

Final Essay for Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*

Page requirements: 3 -5 pages, typed, double spaced, 12-point font, Times New Roman, standard margins—do not skip extra lines between paragraphs.

Citation: Proper MLA citation and a Works Cited page is required

Task: You will write a 3 -5 page critical essay on a theme of your choice as it pertains to *The Scarlet Letter* and at least one other text that we have studied in class during the Hawthorne unit.

Texts:

- Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*
- Meredith Hall's "Shunned"
- Maxine Hong Kingston's "Woman Warrior"
- Frida Kahlo's "The Little Deer"

Goal: Great literature does not exist simply within the confines of a book. Literature transcends its pages and brings us new understandings of the world around us. It challenges our beliefs; it records our culture; it reveals universal truths. Great literature also gives us a way of investigating and making sense of what it means to be a member of a society. Great literature holds the secrets to life. Your goal is to think about what these literary works teach us.

How do I get started? Don't start with the works; start with a pertinent theme that interests you—shunning, redemption, social law, etc. After you have settled on a theme, start thinking about what the texts reveal or teach about that theme. Put your examination in the form of a question. For instance, you might ask, "What does Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* and Kingston's "Woman Warrior" reveal about the power of the community mind?"

Next steps: Brainstorm. What is your gut response to your question? What examples do you have from the texts that speak to your question? What do your examples reveal? What real-world connections can you make? Always remember to come back to your original question and to this question: What does the text teach us about human nature?



Additional Questions/Issues:

Do I have to type the final draft? Your final draft must be beautiful, brilliant, and typed. If this is a problem, then you must see me in advance.

May I use more than two texts? Yes, but remember that analysis is more important than just a long list of examples.

Do I have to turn in my rough work? Yes. If you do not, then you will lose points.

3 to 5 pages. Are you trying to kill us? No. I am only giving you an opportunity to flout your genius. I am also getting you ready for college. Don't whine. Push yourself.

What do you mean by MLA citation? You must provide a page number for all quotations. You must also include a Works Cited page. If you ignore these things, then you will lose points. I will provide you with citations for the class handouts and for the Kahlo picture.

Do I need a title page? No, but you do need a title, proper header information and page numbers.

John Smith Mrs. Krieger AP English Language March 28, 2013 Hester Prynne and the Way We Love
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Smith 2

First Page Only:

- Your Name
- Teacher's Name
- Class
- Date
- Centered Title
- No Page Number

All Other Pages:

Your last name & Page #

Mrs. Krieger, do you recommend plagiarism? No. Plagiarism is not only a violation of school policy, it is also a black spot on your soul, or should we say, a scarlet letter upon your bosom.