

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 are required

Task: As you will have a significantly lightened homework load in January while you read Shakespeare in class, your out-of-class focus will be on writing a summative essay on *The Scarlet Letter*. 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"

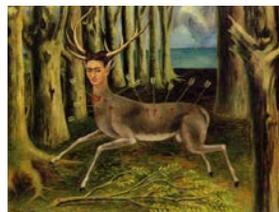
Optional Text:

Laurie Halse Anderson's *Speak*

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 our truths. Truly 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 do these texts reveal about the relationship between shame and power?" Or, "How do these authors address the issue of voice and voicelessness in their writing?"

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 do the texts teach us about human nature?



Grading:

In this extended writing assignment, you will be graded on your ability to *meaningfully* analyze several texts in relation to one another regarding a pertinent theme. In order to achieve the following score ranges, here are the number of texts you must insightfully and purposefully engage in your essay.

95+ Reserved for essays that demonstrate an extraordinary level of synthesis and critical analysis. (A minimum of three texts is required for this score including one outside text.)

90+ Meaningfully analyzes 3 or more texts in relation to one another

80+ Meaningfully analyzes 2 texts in relation to one another

Please note that the items above are minimum requirements only. Your final grade will be based on the texts you use and the quality of your synthesis and analysis.

Due Date:

Monday, January 25, 2016

Additional Questions/Issues:

Will we spend any class time on this essay? Yes, upon our return from Christmas break, we will talk about and practice essay format, thesis statements, citations, and critical analysis.

What types of risky behavior can I engage in? Challenge yourself to incorporate another text that we did not cover in class. Remember that a text is anything that can be read. You must include MLA citation.

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. You must also submit an online copy of your essay to Turn It In .com

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

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 January 1, 2016 Hester Prynne and the Way We Love

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.

Some general topics to get you thinking:

- Silence
- Shunning
- Shame
- Secrets
- Power
- Community
- Sin