

LIT111: BRITISH LITERATURE

THIS COUSE DOES NOT REQUIRE A FINAL EXAM

SYLLABUS

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS NOW!

Keep work organized by week, clearly labeled and typed or copy/paste onto your syllabus. Math and hand done projects: photograph, scan or screenshot and copy/paste to your syllabus. Keep images small so your file isn't too large to submit or save work as a PDF. Go to "Student Services" online for any issues with this course. If you need Microsoft Word, request an email from Student Services and follow the steps given to you.

SUBMITTING WORK: YOU MUST SUBMIT ALL WEEKS AT ONCE on one file. Your syllabus may be submitted separately if you chose not to add your work to it. Go to the website and select "Submit Work", complete the form and attach your work. You may also share a public link such as Gdocs. You have two attempts at receiving a passing grade of "C" or better so submit your full effort original work. Do not mail work. You will receive a reply in about 5 business days. Do not call or email asking for us to verify your work. All components of your course must be completed by the end of the 8th week from the time of your registration; 12 weeks for a 2 credit class. If you have a medical emergency or disability preventing you from completing your class, contact "Student Services" and send an email to request up to a 2-week extension

Week 1 – Historical Survey

Read your download, "British Literature Breakdown" PDF

- 1.) For each of the following periods in British Literature, give a 2-3 sentence power summary that sums up the key aspects of that period:

Old English, Middle English, Elizabethan, Caroline, Neo Classical, English Augustan, Romantic, Victorian, The Aestheticism and Decadence Movement of English Literature, Edwardian, and Modern.

- 2.) Which period is most appealing to you and why?
- 3.) What is meant by "British"? Who does this include? (Research)

ADD RESPONSE/S/ HERE

BRITISH POETRY

DOWNLOAD AND READ: British Poetry

ASSIGNMENT: List the title of 10 British poems and give your interpretation of each poem.

ADD RESPONSE/S/ HERE

British Essays

Read your download: BRITISH ESSAYS PDF

The Decay of Friendship; from *The Idler*, Number 23, September 23, 1758- by Samuel Johnson (1709-1784)

Laughter; from *The Spectator*, Number 249, December 15, 1711-by Joseph Addison

An Apology for Idlers-by Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894)

On War- by James Boswell (1740-1795)

ASSIGNMENT: Read each essay thoroughly and respond to the following questions for EACH essay separately.

- 1.) What message is the writer attempting to get across? How do you know? Give direct textual support and your interpretation of the quote you are using for support. Why is this topic of interest to the writer?
- 2.) Critique the essay. Do you agree or disagree with its message? Why? What value does the essay have in application to your own life?
- 3.) Is the writer successful in making his point? Support your answer

ADD RESPONSE/S/ HERE

WEEK 2

Oscar Wilde

READ THE STORY: The Canterville Ghost

ASSIGNMENT

The Garden of Death

CREATE a piece of art that displays your idea of what the Garden of Death is like. Make sure to use the description provided in the book to help guide your artistic endeavor. Take a photo of your artwork and the image below.

HUMOR AND WIT

In what ways are humor and wit used to defuse the tension and scariness in the story? Describe the major conflict in the story. How does the ghost attempt to be haunting?

MESSAGE

Discuss the universal message of the story? In what ways do we see the typical middle class family portrayed in the story?

READ the Collection of Fairytales by Oscar Wilde

“A House of Pomegranates” (with your downloads)

ASSIGNMENT

Write your own fairytale.

ADD YOUR FAIRYTALE HERE

READ THE PLAY: The Importance of Being Earnest (with your downloads)

QUESTIONS

Be detailed with your responses and give support from the text.

- 1.) By the end of the play, has Jack really learned the importance of being earnest? Why or why not?
- 2.) What is each of the four main character’s relationship to reality? How do they cope, romanticize, or escape from it?
- 3.) What is the girls’ fascination with the name, Ernest? What does it have to do with their romantic idealizations? How are names used to indicate character (or not) in the play?
- 4.) Judging by the tone in *Earnest*, what is Wilde’s opinion of the aristocracy? Does he approve or disapprove of them?
- 5.) What is the importance of the city/country split? What qualities do city-dwellers usually have? How about country folk? Do these stereotypes work in *Earnest*?
- 6.) What’s up with all the food fights? Why are they humorous?
- 7.) How are Miss Prism and Dr. Chasuble products of society?
- 8.) In the end, why doesn’t Cecily care that Algernon’s name isn’t Ernest?

ADD RESPONSE/S/ HERE

Week 3: SHAKESPEARE

William Shakespeare

VIDEO: A BRIEF BIO ON WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

http://www.dailymotion.com/video/xe04ih_history-of-british-literature-willi_creation

A Poem

All the World's a Stage

All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages. At first, the infant,

Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms.
Then the whining schoolboy, with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school. And then the lover,
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad
Made to his mistress' eyebrow. Then a soldier,
Full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honor, sudden and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble reputation
Even in the cannon's mouth. And then the justice,
In fair round belly with good capon lined,
With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws and modern instances;
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts
Into the lean and slippered pantaloon,
With spectacles on nose and pouch on side;
His youthful hose, well saved, a world too wide
For his shrunk shank, and his big manly voice,
Turning again toward childish treble, pipes
And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history,
Is second childishness and mere oblivion,
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

William Shakespeare

Assignment: Give your interpretation of the poem below. Use your Literary Devices download for help.

ADD RESPONSE HERE

READ: "Othello" (with downloads)

Be detailed with your responses and give support from the text.

(Movie available on YouTube)

- 1)** Some have said that the focus of *Othello* is not the title character, as is the case with Shakespeare's other great tragedies, *Macbeth*, *King Lear*, and *Hamlet*. Is Othello simply too one-dimensional to be considered a great tragic hero? Does his seemingly unrealistic gullibility lessen our interest in him and his suffering?
- 2)** Why does Othello not investigate Iago's accusations? Why does Othello not seek his own proof of Desdemona's betrayal?
- 3)** Explore the character of Desdemona. What does she represent in the play?
- 4)** If you read the play closely you will see that not enough time could have elapsed on Cyprus for Desdemona to have committed adultery. Examine the problem of time in *Othello* and the possible dramatic reasons behind this unrealistic passage of time.

- 5) Discuss Othello's relationship with Desdemona. Does he truly love her?
- 6) Examine the female characters in the play. Do they share a common role in Othello?
- 7) Explore and discuss the issue of racism in *Othello* and relate it to the problems of racial hatred in Elizabethan England.

ADD RESPONSE HERE

HAMLET by SHAKESPEARE (with class downloads)

Be detailed in your responses and give support from the text

(Movie available on YouTube)

Hamlet Questions

Act I

- What is "rotten in the state of Denmark," as Marcellus tells us? What do we learn about the situation in Scene I? In Scene II?
- In what ways is Scene II a contrast to Scene I? What do we learn about Gertrude, Claudius, and Hamlet in this scene?
- What does Hamlet learn from the Ghost's speech?

ADD RESPONSE/S/ HERE

Act II

- What does this tell us about Polonius's character?
- How does the interaction between Hamlet and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern help to explain what's wrong with Hamlet? Why are Rosencrantz and Guildenstern in Denmark?
- The First Player's speech is often cut in performances of the play. Explain why it is important and why it should not be cut.

ADD RESPONSE/S/ HERE

Act III

- What is the subject of Hamlet's second soliloquy, the famous "To be or not to be" speech?
- Why is he so cruel to Ophelia immediately thereafter?
- What happens in the "play-within-a-play"?

ADD RESPONSE/S/ HERE

Act IV

- Is Hamlet really mad in this play, or is merely pretending to be mad? (Find lines that support your answer.)
- A foil is a character who is like the protagonist in some respects but who has contrasting qualities that "reflect" or illuminate the traits of the main character. Who are Hamlet's foils, and in what ways do their characters shed light on his?
- Why is Ophelia mad? Does anything she say make sense? What happens to her at the end of Act IV? What does her madness and death symbolize about the kingdom?

ADD RESPONSE/S/ HERE

Act V

- Why does this scene begin with two clowns trading jokes? Do their jokes make any sense in the context of the play?
- When Gertrude drinks from the cup, Claudius asks her not to drink and she refuses. Has she ever disobeyed Claudius before?
- Who is alive at the end of the play, and how do the others meet their ends?

ADD RESPONSE/S/ HERE

LEARNING FROM HAMLET. Hamlet is more than a play to be studied in a classroom. It is a powerful story to be experienced, lived through as it were, and learned from.

1. Ophelia falls into the water accidentally and passively drowns. Discuss her death as a symbol of her life, her honor, and her relationship with Hamlet.
2. Discuss the concept of honor as it is presented and attacked in the play. What role does "honor" play in your own life?
3. Is there anyway Hamlet could have prevented Ophelia's end? If so explain. If not, why?

ADD RESPONSE/S/ HERE

WEEK 4: LET'S REFLECT & WRITE

ASSIGNMENT: Respond to each writing prompt in your most expressive language. Think on the prompt and respond honestly and clearly. There is no right or wrong answer. Watch your grammar, punctuation, capitalization and spelling.

1.) Futures -- Fantasy and Fact: This is a three-part assignment. In the first paragraph, pretend that you can see yourself 10 years from now. Describe your future as it could be if all your wishes came true. This description is "romantic." In the second paragraph, describe what your life will be like 10 years from now if you continue just as you are now. No miracles or magic allowed. This view is "realistic." For most people, the "romantic" and "realistic" descriptions are very different. In the third paragraph, analyze the discrepancy. Discuss the specific differences between your two descriptions and how you feel about these differences. Finally, explain the steps you can take to find a sensible compromise between the romantic and the realistic.

ADD RESPONSE HERE

2.) Remembering the Child: Imagine yourself a sweet little toddler. How did others see you when you were very little? Interview someone who knew you as a small child -- one of your parents or grandparents, an older sibling, or an aunt or uncle, for example. Write about their favorite memory of you.

ADD RESPONSE HERE

3.) Lessons I Learned After It Was Too Late: It seems that we always learn the most important lessons the hard way, usually when it's too late, when we've already made our big mistakes. Look back over your life and write about lessons you learned after it was too late.

ADD RESPONSE HERE

4.) One Medium Suitcase: Imagine that you are leaving home forever, and you can only take what will fit in one medium-sized suitcase with you. Specifically, what will you take with you and why? Explain.

ADD RESPONSE HERE

5.) Flashback: If you could relive one day or experience in your life, what would it be? You might choose to relive this time because it was so wonderful you want to experience it again, or you might choose a day you want to change in some way. Identify the day or experience, tell why it was so important to you, and explain what reliving it would accomplish.

ADD RESPONSE HERE

6.) As Time Goes Bye-Bye: Carpe diem (or, Seize the day!). Before time passes you by, what things do you want to do? What one thing do you most want to do before your last day on Earth? Why? What have you already said good-bye to -- people, places, ideas, stages in your life, hopes, dreams, sorrows? Reflect on those good-byes and/or grand plans and share.

ADD RESPONSE HERE

Week 5: H.G. WELLS

Read: The Man Who Could Work Miracles by HG Wells (Also one of your PDFs)

READ <http://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/w/wells/hg/w45mw/>

- 1.) Give a critique of this short story. Include expressions on the theme, choice of words and overall interest level of the reader. What was the plot? What major conflict was in this story and how was it resolved.
- 2.) If you could work miracles, what miracle would you work? Think of one, and then think of all the consequences it would have. Make a list.

ADD RESPONSE/S/ HERE

Persuasive Essay Writing Workshop – online

<http://www.studygs.net/wrtstr4.htm>

- 3.) **Persuasive Essay:** Take one of these positions: **A:** It is possible to know reality. Science can describe and possibly explain it, so we know that miracles don't exist. **B:** It isn't possible to know reality because our knowledge is always filtered by our senses and the structure of our brain.; therefore, miracles can exist. (1 page double spaced minimum)

ADD RESPONSE/S/ HERE

READ: WAR OF THE WORLDS (with downloads)

Chapters 1: The Eve of the War

From what perspective is humanity viewed? What qualities in the Martians make them dangerous to humanity?

Chapter 2: The Falling Star

In the second paragraph, what evidence is there that Wells is trying to avoid making his narrator a perfect observer? Why do you suppose he does this? How is Ogilvy's first reaction to the movement of the cylinder top ironic? In the absence of broadcasting, the telegraph was the fastest means of communication, and ordinary people received the news by one of several different editions of newspapers during the day. What error do the

first reports of the landing make?

Chapter 4: The Cylinder Unscrews

What is a Gorgon, and why might Wells have chosen to compare the Martians to one? In what way does Wells make his narrator distinctly unheroic?

Chapter 5: The Heat-Ray

What is the narrator's reaction to the attack?

Chapter 9: The Fighting Begins

Wells jokingly calls the milkman's cart his "chariot," comparing it to Phoebus Apollo's chariot, because both appear at dawn. What is the significance of the pun "fishers of men--fishers of fish"? (Hint: see Matthew 4:19.) What act of realistic cowardice does the narrator commit in the last part of the chapter? What is the eventual fate of the landlord in a later chapter?

Chapter 13: How I Fell in with the Curate

What does the clergyman's reference to Sodom and Gomorrah mean? (Hint: see Genesis 18:20-28.) See Revelation 14:11 for the source of this quotation: "The smoke of her burning goeth up for ever and ever!" How is the clergyman interpreting the attack of the Martians? See also Revelation 6:16-17. Why does he call the Martians "God's ministers?"

Chapter 14: In London

At this point, the narrative switches to events in London, told second-hand through the experiences of the narrator's brother. Can you think of reasons that Wells chose not to continue with the same first-person narrative technique? A "crammer" is a tutor specializing in preparing students for exams. What prevents many Londoners from immediately reacting to the Martian invasion?

Chapter 16: The Exodus from London

What evidence is there that panic is overriding civilized behavior in this flight from the Martians? How does the brother rescue a lady, and what is the consequence to himself? In what ways does this scene contradict our usual expectations of a hero saving a lady in distress?

YOUR IMPRESSION: What is your overall impression of the story? Was the author effective – why or why not?

ADD RESPONSE/S/ HERE

Week 6: Charles Dickens

Short Story: A Christmas Carol (with your downloads)

Original Movie: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v= Sr2ow_ZH9w](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sr2ow_ZH9w)

QUESTIONS

Be detailed with your responses and give support from the text.

- 1.) Had you read *A Christmas Carol* before? Did anything surprise you in the book?
- 2.) This is a very short book, and not the only Christmas story that Dickens wrote. Why do you think that it and its message endured and became such a part of English-speaking culture?
- 3.) Did you have a favorite part? What image or line or scene sticks with you the most, if one does?
- 4.) How would you characterize Bob Cratchit's attitude toward Scrooge? Scrooge's attitude toward Cratchit?
- 5.) Besides literal heat, what might be the symbolism of the tiny coal fire that Cratchit has in the office?
- 6.) Why does Scrooge say that Fred should not be happy? What does this reveal about Scrooge's priorities?
- 7.) What is the significance or symbolism of the fact that bells announce Marley's ghost?
- 8.) Why is the Ghost of Christmas Past young, small, cloaked in white and shining bright? What does he mean when he says that Scrooge made his cap and has forced him to wear it?
- 9.) What has Marley's ghost been doing since his death?
- 10.) What is Scrooge's initial attitude toward the spirit?
- 11.) What is different about Scrooge when he says "Remember it? I could walk it with a blindfold?"
- 12.) How does Scrooge's relationship with his sister Fan play into the story?
- 13.) How does Scrooge try to extinguish the light of the first spirit? Does he succeed? What does the light symbolize?
- 14.) What is the point of the visits with the Ghost of Christmas Present to the lighthouse and the ship?
- 15.) Why does Fred refuse to speak against Scrooge? How does his wife differ on this matter? Fred and his wife and Bob and his wife have different views on Scrooge. What does this say about each of them?
- 16.) What does the Ghost of Christmas Present mean when it says the boy and the girl under his robes, Ignorance and Want, are "Man's"?
- 17.) How does Scrooge feel about the spirit of Christmas yet to come?
- 18.) What is the lesson Scrooge learns when the ghost shows him the Cratchit family after Tim's death?
- 19.) Why is this lesson needed when Scrooge's attitude has already changed so much?
- 20.) Is Scrooge's transformation believable?

ADD RESPONSE/S/ HERE

PERSONAL CONNECTION

- 1.) Assume the role of one of the ghosts. What ghost did you choose? Where would you have taken Scrooge? Explain your reason.
- 2.) What character flaws does Scrooge possess and why do you think he behaves as he does? Is there a bit of "Scrooge" in all of us – explain?
- 3.) Define "Christmas spirit." How does one who is full of Christmas spirit act towards others? In what ways do you think that today's "Christmas spirit" may be different from the Christmas spirit of Dickens's time?

How has the tone of Christmas changed? Is whether or not one exhibits “Christmas spirit” dependent on how much money one makes? Are the rich more likely to exhibit it? Are the poor?

ADD RESPONSE/S/ HERE