

Poetry and Fiction Close Reading Papers (4 typed pages each)

Due Dates:

- Poetry Paper Due On or Before October 17
- Fiction Paper Due On or Before November 14

You will be given a specific, assigned text to close read for both of these assignments. I will provide you with the text as a handout or assign one of the texts from the *Norton* that we did not discuss in class.

You may focus on explicating the assigned text's theme or its form or a combination of both. You should refer to key passages and/or key events in the text. No outside research is necessary. You should focus on demonstrating your understanding of the close reading methods we are honing in this class (e.g., discussing words, sentences, tone, point of view, plot, meter, rhyme, etc.). *The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms* and the *Norton Anthology* may be used if any outside sources are needed to help clarify your reading or method.

Suggested Format:

- **Introduction:** Peak your reader's interest and focus your close reading. You do not need to provide a plot summary; assume your reader is familiar with the text.
 - **Descriptive Thesis:** Place your descriptive thesis in the first or second paragraph. This thesis statement will outline what your paper will discuss. For example, "In this paper I will show how the story uses foreshadowing to advance the protagonist's character development." The thesis will describe what you will discuss in the paper and describe some aspect of the text.
 - **Focus!** This is a short paper—not a dissertation. Be careful your thesis doesn't bite off more than a 4 page paper can reasonably argue.
 - **Interest!** Make sure your reader understands (implicitly or explicitly) what makes this argument worthwhile. What will the reader gain from reading your argument?
- **Body:** The paper's support (approximately pages 2-4). Start each paragraph with a clear topic sentence that connects the evidence with a portion of the thesis. Consider the arrangement of the body paragraphs. What order will most effectively explain your close reading of this text?
- **Conclusion:** Can be brief—one paragraph. Wrap up your analysis. You might consider talking about other issues your reading raises—aspect your focus did not allow you cover, but would be important for a longer paper. Finally, double check to make sure your concluding remarks match your thesis statement. Have you shifted directions? Come to a more specific set of conclusions? If so, revise your thesis to reflect these changes.

Before passing in each paper I encourage you to drop by my office hours to chat about your paper, look over your thesis statement, etc. **No revisions will be allowed.** Put your very best effort into the final drafts.