Spring 1-15-2012

ENG 1002G-003-008-040: Composition and Literature

L Berry
Eastern Illinois University

Follow this and additional works at: http://thekeep.eiu.edu/english_syllabi_spring2012

Part of the English Language and Literature Commons

Recommended Citation
http://thekeep.eiu.edu/english_syllabi_spring2012/17

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the 2012 at The Keep. It has been accepted for inclusion in Spring 2012 by an authorized administrator of The Keep. For more information, please contact tabruns@eiu.edu.
EN 1002G Composition and Literature
Instructor: Lucinda Berry laberry@eiu.edu Coleman 3836 581-6987
Office Hours: 11:00 - 1:30 Tuesday & Thursday

Course Description
You'll practice analysis of poetry, short fiction and drama. To be successful, you must read carefully and think deeply about what you have read. You must write well-reasoned, logically organized essays using sound rhetorical strategies to support an arguable thesis.

Course Policies and Grade Determination
Poetry essay = 20 pts. (20/A, 16/B, 14/C, 12/D)
Fiction essay = 25 pts.
Drama essay = 25 pts. (25/A, 20/B, 17.5/C, 15/D)
Participation = 15 pts (15/A, 12/B, 10.5/C, 9/D)
(Includes discussion, homework, journal, group work, in-class writing. Grades on the many assignments in this category will be averaged.)
Quizzes & exams (Also averaged) = 15 pts.


Requirements for the three major essays will be explained in class. There will be ample time to ask questions, both in class and during my office hours. If you choose not to do so, don’t complain later that the assignment wasn't clear.

In general, I will be assessing your writing for:
• sufficient, useful development in support of your thesis
• clarity of expression
• effective organization and use of transitions
• use of standard conventions for spelling, punctuation and grammar

All assignments must be completed in order to receive credit for the course. Late work will be marked down 10% for each calendar day past the deadline.

Participation means more than just your physical presence. Making use of devices such as cell phones and MPG players during class is strictly forbidden. If you feel you need to respond to or send a text, leave the room and don’t come back. Ever. During certain classes, I will ask you to bring and use your laptop. Otherwise, you should be electronic free.

Three students will be chosen as discussion leaders for certain classes. You may decline once to take this position due to a lack of preparation. If you decline a second time, or if your lack of preparation is apparent by the weakness of your leadership, five points will be deducted from your overall grade.

As a discussion leader, you will point out specific techniques used by the writer, or explain the importance of word choices or figures of speech. Soliciting responses to specific questions can also be part of your strategy for using the
class time productively. A specific question would be something such as “Why is the use of “awed” effective in the poem’s second stanza?” or “What is the poet telling us about the role of parents?” A question such as “What do you think this poem means?” is not specific enough.

Homework must be typed. Late homework will receive no grade, only a check for completion. If you have more than two checks, the third late assignment will be averaged as a zero.

Quizzes will be given at the beginning of the class period. You won't get extra time if you’re late. There are no make-ups for the quizzes. When determining your average, I will throw out the lowest two scores.

Policy on Plagiarism
Random House Dictionary of the English Language defines plagiarism as “the appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author and representation of them as one’s own original work.” Plagiarism will result in an F for the course and referral to the Office of Judicial Affairs.

Policy on Disabilities
If you have a documented disability and wish to receive accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services at 581-6583 as soon as possible.

Introduction to Poetry
Billy Collins

I ask them to take a poem
and hold it up to the light
like a color slide

or press an ear against its hive.

I say drop a mouse into a poem
and watch him probe his way out,

or walk inside the poem's room
and feel the walls for a light switch.

I want them to waterski
across the surface of a poem
waving at the author's name on the shore.

But all they want to do
is tie the poem to a chair with rope
and torture a confession out of it.

They begin beating it with a hose
to find out what it really means.
Read and complete assignments prior to the date on which they are listed. Bring your textbook to class. In class, we will also look at poems that have not been listed on the syllabus. For this section, all page numbers refer to Meyer, Michael. Poetry: An Introduction. 6th Edition. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2010.

Jan 10      Intro to class/"Introduction to Poetry” on syllabus and 40.
Jan 12      “Miss Goff” 350, “How I Discovered Poetry” 543-4, and “In the Library” 544-5 Take notes about the elements discussed Tuesday; consider answers to the questions in the text; think about connections among these poems and “Introduction to Poetry”

Jan 17      Suggestions for Approaching Poetry 38-39, Questions for Responsive Reading and Writing 59-60, “Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?” and “My mistress’ eyes are nothing like the sun” 248-9 and “Song” 205-6

Jan 19      “In a Station of the Metro” 130, “Latin Night at the Pawnshop” 77-8, “Poem” 107, “The Pond” 115

Jan 24      “The Fish” 31-2, “In White” 387, “Design” 386
Jan 26      “My Papa’s Waltz” 238, “Nighttime Fires” 37

Jan 31      “Dover Beach” 112-3, “Dulce et Decorum Est” 121-2
Feb 2       “February” 145 (Also discussion of poetry exam and essay)

Feb 7       “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” 494 - 498
Feb 9       Poetry exam Bring your laptop to class (remember to charge it!)

Feb 14      Poetry Essay Due/ Begin unit on short fiction
Readings for this section are from Charters, Ann. The Story and Its Writer. 8th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2011. Read head notes and editorial information as well as the stories themselves.

“Barbie-Q” 285 - 287, “The Lesson” 82 - 88
Feb 16      “The Rocking Horse Winner” 804-15, “The Brown House” 1411-17
1. How are these stories like fairytales? What role does gambling play in each?
2. What is the connection among luck, money and love in “The Rocking Horse Winner”?
3. What role does Basset play in the story?
4. One particular physical feature of Paul is frequently described. Summarize the descriptions and explain why Lawrence focuses on this aspect of Paul’s appearance.
5. Does “The Brown House” have all the plot elements expected with the traditional Freytag pyramid?
6. This story deals with a serious topic, but the overall tone is humorous. Give some examples of humor in the story.

Feb 21      “The Metamorphosis” 719 - 53, 712
1. This story was originally written in German, so we are reading a translation. Ann Charters writes about her process of deciding between using the title or “The Transformation,” which is a more literal translation. Also, she might have used “giant” or “enormous” as the descriptive adjective in the opening sentence,
and "bug" or "vermin" as the noun. What subtle differences would use of these other words have produced?
2. Gregor changes physically, but in many ways, his circumstances remain the same. How would you support an argument that the family as a whole undergoes a larger change?
3. What is the theme of the story? Is it still relevant?
4. Be able to explain the family dynamics.
5. Be able to point out a couple of funny parts.

Feb 23  "The Rememberer" 134 - 6, "Cathedral" 191- 200
Feb 28  "Greasy Lake" 164 - 171
Mar 1    "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been" 988
Mar 6    "A Good Man Is Hard to Find" 1042- 53, 1015
Mar 8    Fiction Essay Due

Reading for the next section from Jacobus, Lee. The Bedford Introduction to Drama. 6th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martins
Questions adapted from Bedford/St. Martins companion web site
Mar 20    The Rising of the Moon 23 - 9
1 Describe the setting at the opening of the play. Discuss how the lighting, sound, and set design might contribute to the play's oppressive atmosphere.
2 What is revealed in the exposition provided by Policeman B, Policeman X, and the Sergeant at the beginning of the play?
3 Near the end of the play the Sergeant ponders the twist of fate that made him the hunter rather than the hunted. What reasons does the Sergeant provide for the alliances he has made?
4 The final line of the play is delivered by the Sergeant, who turns to the audience and asks, "I wonder, now, am I as big a fool as I think I am?"
Why do you imagine Lady Gregory chose to end her play with this question?
Mar 22    Trifles 897 - 907
Mar 27    The Clean House 1732 - 56
March 29  Finish whatever we're behind on!

April 3    Fences 1424-1512
1 Discuss the possible meaning(s) behind the play's title.
2 The play is set in the 1950s, an era remembered both for economic expansion and for the limits imposed by segregation. How is this dichotomy evident in the text of Wilson's play?
3 Fences deals with familial relationships in a time of change. How would you explain the connections and the conflicts among the family members?
4 Rose talks about her family being made up of "halfs": no siblings share the same set of parents. How do the "halfs" affect Rose and Troy's family? How does Wilson either emphasize or minimize the fact that Lyons, Cory, and Raynell do not share the same set of parents? What resolution regarding the issue of "halfs," if any, does the family achieve by the play's end?
5 Discuss the ending of the play. Why do you think Wilson chose the character Gabriel to conclude the piece?

April 5  
Fences  1512 - 1543

April 10  
Fences continued

April 12  
"Shining City" 1709 - 31

April 17  
"Shining City"

April 19  
"Shining City"

April 24  
The Bald Soprano  1142 - 58, 1158 - 1161, 1170 - 72
1. Jacques Lemarchand called The Bald Soprano a "parody of conversation." Is his description accurate? Why or why not?
2. Discuss the use of sounds in the play, like the striking of the clock and the doorbell. How would these sounds contribute to an audience's experience?
3. Ionesco wrote that when he completed the play he considered it a "tragedy of language" and was later surprised to hear the audience laugh. Is the play funny? If so, what makes it funny? If not, why is it not?
4. Ionesco wrote that the absurd is that which "has no purpose, or goal, or objective." How does this statement apply to The Bald Soprano?

April 26  
Drama Essay Due