Question 1:

David Lodge describes the beginning of a narrative as a ‘threshold’ which must in some way ‘draw us in’ (1992: 5). Considering this statement, discuss how two short stories of your choosing from the Course Reader establish narrative conflict in order to engage reader interest. (500 words)

Lodge, D. 1992 The Art of Fiction, Penguin, England

**Introduce topic**: Narrative conflict underpins the design of most narratives to create tension or interest in the story by inflicting doubt that the protagonist will achieve their goals. Such conflicts can arise from the protagonist’s actions or thought process, being an internal conflict against themselves, or from an external source, arising from an antagonist’s actions or nature/environment surrounding the protagonist.

**Introduce use for the beginning of the story:** Typically, this is where the plot of a short narrative begins. This establishes the reader’s interest by introducing a conflict or event that is foreign from the readers’ day to day life, which is often used in fantasy or science-fiction genres. Alternatively, introducing a conflict that is only too familiar to the reader can also draw in interest by sparking a bond to the characters, commonly used in dramas. Hereby, introducing conflict early within a narrative can employ interest to the reader.

To exemplify this point, two readings were selected: ‘An Act of God*’* by Gary Crew and ‘The Most Dangerous Game’ by Richard Connell. ‘An Act of God’ is instantly opened up on an external conflict as the main character of the story is viewing the aftermath of an earthquake and how the earthquake began while he was on traffic duty. T

As the character is lead down the street the effect of the earth quake become increasingly apparent as the character is able to see the countless dead. As they proceed, the main character has internal conflict as he is not wanting to proceed along the journey with the young boy, doctor and himself in fear that the people that they are trying to find are already dead. They are lead to a church where a woman is inside trapped under a beam from the ceiling. Many people struggle to free her but are unable to. A wall of fire rapidly approaches the church to engulf it the doctor euthanasia’s the woman in order to spare her being burnt alive however the wind changes course and the flames are blown away . In ‘the most dangerous game’ the main character of the story Rainsford is traveling by yacht through the Caribbean after hearing a shot he stands on a rail to investigate exactly where the shot came from however losing his balance he falls in to the sea and struggles in vain to scream for help and is forced to swim towards the sound of the shots and reaches and island which he falls to sleep on once he awakens he goes searching for help and stumbles across evidence that there had been some one hunting on the island after following a trail he arrives at a chateau at which his is greeted by al tall menacing person and soon after that another man claiming to be a general the general welcomes him in and provides him with cloths and food soon enough they being talking about hunting in which soon turns terrifying when Rainsford realises that the general hunts humans when Rainsford hears about this he request to leave immediately in which his is told he may but only if he can out run the hunter three days he would be allowed to leave the hunt begins and Rainsford tries to throw the tracker of his scent by going back over his tracks and setting up traps

Question 2:

Select one (1) short story from the list below and critically analyse how the writer has

constructed theme. (500 words)

Carver, R. ‘So Much Water So Close to Home’ Crew, G. ‘An Act of God’ Hughes, L. ‘Passing’ Kennedy, C. ‘Waiting’ Lessing, D. ‘Through the Tunnel’

Question 3:

Compare the use of point of view and the related effects in Hemingway’s ‘Hills Like

White Elephants’, Updike’s ‘A&P’, and Moore’s ‘How to be an Other Woman’. (500

words)