

## ENGLISH 181.8A: WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

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Office Hours: MW 1:45-3:00, Tuesday 1:30-2:20 and by appointment

Course objectives: This course will teach you how to analyze works of literature from a variety of cultures and historical periods. Your work will include class participation, in-class exercises and quizzes, five essays, a research paper, and a final examination. You will be graded on your ability:

- to write persuasive, clearly-organized essays which demonstrate your mastery of effective argument and your thorough understanding of sentence structure, grammar, spelling, punctuation and vocabulary
- to conduct library research and write a formal research paper in the proper format
- to analyze and explicate literary texts, in both written and oral presentations
- to identify and analyze major literary genres and literary styles
- to identify the biographical, geographical, historical and literary contexts for the works we will read in this course, and to compare and contrast differences between these texts.

### Course Requirements:

1) Write five critical essays. On the class meeting **before** writing workshop days, you must bring to class **two copies** of a **complete** draft of your essay. I will not accept outlines or incomplete drafts of your essay. On writing workshop days, you should also be prepared to present a brief oral report on your essay.

2) Write a formal research paper.

3) Participate fully in all classroom work.

4) Complete all other class assignments, including written exercises and quizzes.

There will be no makeups for missed classes.

5) Complete the final examination.

### Required:

The Bedford Introduction to Literature. 6th edition

Danticat, Breath, Eyes, Memory

Erdrich, Tracks

portfolio folder to hold all of your drafts and papers

### Policies:

Attendance: You should be present for every class and prepared to participate. If you are absent, you are responsible for informing yourself about any missed assignments or announcements, and for material covered during that class. You have a maximum of four absences, excused or unexcused. You will lose 1/3 of a letter grade for any absence after the fourth; a 3.3 becomes a 3.0.

Classroom Demeanor: No eating, sleeping or private conversations. I expect you to show respect to me and to your fellow students. Students who are disruptive will be asked to leave.

Class Participation: This will count for 20% of your grade. For full credit, you will need to attend every class ready to participate. This means not just responding when called on, but coming to class with questions from the reading and topics for discussion, responding to other students' comments on the text, and taking active responsibility for the liveliness and pertinence of discussion. Quizzes, in-class assignments, learnlink conference contributions and short writing assignments will all be part of your participation grade.

Plagiarism: In this course, as in all other courses, you are bound by the Honor Code. Therefore, the work you submit for this class must be your own. If you use any outside sources in your writing for this course, you must acknowledge them by using the MLA system of documentation, which is presented in detail in *The Bedford Handbook*. **All Websites or other Internet sources must be acknowledged and documented.** If you have any questions regarding the Honor Code as it applies to this course, please consult me or pages 97-100 of the Oxford College catalog.

Final Grade breakdown (I use the +/- scale):

Essays	45%
Research Paper	20%
Class Participation	20%
Final Exam	15%

### **Tentative Outline of Topics to be covered:**

August 25	Introduction and Objectives
August 27	Fiction and Writing About Fiction Reading: Alice Munro "An Ounce of Cure" 451; Writing About Fiction 43-63
Aug 30	James Joyce "Eveline" 524.
Sept 1	Hemingway "Soldier's Home" 152 and "On What Every Writer Needs" 159
Sept 3	Atwood "There was once" 537
September 6	Labor Day .
Sept 8	Drafts of Essay #1 due in class; Reading: Carver, "Popular Mechanics" 286.
Sept 10	Writing Workshop
Sept 13	Essay #1 due. Reading: Poetry's Appeal to the Senses 752-757; AND Kinnell, "Blackberry Eating" 838

Sept 15	Figures of Speech 777-783 and Walker “a woman is not a potted plant” 699
Sept 17	“Diction” 717-722 Owen “Dulce et Decorum Est” 764
Sept 20	Herrick, “To the Virgins, To Make Much of Time” 726, Marvell “To His Coy Mistress” 728. Research annotated source due.
Sept 22	Brooks “We Real Cool” 744 Heaney and Komunyakaa (handouts). Research paper topic due
Sept 24	Open Form 913-916, Rushin “The Black Back-Ups” 919
Sept 27	Hughes, “Dream Boogie” 1052, “Harlem” 1053, “Writing About Poetry” 708-714. Research paper annotated source due.
Sept 29	Sonnets 888-891, Sestina 896-898. Drafts of Essay #2 due.
Oct 1	Writing Workshop
Oct 4	Essay #2 due Reading <u>Tracks</u> . Annotated source due.
Oct 6-8	<u>Tracks</u> Research annotated source due Oct 10
Oct 11	Fall Break
Oct 13	Reading: <u>Tracks</u> Drafts of Essay #3 due
Oct 15	Writing Workshop. Annotated source due.
Oct 18-20	<u>Tracks</u>
Oct 20	Essay #3 due.
Oct 22	<u>Macbeth</u>
Oct 25-Oct 29	<u>Macbeth</u>
Nov 1-Nov 5	Southern Literature
Nov 8	Workshop
Nov 10	Essay #4 due
Nov 10-12	Writing In Other Disciplines
Nov 15-19	<u>Breath, Eyes, Memory</u>
Nov 17	Outline or partial draft of research paper due
Nov 22	Workshop on Research paper
Nov 22	Essay #5 due
Nov 24-26	Thanksgiving Break
Nov 29-Dec 3	<u>Breath, Eyes, Memory</u>
Dec 3	<b>Research paper due</b>
Dec 6	Review

