be easier to achieve this goal if the course starts out focusing on a genre that students are most familiar and comfortable with—fiction—before gradually moving into the genres they likely have less experience with, which would be drama and poetry. By the time we make it to the poetry unit, students may still feel a little intimidated, but they will have already had enough practice with close reading and literary analysis to feel more prepared for the genre. If the class began with the poetry unit, students may be turned off literature completely if they find the genre too much of a challenge and that the class is not worth the effort.

Fiction Unit

The reading list for the first week of fiction is comprised of three short stories that are more contemporary compared to the subsequent selection of texts. I chose to begin the class by

focusing on more recent stories because I think they are easier for students to understand, relate to, and take an interest in. That way, students can develop the important critical reading and analytical skills early and apply them to later, more challenging texts. The next two weeks focus on older short stories (older meaning published in the early 1900s and prior), and the final week of the fiction unit focuses on two novellas. All of the works I've chosen convey nuanced, layered messages of gender, race, class, power, and other pertinent issues that make them ripe for discussion and analysis. I want my students to enjoy these works, but more importantly, I want them to learn how to make connections to real life in our current society. I believe this fiction selection lends itself to that very well.

Drama Unit

The drama unit will take place over a four-week period, and we will be focusing on a different play each week. Susan Glaspell's "Trifles" will be the first play because it is the shortest – it will be a way to ease students into the genre if they are feeling any hesitation. The next two plays will be "A Raisin in the Sun" and "Fences," both of which lend themselves to rich discussions of race and privilege. Finally, after good practice reading plays and working with the genre, we will venture into Shakespeare territory and focus on "Twelfth Night." Of course, this will be the most challenging for students, but I believe it is worth it to teach Shakespeare. As someone from our 516 class said, this may be the only exposure students have of Shakespeare in college. I don't want to teach something like "Romeo and Juliet" or "Hamlet," which most students probably read in high school; I think "Twelfth Night" is an extremely fun play, one of Shakespeare's works with the most potential of keeping students' interests. Over the course of this unit, we will be sure to discuss elements of drama that are specific to the genre—both on paper and in live performances—and how the genre differs from fiction.

Poetry Unit

The reading list for this unit covers over 30 poems. We will read and discuss these over the span of four weeks. The weeks are divided into categories of Modernism, Romanticism, Local/Regional poetry, and poetic forms, in which we will be discussing various types of poems (sonnets, villanelles, sestinas, haikus, etc.) I will introduce the poetry unit by presenting a lecture on “Persimmons” by Li-Young Lee and emphasizing to students that learning poetry can be like learning a new language—a challenging experience, yet rewarding in the end. Students have been preparing for this unit all semester, sharpening their reading and analytical skills.

Each week, we will discuss the fundamentals of that week’s literary movement/era so that students have a foundation of knowledge about what they are reading. Many people (rightfully) believe that modernism is extremely hard to understand, but I chose to lead with this because I think students may have more background knowledge about this period of time than they do about the romantic era. Romanticism and poetic form come next, most of the reading selections being from the 19th century and earlier, because I think the language will be a bit more challenging than modernism. Lastly, I chose to include a week on local/Kentucky poets because I thought it would help students develop a deeper connection with the texts. They may never read another poem after they leave my class, so I believe it’s important for them to leave having read the works of poets who lived in the same place that many of them live/all of them attend school in.

Overall

I want this class to be loosely based on the theme of “home.” Most of the readings I’ve selected for this schedule have a clear vision of home—it can be a place or a person, it can be safe, or it can be broken, literally or metaphorically. That’s why I wanted to close out the class

with the week of Kentucky poetry, so that students can come to view their home in a new, poetic light. This theme of home, no pun intended, will act as a sort of “home base” for all of the discussions we have in class. We may discuss issues of gender, race, class, and power in the texts, the time period in which they were written, and our current society, but we can always circle it back to notions of home, too.

The idealist in me wants students to find a new home in literature. At the very least, I hope my syllabus and my reading list sparks an interest in more reading, enjoying, and analyzing literature.