

## ENGH 305: Process Paper on One Poem

### Due Dates:

Sept. 7: Preliminary work in class.

Sept. 22: Draft due in class.

Sept. 24: Final version due on Blackboard by midnight.

### Submission

If you have not done this before, try it ahead of time with a document that's blank except for the word "test." When you are ready to submit this assignment (all parts must be in a PDF and the file must include the "statement of academic integrity—electronic"), please name it "pp.yourfirstname.yourlastnameinitial.pp" Then go to Blackboard, click on "Assignments" in the left-hand side bar, and follow the directions to submit the document. Be sure to upload it. If, by chance, you still encounter problems at the last minute, please e-mail it to me as an attachment.

### Instructions

This writing assignment requires you to complete and to make visible much of the behind the scenes intellectual work that goes into close reading and the generation of an original argument about a literary text. This paper has seven "several" (in Robert Herrick's sense) parts. All seven parts are required and should be presented in order. Although this assignment is not in standard essay form, it is a formal, graded assignment. Your writing should be clear, correct, and concise.

#### Note:

Although this may be very difficult for you, please do not conduct any outside research for this assignment aside from that required in the "definitions" and "allusion" sections (4 & 5). I am interested in reading only your original analytical ideas at this early stage in the process. This sort of close reading and analysis is the bread-and-butter of literary study. Dive in and have fun!

### 1. Select part of the poem on which to focus.

To begin, please choose either a short poem or a short passage (ideally 10-15 lines long) that you think is a significant part of a poem. This selection must have

A figure of speech (metaphor, simile, instance of personification, etc.)

A Biblical, literary, or historical allusion

Please type out this selection so I have it right in front of me as I read. (This typing is not a waste of time: it will help focus you on the word-by-word details of the selection.)

### 2. Pattern

Identify one pattern (any **repeated** image, formal element, word or constellation of words, or concept) that runs throughout the passage. Offer a list of quotations that includes every word, phrase, or other evidence that you count as part of this pattern. Then look for more specific patterns within this overall pattern. Key these sub-patterns by color and provide the key. Then, posing and answering analytical questions about a pattern you have identified, offer two analytical paragraphs in which you interpret your findings (i.e., try to answer the question "what, specifically, does this pattern suggest about some aspect of the poem's meaning?").

**Comment [GG1]:** Assignment indicates required draft and revision deadline.

**Comment [GG2]:** Assignment prompt describes specific strategies and conventions necessary for student success for this assignment.

**Comment [GG3]:** Assignment prompt includes rationale, strategies, and/or suggestions for writing in this field or genre.

### 3. Figure of speech

Identify one figure of speech in the selection. Type out the sentence in which it occurs. Then offer two paragraphs in which you analyze this figurative use of language. (The two paragraphs are required to force you to develop your idea beyond one generalized point.)

### 4. Definitions

Choose **five** words from the quotations you examined in part two and/or from the figure from part three (words that are repeated, seem significant, or that you suspect might be being used in multiple ways in the passage) and look each one up in the Oxford English Dictionary Online. Read all the definitions (do heed the date chart to be sure that you are considering only definitions that were operating in the language at the time of the poem's writing). Make a list of the words you look up in order of their occurrence in the passage. Cut and paste all the definitions you think might be at play in the passage into your process paper. Do not include the examples, only verbatim definitions. Be sure to keep a record of the citation information for each entry. (Each entry you cite from the OED Online will need to have a corresponding entry in your works cited list for this paper. The OED Online site provides citation directions.)

In a two-paragraph analysis, use these definitions help you further develop your emerging interpretation of the pattern and/or the figure of speech.

### 5. Allusion

Identify one Biblical, historical, or literary allusion in the selection. Conduct some preliminary research into the allusion using reliable, scholarly sources: Oxford Reference library.gmu.edu , a dictionary of literary allusions, a standard translation of the Bible, a peer-reviewed article by a historian on an event or movement, and/or the website of a museum, academically sponsored, or government (e.g., the Library of Congress are examples. No Wikipedia research, please. Offer at least two paragraphs in which you explain the details of the allusion and interpret how it is used in the selection and what it might mean for an interpretation of the poem overall.

### 6. Working title and introduction for poetic forms essay

Here's where you tie it all together. At the beginning of this section, write "Working Title" and then write what your provisional title for the poetic forms essay will be. Next, write "Introduction" and follow that with the introduction, including a specific thesis statement you would like to prove in the essay. This should be a specific interpretation of the literary work based on your analysis of this particular passage.

**Note:** you do **not** have to try to use all the material you generated in parts 2-5! For some of you, your best idea will appear in a number of parts of the process paper. For others, your best idea may be in raw form buried in the middle of one part. Identify what you take to be the most promising idea, the one that most interests you, and use it as a foundation for your interpretation.

### 7. Works Cited

You must cite all materials consulted for this assignment: the list should include five OED entries as well as the works you used for the allusion section. Please use MLA format. Build your bibliography as you go! It may be the last thing I will read, but it should not be the last thing you draft.