ENGLISH 9 / Fall 2005
Introduction to Literary Analysis

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The Schedule
You can find a printable version of this syllabus (.pdf) here

Week 1
Tuesday, September 6:
Class: Introduction to the class, discussion of the theme of the class. Introductions to each other, the class, things you like to read—dislike. The role of reading in imagining—and creating—other worlds. The role of sound in poetry. Discussion of words and sounds in Gwendoline Brook's poem "We Real Cool." Homework: Read Coleridge's poem "Kubla Khan" (Gwyn 132) and write a response to it. Pay attention to the words. If you read and discussed this poem in high school, try to forget that and just focus on the words as if you have never read the poem before. If you have never read the poem before you will be at a slight advantage here! As you read, pay attention to the sounds of the words and the combinations of words. Think about the sound of the overall poem as it moves through the various stages of the description. Where does the mood change? How does the language make that happen? Think about images as well, but don't go into discussions of Coleridge's life or drug use. Focus on the poem as if you just found it in a treasure chest and knew nothing about the author, the context, or Kubla Khan. In your response to the poem, play literary critic as you imagine that term. What is going on here? How? Send this response to me via email (sjamies@drew.edu) OR just bring it to class on Tuesday.

Thursday, September 8:
Class: Discussion of "Kubla Khan" and the homework assignment. Focus on the words, the images, the movement of emotion through the text. What is going on here? How does Coleridge make us feel the way we do as we read these lines?
Terminology review: enjambment, alliteration, assonance, repetition, verb tense, image, association.
Homework: Read Louise Glück's poem "The School Children" (copy handed out in class). What is happening in each of the stanzas? How do the various roles change through the poem? Which words and images does Gluck use to make this happen? Pay attention to repetition of sounds and ideas and the way subtle changes in those repetitions change the way we experience the things in question. Also pay attention to unexpected words, the effects of enjambment, verb tense changes, and shifts in spatial relation of the events in the poem.
Virtual class (here's a link to the class, and here's the information about this component of the class): First pass: Describe yourself as a literary critic. What kinds of writing about literature have you found most satisfying? What is the goal of literary criticism? What kind of "moves" do you make as an interpreter of literature (what are your strategies for interpretation)?

Week 2
Tuesday, September 13:
Class: The role of the strange/unexpected word and the power of metaphor. We will discuss Louise Glück's poem "The School Children" (copy handed out in class 9/8). What is happening in each of the stanzas? How do the various roles change through the poem? Which words and images does Gluck use to make this happen? Pay attention to repetition of sounds and ideas and the way subtle changes in those repetitions change the way we experience the things in question. Also pay attention to unexpected words, the effects of enjambment, verb tense changes, and shifts in spatial relation of the events in the poem. Then look at e.e. cummings' "in just--" (copy handed out in class 9/8) and apply the same analysis to it.
Homework: Based on our analysis of form in "in just--", what is going on in the poem? As with the notion of the apple for the teacher in "School Children," you will need to look outside of the poem for at least one of the images; however, attend very carefully to the words, sounds, and rhythms cummings selected and their overall effect. You goal is not to tell us what cummings meant; but to tell us what the poem seems to be "about"-what is going on? Offer an interpretation beginning with a statement about what seems to be going on in this poem. (If you are not sure how to write about and cite poetry correctly, see the guidelines at www.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/composition/literature.htm)

Thursday, September 15:
Class: Sounds and language. We will briefly discuss what you found in "in just--" and the overall effect these features seem to have for you. We will pay careful attention to the effect of sounds and word choices and the way they work together to give us a sense of the feeling of the poem and to enhance the content. Think back to "We Real Cool!" Homework: Instead of responding to a poem tonight, I'd like you to respond to the idea of responding to poems. Read the handout from Helen Vendler 39-47 and 152-157 (copy handed out in class 2/2) and think about what she is doing. As she responds to the poems in these sections. What kinds of moves does she make as a literary critic? How do you react to them? Did her methods help you to see more within the poems? Do you like her strategies for breaking open or unpacking a poem? As a fellow literary critic, what can you imagine doing in the same way as Vendler? What did you not find so useful?
Reviewing terminology: alliteration, assonance, consonance, formalism, allusion, assertion

Week 3
Tuesday, September 20:
Thursday, September 22:  
**Class:** poetic structure (images and speech acts). We will review the terms Vendler discusses on 125-34 (copied handed out in class 9/8) and then apply them (and the list on 134) to at least one poem, beginning by looking at speech acts in Edna St. Vincent Millay's "Oh, Oh, You Will Be Sorry for that Word" (Gwynn 245) and Theodore Roethke's "My Papa's Waltz" (Gwynn 266). Then we will discuss speech acts and images in Mathew Arnold's "Dover Beach" (Gwynn 182-3).  
**Homework:** In this response, select one of the poems we discussed in class today and use Vendler to help you comment on the poem in more depth. Again, look at what is "going on" in the poem. Who is the speaker in the poem addressing? Who does the poem itself seem to be addressing? What is the effect of these different audiences and speech acts (the audience internal to the poem and us, the readers: the speech acts within the poem and the poem itself)? Consider the effect these poets might have created if they had made different choices and say something about the impact of the choices they did make. In other words, I'd like you to respond as a literary critic, discussing the poet's moves and how and why they do or do not work.  
**Terminology review:** meaning: emotional curve (skelaton); antecedent scenario: climax; agency; speech act.

**Week 4**

Tuesday, September 27:  
**Class:** Narrative & Lyric poems and Sonnets. We will briefly discuss Mathew Arnold's "Dover Beach" (Gwynn 182-3) and Theodore Roethke's "My Papa's Waltz" (Gwynn 266) and the difference between "lyric poems"and "ballad" or "narrative" poems. Then we will briefly discuss one narrative poem, "Bonny Barbara Allan" (Gwynn 59) or perhaps Robert Burns' "John Barleycorn" (Gwynn 114). What makes the ballad form work and how does it differ from the lyric? What makes "My Papa's Waltz" a ballad? How is "Dover Beach" different? What is a poem anyway? (Just checking to see if you are paying attention.) See Gwynn p. 9-12 if you want another explanation of all this. How about the sonnet form? There are several kinds of sonnet (sonetto, "little songs"); Most notably Shakespearean (English) and Italian (Petrarchan). We will discuss examples of each in class, including Shakespeare's Sonnet 130 "My Mistress' Eyes" (Gwynn 71) and John Keats' "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer" (Gwynn 146-7). Then we will look back at Edna St. Vincent Millay's "Oh, Oh, You Will Be Sorry for that Word" (Gwynn 245) and see whether reading it as an English Sonnet helps us to understand anything we missed last week.  
**Terminology review:** content genres, autobiography, love-poem: speech acts, confessional narration, meditation; outer form, octave, sestet, quatrain, couplet, thematic break.  
**Homework:** Find the words of a song that meet the definition of either a lyric poem or a ballad, print them out and bring a copy to class Thursday. **WARNING:** this is not as easy as it sounds. The first three songs you think of won't work. You need to be able to apply the terms Vendler discusses on p. 125-34 of the handout (copied handed out in class 9/8) and the list on p. 134 and come up with something more interesting than "blah blah blah." Hint: if the lyrics for your poem sound as if they would work in a Hallmark card it isn't a poem--and it will bring on my allergies and make me sneeze!  
**7:00pm:** Public reading by Daphne Kalotay, author of Calamity and Other Stories. Founder's Room, Mead Hall

**Thursday, September 29:**  
**Class:** Politics and places. How do poets use identity and voice for political purposes in their poems? We will look at a poem in which the author adopts an identity different than his own, William Blake's "The Little Black Boy" (Gwynn 111): one in which the author uses his own identity, and mistaken identity, to make a point, Sherman Alexie's "On the Amtrak from Boston to New York City" (Vendler 251-2--available in class), and Lorna Dee Cervantes "Poem for a Young White Man Who Asked Me How I, an Intelligent, Well-Read Person Could Believe in the War Between the Races" (Vendler 415-416--also available in class).  
**Homework:** Read Wilfred Owen's poem "Dulce et Decorum Est" (Gwynn 246) and respond to the way he uses form to add power to content. The form, like that of Blake's "Little Black Boy," is heric and quaint. Use your notes from class today to help you think about the ways that a poem is so much more than just words.  
**Virtual Class:** Use this chance to say anything you wanted to say about the poems we discussed in class today but did not have chance to say...  
**Reviewing terminology:** heroic quaint, universal speaker, prosa, persona,  
**Preparation for Paper #1:** Review what Gwynn says about poetry in her introduction (1-45) and what Vendler said in the handout we've been using in class and use this to do a reading of the song you selected Tuesday. Don't listen to the music--try to forget that there is music--just focus on the words. Don't worry about the terminology in Gwynn either (especially feet and meter). What I want you to do is to get a sense of how poetic language works, the moves poets make, the clues they leave, and the options you have as readers. Tell me what is going on in your song and how you know that. This may form a rough draft of paper #1 if you do it well enough.  

**Week 5**

Tuesday, October 4:  
**Class:** Looking outside the poem: Elphgrass. Literally the description of a visual image in words. In this case, the use of a painting as the basis for a poem. We will look at images and poems I will hand out in class. I will also sign people up to meet and discuss paper #1 (due on Friday, March 11th by 6 pm).  
**Homework:** Finish writing up the discussion of the second poem and image we discussed in class. Focus on the images created in the poem and the sounds of the words as well as the word choices.  
**Virtual Class:** list the song you are writing about and briefly summarize what you think is going on. Feel free to actually discuss each other's songs!  

**Thursday, October 6:**  
**Class:** No Class today--I have to be at an academic conference. In place of class I will hold individual meetings next week to talk about paper #1. You could also go to NYC to see Thoth (see below) and/or go see "The Diary of Anne Frank" (see below). Oh and don't forget to work on paper #1...  
**Homework:** Work on paper #1. If you want me to read a draft you need to send it to me as an email attachment by the end of Monday, October 10.  
**Virtual Class:** tell everyone what song you are writing about and briefly summarize what you think is going on in it. Feel free to actually discuss each other's songs!

8p.m. Thursday, October 6th at 8:00 pm thru Saturday, October 8th, and at 2:00 p.m. Saturday

"The Diary of Anne Frank" by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett; newly adapted by Wendy Kesselman
Thomas H. Kean Theatre, Dorothy Young Center for the Arts. $7/ticket; $6 on Thursday. Call 3030 for reservations. (You may write about this performance for paper #2 if you like)
Week 6

Tuesday, October 11:
Class: Introduction to drama as performance. Bring your copy of Shakespeare's Tempest to class. How does one imagine a play and bring it to life on the stage? We will read the first scene of The Tempest aloud and discuss reading plays as a performance (see handout available in class and via the K:drive "Resources" folder).

Homework: Read The Tempest. We will work through it as performance in class next Tuesday, but you need to have read it through once and worked out what is going on!

Thursday, October 13:
Class: Reading day--no classes. Use the time wisely (work on paper #1 perhaps, or read The Tempest)

Week 7

If you didn’t watch it on Friday or Saturday on Drew TV, sometime early this week you need to watch the BBC version of The Tempest in the library (it is on reserve for this class). This is a multi-ranged performance of Shakespeare. Think of it as a performance and consider the moves the director made. What effect do they have? What effect do you think he is going after? Look at costume, movement, and characterization. What do they tell you about the interpretation this performance is advancing? How might you have done things differently? What effect would your choices have made? You may also view one of the other versions of The Tempest on reserve for this class in the library (if you are interested in performance you may want to watch more than one version and compare them for paper #2).

Virtual Class: By Tuesday 18, post your comments on the BBC version of The Tempest and any other version you watched.

Week 8

Tuesday, October 25:
Class: Responding to The Tempest (2): Introduction and sources -- Group presentations and discussion (groups 1,2,3,4 present). See list of groups and readings. Presentations briefly summarize the essays or extracts you read, respond to issues raised in the reading, and generate discussion intended to help us all gain a deeper understanding of the play. Topics: "Introduction" (p.1-23 and 36-54), Stachey (p.287-302), Montaigne (p. 303-314).

Homework: Everyone read "Introduction" p.54-73 and "Perspectives on Imperialism" p. 98-108 (in the Arden Tempest)

Virtual Class: Each group posts their notes onto the discussion board. Others respond to the class discussion, add ideas, comment on issues raised, or set that thing you wanted to say in class but could not work out how to say. EVERYONE MUST POST SOMETHING.
7:00pm: Public reading by fiction writer Holiday Reinhorn, author of Big Cats Founder’s Room, Mead Hall

Thursday, October 27:
**Class:** Responding to The Tempest (3): Interpretations and appropriations -- Group presentations and discussion (groups 5, 6, 7, 8 present). See list of groups and readings.

Presentations briefly summarize the essays or extracts, respond to issues raised in the reading, and generate discussion intended to help us all gain a deeper understanding of the play. Topics: “Introduction” (p. 54-73), “Perspectives on Imperialism” (p. 98-108), Rodd’s Ariel (p. 315 + p.325-31), Manner’s Prospero and Caliban (p. 331-342).

**Homework:** Everyone read “The Text” (p.124-138), “Character” (p. 23-36) (in the Arden Tempest)

**Virtual Class:** Each group posts their notes onto the discussion board. Others respond to the class discussion, add ideas, comment on issues raised, or set that thing you wanted to say in class but could not work out how to say. EVERYONE MUST POST SOMETHING.

**Homework:** If you have not already done so, go see S.K.Thoth’s “Tested” in Central Park if you possibly can sometime before November 1. See week 5 above. You can find his website at <www.skthoth.com/SKTHOTH/Home_Pagex.html>

If Thoth isn’t there, observe what else is going on in that part of the park. Are there other performers? What are they doing? How are the people watching them behaving? Never been to NYC? Well, now is the time to go. This is homework! You can write paper #2 about Thoth if you want to do so.

**Virtual Class 2:** Post your response to Thoth. Why did I suggest that you go see this performance? What do you think of the world he creates and the story he performs? How does this connect to other things we have read so far this semester?

Week 9

**Tuesday, November 1:**
**Class:** Responding to The Tempest (4): Responding to The Tempest (3): Interpretations and appropriations -- Group presentations and discussion (groups 9, 10, 11, 12 present).

See list of groups and readings. Presentations briefly summarize the essays or extracts, respond to issues raised in the reading, and generate discussion intended to help us all gain a deeper understanding of the play. Topics: “The text” (p.124-138), “Character” (p. 23-36), “Afterlife” (p. 73-98), and “Stage and Film” (p. 112-124)

**Introduction to South Africa, South African Drama, and Sophiatown**

**Homework:** Read Sophiatown and view the PowerPoint presentation on recent South African history and context for the play (in the “Reserve” folder of the k:drive for this class)

**Virtual Class:** Each group posts their notes onto the discussion board. Others respond to the class discussion, add ideas, comment on issues raised, or set that thing you wanted to say in class but could not work out how to say. EVERYONE MUST POST SOMETHING.Critical readings of The Tempest --Group presentations and discussion.

**Thursday, November 3:**
**Class:** Brief discussion of Thoth and then discussion of Sophiatown.

**Homework:** Reread and block a few scenes from Sophiatown (and if you have not already done so, view the PowerPoint presentation on recent South African history and context for the play—in the “Reserve” folder of the k:drive for this class).

**Virtual Class:** Respond to Sophiatown. What do you think? What themes do you see? What questions do I need to answer win class on Tuesday? Which theories might be applied to Sophiatown? What would they help us to understand?

Week 10

**Tuesday, November 8:**
**Class:** Continued discussion of Sophiatown. Focus on specific scenes and dramatic moments.

**Discussion of paper #2, handouts, and questions.** (Due Tuesday November 22)

**Introduction to Bithedale Romance**

**Homework:** Read Bithedale Romance, pp. 40-78 (ch. 1-7). Pay attention to words, images, sentences, and the development of character and relationships, etc. You’ll need to read quite slowly until you get used to the style. You might even try reading aloud. As you read, try to visualize the action. If you were to make a film of this book, who would you cast in each role? Why? What kind of lighting would you use? And what general mood would you want to create?

**Virtual Class:** Reaction? Reactions? What themes do you see developing? Answer any of the questions above—or all of them! What do you want to focus on in class on Thursday?

**Thursday, November 10:**
**Class:** Discussion of Bithedale Romance, pp. 40-78 (ch. 1-7)

**Homework:** Read Bithedale Romance, pp. 79-123 (ch. 8-13). Pay attention to words, images, sentences. Is the style getting easier as you get used to it? Are you getting a better sense of this “modern arcadia”? What do you think of the place? What do you think of Zenobia? And Priscilla? And Hollingsworth? What do you make of Coverdale’s relationship with them? How do you see it evolving?

**Virtual Class:** Comments? What themes do you see now? What issues? What concerns? Answer any of the questions above—or all of them! What do you want to discuss in class Tuesday? What questions remain for you?

Week 11

**Tuesday, November 15:**
**Class:** Discussion of Bithedale Romance, pp. 79-123 (ch. 8-13)

**Homework:** Read Bithedale Romance, pp. 123-164 (ch. 13-20) Pay attention to words, images, sentences, and character development. What do you think of Hollingsworth now, for example? Do chapters 14 and 15 change the way you view him? What about Zenobia in chapter 20? Is she the same Zenobia you saw in chapter 13? And what of Priscilla? Has your attitude to her changed in any way? Finally, think about the narrator (Coverdale). How do you feel about him, especially after the big crisis?

**Virtual Class:** Comments? What themes do you see now? What issues? What concerns? Answer any of the questions above—or all of them! What do you want to discuss in class Thursday? What questions remain for you?

7:00 pm: Reading by authors Jonathan Blum and Lenore Look. Location t.b.a.

**Thursday, November 17:**
**Class:** Discussion of Bithedale Romance, pp. 123-164 (ch. 13-20)

**Homework:** Read Bithedale Romance, pp. 164-218 (ch. 21-end) Pay attention to words, images, sentences, the way the story develops and the way we learn more about the characters. Think about Moodie for example. Is he what you expected? What is his role in the plot? And Coverdale? Did the story end the way you predicted? What took you by
Virtual Class: Comments? What questions remain for you? Answer any of the questions above—or all of them! What do you want to discuss in class Tuesday? What questions remain for you?

Week 12

Tuesday, November 22:
Class: Final discussion of Blithedale Romance and Cultural contexts. Discussion of paper #3 (Due on December 14).
Brief introduction to PowerPoint on African American literature and time-line (in the "Resources" folder on the K:/drive).
Virtual Class: Respond to the opening of Paradise. What did you expect after the first chapter? To what extent has the novel been what you expected based on those first pages? What do you think Morrison was doing there?

Paper #2 due in the box outside my office in S.W. Bowne by 6 p.m. today.

Thursday, November 23:
Thanksgiving, no class. Eat, sleep, . . . and think about paper #3 and Paradise!

Week 13

Tuesday, November 29:
Class: Discussion of Paradise, pp. 1-77.
Homework: Read Toni Morrison’s Paradise, pp. 81-138.
Finish Paper #2, due Friday April 16.
Virtual Class: Responses? Questions? Points of confusion? What do you need explained? What themes do you see developing?

Thursday, December 1:
Class: Discussion of Paradise, pp. 81-138
Homework: Read Toni Morrison’s Paradise, pp. 141-266.
Virtual Class: Responses? Questions? Points of confusion? What do you need explained? What themes do you see developing?

Week 14

Tuesday, December 6:
Class: Discussion of Paradise, pp. 141-266
Homework: Read Toni Morrison’s Paradise, pp. 269-318.
Virtual Class: Responses? Questions? Points of confusion? What do you need explained? What themes do you see developing?

7:00 pm: Drew Student Fiction Reading. Location t.b.a.—go hear what your peers can write, and be impressed!

Wednesday, May 8: Last Class: Course evaluations—please don’t miss this class.
Class: Discussion of Paradise, pp. 269-318 and cultural contexts. Wrap up of the class, discussion of final paper, sign up for final deadlines and appointments to collect work and discuss grades.
Homework: Work on paper #3, get some sleep, eat, take care of yourself.

Week 15

Wednesday, December 14: Paper #3 is due in the box outside my office by 6 p.m. today.
(When you drop it off, sign up for an appointment to collect it and find out your final grade!)