**English 112W**

**Assignment: Essay Proposal and First Draft**

**Due: Week 5 (Proposal)**

**Assignment Part One:** Essay Proposal

Write a 250 word (~1 page) proposal for the essay you will be working on this semester. Your proposal must address the following items, and be written in MLA format:

* **Your thesis statement**. You will need to develop an argument for this paper, and you must present your thesis statement as part of your proposal.
* **Show your topics**. These will be the main points to support your thesis.
* **Discuss which scenes in the book** (or for topic two, the movie and book) that you will be using as evidence in your paper.
* **Outline how you expect your paper to develop**: how will each scene you look at support your thesis?
* The Proposal may be written either in standard paragraph form or in point form. If using points, be sure to write in complete sentences.
* You will **not** use any secondary sources for this paper. You will combine your own ideas, thoughts, and arguments with evidence from the novel taken via citation.

The proposal is worth **5%** of the course grade, and will be marked out of five. The grade is based equally on grammar and diction, and content.

**Assignment Part Two:** Essay One Draft

Write a 1000 word (~4 pages) draft of essay one. Your draft will be an opportunity for you to write your initial ideas down, think things through to logical conclusions, and use the primary text as evidence for your essay, all while working from your marked and graded **Essay Proposal**. In order to be a successful essay, there are several parts that must work together to create a cohesive whole:

* The paper must be written in MLA format. Refer to the SFU style guide available via the student portal/class notes
* You must cite from whichever novel/short stories you are examining. You will need to have several quotations, which will work as evidence in order to support your position – a minimum of one citation per body paragraph
* You will **not** use any secondary sources for this paper. You will combine your own ideas, thoughts, and arguments with evidence from the novel taken via citation

The first draft is worth **10%** of the course grade, and will be marked out of ten. Half the grade is for grammar and diction, and the other half for content.

**Essay Topics:** Choose one of the following topics on which to write your proposal and essay. Once you have chosen a topic, you must follow through and write all three parts of the essay on the same topic. Note that there is no topic covering our last novel of the semester, *War of the* Worlds. This is because we will all be writing a paper on this novel in-class toward the end of the semester. You may, however, choose to write on this if you come up with your own topic, and I give you the go-ahead. **If you are choosing topic five, bear in mind that you must get permission from me in order to move forward**.

**Topic One:** Raymond Chandler has a unique literary voice. He uses short, descriptive language to present vivid scenes and characters. Choosing one of the following six characters – Carmen Sternwood, Vivian Regan, Eddie Mars, Agnes Lozelle, Harry Jones, or Lash Canino – discuss how Chandler builds their character through description and dialogue. What are we able to infer about them through the words they use, the clothes they wear, the expressions they make (both on their faces and with their bodies), and perhaps most importantly, their actions? **You may not write this topic on the character of Philip Marlowe!**

**Topic Two:** In the first third of our course, we’ve looked at three distinct types of detective story: hard-boiled, deductive reasoning, and armchair detective. Write an essay comparing these three styles of detecting, referring to the characters and their stories. Conclude by deciding which of the three seems the most likely to succeed on a regular basis, and which may be the least effective.

**Topic Three:** In both “The Tell-Tale Heart” by Edgar Allen Poe, and “The Yellow Wallpaper” by Charlotte Perkins Gilman, the narrators of the stories are not entirely reliable. Looking at both stories, discuss how having an unreliable narrator affects the tone of the story, and your own reading of it. As you do the work, bear in mind that the two narrators have different reasons for being unreliable (one is trying to hide something, the other is being lied to be people in their life). Do these different reasons have an effect on how you read the stories?

**Topic Four:** Our last two stories of the semester, “Jealous Husband Returns in Form of Parrot” by Robert Olen Butler and “The Courtship of Mr. Lyon” by Angela Carter, focus on animals or animal-like characters. Discuss how this dehumanization of the main characters works to actually create a more human story. How does the animal nature effect communication and connection between characters? Does having animalistic aspects actually help the characters make these connections, or does it hinder them?

**Topic Five:** You may choose your own topic. This may be on any of the novels we look at this semester, or on any of the short stories, or on any combination of the above. In addition, you may utilize any of the films we view this semester, so long as your essay also deals with one of the print texts. **If you choose this topic, you must get permission from me prior to writing the paper. This is to ensure that the topic you choose is appropriate, and that it is compatible with the assignment.**