

EH4007 Literary Modernism
AY 2023-2024
Module leader: Dr Sinead McDermott

Close Reading Assignment

DUE: Monday 16th October (Week 6) by 5pm

Assignment Guidelines:

- 1,200- 1,400 words.
- Your answer should focus solely on the primary text itself, i.e., **no secondary sources** should be consulted in completing this assignment. The assignment should show evidence of your own engagement with the text – it should not simply replicate lecture notes.
- Your answer should use close reading to construct an argument in response to the question. You should have a thesis statement, or sentence that sums up your key argument, in your introduction.
- You must discuss the passage indicated in the question; you are not permitted to choose a passage at random from the text. If you are unsure of where to find the relevant passage, please contact the module leader or your tutor.
- Citations should be given in MLA format (Study Abroad and Erasmus students may use a referencing style with which they are already familiar). You should specify the edition of your primary text in the Works Cited List.
- Plagiarism is not permitted and will result in an F grade for the assignment. Similarly, the use of Artificial Intelligence (such as ChatGPT) is not permitted and will result in an F grade for the assignment. See the English Student Handbook on Brightspace for further information.

Submission guidelines:

- Assignments should be submitted to Brightspace.
- Extensions are only granted in exceptional circumstances. Students who require an extension must apply in advance to the module leader and must provide written documentation (such as a medical certificate) to justify the extension.
- This assignment is worth **40% of your total grade** for the module.

Answer ONE of the following questions in 1,200 - 1,400 words:

- (1) Read the ending of *Heart of Darkness*, from the line “The dusk was falling” (*Norton Anthology* 128) to the last line, “the heart of an immense darkness” (*Norton Anthology* 131). Comment on the significance of the figure of the Intended, and her interaction with Marlow, for the novel. Why do you think Conrad chose to end the novel with this scene? Your close reading should pay particular attention to the use of setting, imagery, and dialogue in this passage.
- (2) Read the opening (lines 1-30) of T.S. Eliot’s poem “The Waste Land” and discuss the ways in which Eliot sets the mood of this poem and introduces key themes that will be explored throughout this text. Your close reading should also pay particular attention to setting, imagery and the significance of questions asked in these opening lines.
- (3) Choose one of the imagist poems covered on this module and write an analysis of the ways in which this poem adheres to or expands upon/ deviates from the central tenets of imagism as described in Pound’s essay, “A Few Don’ts by an Imagiste”. Your close reading of the selected poem should focus in particular on the analysis of images employed in this text.
- (4) Read the opening pages of *Mrs Dalloway*, from the first line, “Mrs Dalloway said she would buy the flowers herself” (*Norton Anthology* 284) up to the sentence: “Think, for example, of the woman she admired most, Lady Bexborough, opening the bazaar” (*Norton Anthology* 288). Discuss the ways in which the opening sets up key themes and images for the novel. What insights does this passage provide into the character of Clarissa Dalloway herself? Your close reading should pay particular attention to the imagery and narrative perspective in the passage.

Note: Reading poetry and fiction

You can find some helpful essays on how to read poetry and fiction on your Brightspace site – look in the unit ‘Useful resources’.