

English 101, summer 2003 Draft class schedule

*VSS = Vancouver Short Stories*

May 6: Introduction

May 8: Stories of perspective and place: *VSS* – Ethel Wilson, “A Drink with Adolphus” Alice Munro, “Forgiveness in Families”

Tutorials: Introduction

May 13/15: *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*

Tutorials: Responses to the book

May 20/22: film of *JH*; final lecture

Tutorials: responses to the film

May 27: Stories of childhood: *VSS* – Wayson Choy, “The Jade Peony”; Frances Duncan, “Was that Malcolm Lowry?”

May 29: Begin *Anne of Green Gables*

Tutorials: child’s perspective: writing for children vs writing about children

June 3/5: *Anne of Green Gables*

Tutorials: their experience of place, e.g. PEI.

June 10: finish *Anne*

June 12: Stories about women’s role: *VSS*: Jean Burton, “Phyllus”; Sky Lee, “Broken Teeth”

Tutorials: Begin to work on first essay: brainstorm topics

June 17: Histories and stories: *VSS*: Grainger, “In Vancouver”; Sinclair, “The Golden Fleece”; Kogawa, “1941-42”

June 19: Begin *Alias Grace*

Tutorials: peer review drafts of first essay

June 24/26: *Alias Grace*      FIRST ESSAY DUE IN TUTORIAL

July 3: *Alias Grace*      NO CLASS TUESDAY – CANADA DAY

Tutorials: responses to Atwood

July 8: finish *Alias Grace* I AM AWAY JULY 10. Lecture: *VSS*: select from unassigned stories: Rebecca, also Greg?

Tutorials: return first essay: discuss; begin to brainstorm second essay, on *Alias Grace*

July 15/17: Stories of First Nations: *VSS*: Owen, “The Prophetess”; Johnson, “The Two Sisters” and Siwash Rock”; Carr, “Sophie”.

Tutorials: responses to these stories

July 22/24: Eden Robinson, *Monkey Beach*

Tutorials: peer review of drafts of 2<sup>nd</sup> essay

July 29/31: finish *Monkey Beach*; wrap-up course. SECOND ESSAY DUE

Tutorials: responses to *Monkey Beach* (will be on exam)

Aug 12: FINAL EXAM; RETURN 2<sup>ND</sup> ESSAY

Good openings in English essays include:

- Essential information about the text
- A narrow focus on a general topic
- Evidence: quotation and paraphrase from primary source texts
- Indication of the writer's view/position/critical stance toward the topic
- Method: indication of how the paper/argument/topic will be developed

Here are two samples from first-year English essays:

Sample 1:

**Topic:** In some work of literature, a character who appears briefly or does not appear at all is a significance presence. Write an essay in which you show how such a character functions in the work. You may wish to discuss how the character affects action, theme, or the development of other characters.

**Opening of student's essay:**

In her passionate novel *Obasan*, author Joy Kogawa introduces a silent character, who has enormous influence on other characters in the story and on the story itself. The author presents a saga of two Japanese-Canadian families through the eyes of a main protagonist, Naomi. Her mother's character appears briefly in the novel, yet has tremendous influence on the Naomi's development. The mother's character becomes a prism throughout which one is able to understand Naomi's journey in her life. Mother, the ideal, the loss the mystery, the silence about her fate and her rediscovery is a preoccupation of this novel. Moreover, her request to keep her children unaware of her fate affects Naomi's life as well as the theme and atmosphere of the novel.

Sample 2:

**Topic:** Develop a topic on relations between the individual and society, in Thomas Hardy's novel, *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872).

**Opening of student's essay:**

The need for collective approval from family members, peers, and people within a community is as apparent today as it was in the middle of the nineteenth century. Thomas Hardy's novel, *Under the Greenwood Tree*, displays this necessity, and through his character, Miss Fancy Day, we can see this desire for social acceptance. The for approval from her father for her actions, and from the community for her actions and appearance, is apparent throughout the novel. Hardy also shows that even though public acceptance is so important to Fancy, there is also a desire within her to maintain individuality. Through her courtship with Dick, we can see Fancy's need to conform to the standards of society while still maintaining a tinge of distinctiveness.

English 101, Summer 2003  
Grading Criteria

When marking your essay, we will be paying attention to:

**1) Content**

- Your argument: Your presentation and understanding of the point of your essay, and your effectiveness in conveying this to your reader.
- Evidence Your use of support from the texts: your selection of apt examples and quotations to support and develop your argument. Avoid plot summary.
- Organization: The logical and effective development of your essay, with an introduction that establishes your argument, and a conclusion that wraps it up.

**2) Technical Style**

Diction, spelling, grammar, use of tense, format, documentation of sources, etc. CHECK YOUR SPELLING, AND PROOFREAD AFTERWARDS. DO NOT RELY ON YOUR COMPUTER TO DO THIS FOR YOU.

**Letter Grades**

A range: Outstanding (perhaps 10% of the class). A spark of individuality or originality in the argument; interesting discussion well supported with evidence from the text; fluid, sophisticated style; very few technical errors.

B range: Good. Interesting ideas, but argument not fully developed; some organizational weakness; some technical errors. A well-constructed essay whose ideas and argument are limited may receive a B grade.

C range: Competent. Ideas unexciting and weakly developed; insufficient or inappropriate use of supporting evidence; some organizational and technical problems which impede the reader's understanding.

D range: Bare pass. May be largely plot summary; lacks argument or focus; major technical and/or organizational errors.

F: Unacceptable. Reasons include: as in D, but so extreme as to render the paper unintelligible; simple plot summary; insufficient length (half or double the assigned wordcount); unacknowledged use of others= words; wildly off topic, etc.

English 101: first essay

length: 1200 words

due: June 26

Write an essay in which you develop a comparison between *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, and *Anne of Green Gables*. Your essay should be structured with a distinct argument that involves similarities and differences, and is supported by quoted evidence from the two books.

Choose a topic of comparison that interests you, and involves substantial aspects of both books. Some suggestions:

- the role of friendship in the characters' lives and in the social communities depicted in the two books
- the use and significance of setting (interior and/or exterior) to enhance the atmosphere and impact of the narrative
- characters' attitudes towards science and knowledge
- the construction and importance of respectability in the social worlds of the 2 books
- some specific features of each author's style, such as their opening and closing paragraphs, creation of suspense, use of foreshadowing, narrative structure, etc.
- gender roles and expectations, in relation to several major characters

Two weeks before the essay is due, bring your ideas to your tutorial:

possible topics, ways to develop arguments, and what constitutes significant evidence

One week before the essay is due, bring a draft to your tutorial.

Writer:

Editor:

Peer review worksheet: Draft Intro. paragraph for the first essay.

1. Read over the paragraph carefully. Be respectful of others' work, ideas and effort, but take the role of editor seriously.
2. In the margin of each paper, use a wavy line to signal all of the places where you notice yourself wondering about wordings, where you don't understand, or stop and have to re-read.
3. Can you identify a thesis statement? Write it out in your own words and see if the writer agrees.
4. Did the writer convey the significance of their comparison, i.e. the "so what factor?"
5. Can you begin to see how the argument will develop comparing the two novels? What might you expect to see in the following paragraphs?
6. Bring along this peer review work sheet, your original draft paragraph, and your draft essay to the drop-in meeting with your TA or instructor next week.

Notes:

**English 101 - Feedback sheet for English 101 Assignment #1:**

**Topic:** Write an essay in which you develop a comparison between *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, and *Anne of Green Gables*. Your essay should be structured with a distinct argument that involves similarities and differences, and is supported by quoted evidence from the two books.

1. **Title:** The title should provide some indication of the focus of the topic.
2. **Opening paragraph:** thesis and organization of the topic, position of the writer and focus of the topic.
3. **Body of the essay:**
  - a). Use of evidence
  - b). Logical connections between ideas and sections of the essay
  - c). Balance of emphasis between each novel
  - d). Good transitions between paragraphs
  - e). Development of significance or “so what?” factor in the argument.
4. **Conclusion:** Conclusion wraps up the argument and points out the significance of the discussion.
5. **Technical Style:**
  - a). Sentence structure with correct spelling, grammar, usage and punctuation.
  - b). Conventional paragraph structures that provide clear central focus and supporting details
  - c). Conventional organizational structures, connection paragraphs with smooth transitions.
  - d). Uses basic citation/documentation skills as appropriate.

**Final comments for writers:**

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English 101, Summer 2003: Second Essay, on *Alias Grace*:

Length: 1500 Words

Due: in lecture, 31 July

*Alias Grace* weaves together many themes and stories, posing a number of questions about the characters and their contexts (historical and social). It also interrogates notions of reliability, truth, and consequences. The purpose of this essay is to analyze some of these threads, through a close examination of a selected passage.

Choose one section of the book, which may be anywhere from a paragraph to several pages in length, and which, in your view, contains significant links to several of the novel's major concerns. Your essay will discuss these concerns, using their appearance in the passage as a starting point. In other words, a close reading of your passage is the foundation of your essay, and your thesis statement will deal with the significance of the chosen passage in relation to the book as a whole. You may expand your discussion to refer to any other literary work on this course.

Themes and questions to consider include:

the divided self  
the reliability of the printed record  
the uncertainty of the "truth"  
gender relations  
power relations and social control (servants, prisoners, mentally ill)  
the role of quilts in the content and structure of the book  
the role of dreams in contributing to our understanding of the characters  
the role of science and medicine  
Canadian / American relations  
patterns of imagery (flowers, blood)

and anything else that strikes you as significant

If you are having trouble selecting a passage, here is a list that may inspire you (you may choose one of these):

Time frame:

15/17 July:

22/24 July: Peer review drafts of essay (in tutorials)

31 July: essay due

Writer:

Editor:

Peer review worksheet: Second session on the second essay, on *Alias Grace*.

1. Read everything your partner has written. In the margin, use a wavy line to signal all of the places where you notice yourself wondering about wordings, where you don't understand, or stop and have to reread.

2. Has the writer identified all the potential depths and connections in the selected passage? If you see more, note them here.

3. Does the thesis statement / argument create interest in the selected passage?

4. Organization: does the essay (or outline) develop its discussion in an interesting way, such as prioritizing the major features of the passage?

5. Does the essay reach a satisfying conclusion?