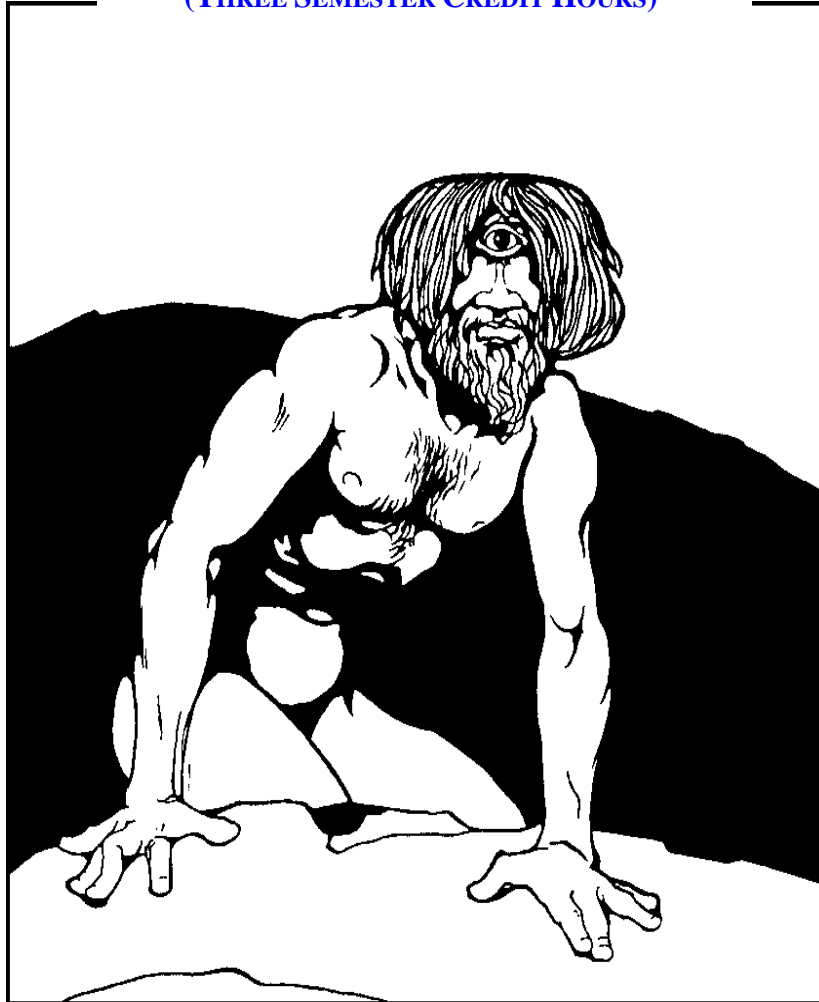


ENGLISH 265W
READINGS IN LITERATURE OF THE
WESTERN WORLD
SPRING 2008
(THREE SEMESTER CREDIT HOURS)



DR. PAUL W. CHILD

CAMPUS OFFICE: EVANS 204
TELEPHONE: 936-294-1412
E-MAIL: ENG_PWC@SHSU.EDU

CLASS DAYS AND TIMES:
SECTION 01: MWF 8:00 A.M. TO 8:50 A.M.
SECTION 04: MWF 10:00 A.M. TO 10:50 A.M.

LOCATION: EVANS 353

OFFICE HOURS: MWF 11:00 A.M. TO 12:00 A.M.,
AND BY APPOINTMENT



**A REAL BOOK IS NOT ONE THAT WE READ,
BUT ONE THAT READS US.**

W.H. AUDEN

**WHEN I AM READING A BOOK,
WHETHER WISE OR SILLY,
IT SEEMETH TO ME TO BE ALIVE
AND TALKING TO ME.**

JONATHAN SWIFT



ENGLISH 265 W
SPRING 2008
DR. PAUL W. CHILD

COURSE DESCRIPTION

English 265 W, Readings in Literature of the Western World (Writing Enhanced), features literature written from the time of the ancient Hebrews to the time of the European Renaissance. The readings in this class have not only reflected and critiqued Western values over time, but have, in part, constructed and deconstructed them.

Like any literature class, this course works best as a collaboration between professor and student: I will provide contexts and structure for the class; you will create the class with collaborative discussion about the works and ideas.

In order to establish your credibility as literary critics, you will acquire a number of useful critical terms in this class—the “lingo” that we use in making arguments about literature intelligently and economically.

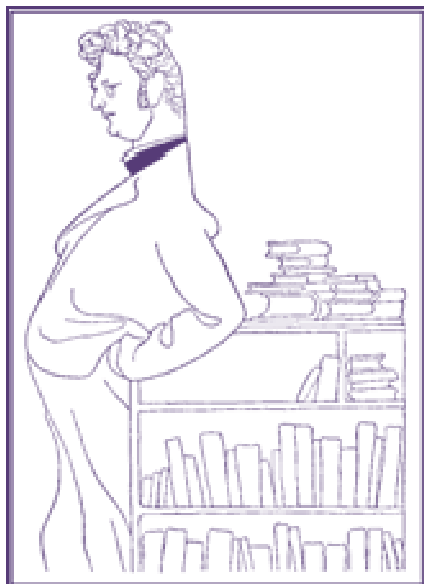
I will assess your understanding of the works and ideas with reading response journal papers, reading quizzes, and examinations featuring essays.

Prerequisites: Successful completion of English 164W and English 165W.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The course aims primarily to

- give you a broader understanding and appreciation of literature from the Western World
- develop your skills in expressing yourself in writing
- encourage you to analyze and critically evaluate arguments and points of view



POLICIES AND REQUIREMENTS

DR. PAUL W. CHILD
EVANS 204
EXTENSION 4-1412
ENG_PWC@SHSU.EDU
OFFICE HOURS: MWF 11:00 A. M. TO 12:00 A.M., AND BY APPOINTMENT

I. CLASS MEETING TIMES AND LOCATIONS

English 265.01 MWF 8:00 a.m. to 8:50 a.m. Evans 353
English 265.04 MWF 10:00 a.m. to 10:50 a.m. Evans 353

II. REQUIRED TEXT

Wilkie and Hurt, eds. *Literature of the Western World*. 5th ed. Vol. 1 Prentice Hall. ISBN: 0-13-018666-X (paper).

You must purchase or otherwise procure the text for this class. Get your book right away, before the bookstores return unsold copies to their distributors.

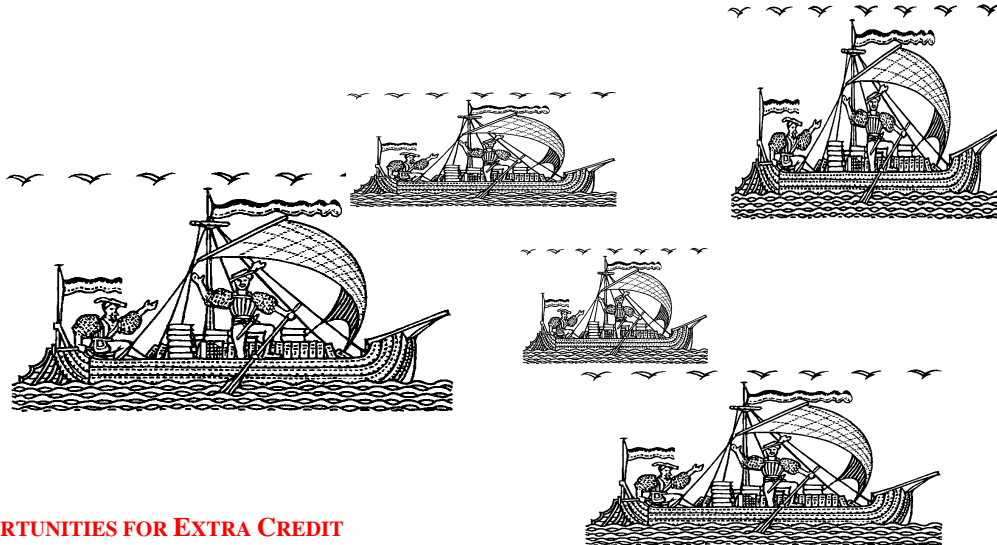
To assure me that you have, in fact, procured the book for this class, I ask that you show it to me on or before Friday, January 25; in the meantime, you are still responsible for all reading assignments from the text.

You must bring the book to class every day.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS (WITH APPROXIMATE RELATIVE VALUES) *

1. Reading Response Journal: 30% collectively (see pages 19-36)
2. Daily Reading Quizzes: 20% collectively (see pages 37-40)
3. Three Unit Examinations: 15% each (see pages 41-44)
4. Participation: 5%. To do well with this grade, *engage* the class: Show that you care about the materials and the assignments. Come to class; come to class on time; come to class having read the materials, eager to discuss the works. Avoid complacency. Try to break the habit of automatically answering, "I don't know" when I direct a question toward you. You probably *do* know, if you give the question a couple of moments' thought. Show me also that you are taking careful class notes.

* To receive credit for the course, you must submit/complete all of these major requirements.



IV. OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXTRA CREDIT

None. There are too many other ways to succeed in this class.

V. ATTENDANCE POLICY (NON-NEGOTIABLE)

Since you have decided to take this class at this time, I presume that you *want* to be here. Accordingly, I expect that you attend class *every* day. Life being what it is, however, you are allowed *five* absences before your final grade begins dropping incrementally. After those five, an *A* becomes a *B*, a *B* becomes a *C*, and so forth. The clock begins ticking as soon as your name appears on my roster.

Except in the case of a university-excused absence (for which I should receive formal documentation), I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. Please—no doctor's notes, hospital vouchers, death certificates, court summons, or long tales of woe!

An extended illness does not excuse you from this policy; my rationale is that if you are too ill to attend all classes, you should withdraw from your courses and try them again when you can attend without distraction or dis-ease.

If you have a job or other extracurricular distractions that will prevent your attending class regularly and submitting all assignments on time, please take another class and try this one again in a later term.

VI. LATE ARRIVAL, EARLY DEPARTURE

Arriving late is both disruptive and impractical. So for the protection of your fellow students (and myself), I count every two instances of tardiness as one absence. You are tardy if you arrive after I begin making announcements or lecturing. If you arrive too late to take a reading quiz, you will not be allowed to take day's quiz.

Do not leave class early unless you provide me with a formal note *before class begins* explaining the reason for leaving. If you stay less than half the class, of course, you are absent for the day.

VII. MAKE-UP POLICY

An absence, even one of those rare ones excused by the University, does not excuse you from taking an examination or from submitting a written assignment on time. Because of the difficulties for me in keeping track of the daily performance of some hundred students, there are no make-ups for reading quizzes; if you miss a quiz because of an absence (except a University-excused absence, for which you must provide documentation), you will receive a "0" But you will be allowed to drop two reading quiz grades at the end of the term.

You should try always to avoid missing an examination date, of course. In the rare case that you must miss such a day, however, give me substantial notice; I'd rather not hear about your absence after the fact. We will arrange for you to make up the examination before the next class period of attendance.

If you are absent on the day on which a journal assignment is due, you must get the response to me in *physical* form on the due date (except in the most unusual circumstances, I do not accept materials in electronic form). Give it to me sometime before the due date, or send it by way of a trusted friend.

VIII. READING QUIZZES

To assure me that you have made an honest attempt to read the assigned materials—in this *literature* class—I will give you a quiz for every substantial reading assignment. For the general format and expectations for these quizzes, see pages 37-40.



IX. EXAMINATIONS

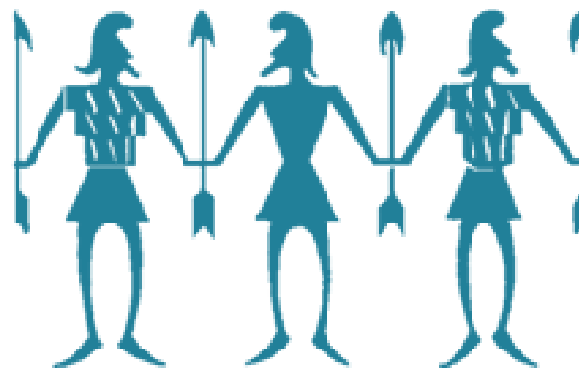
Three unit examinations will assess your grasp of readings and class discussions. For the general format and expectations, see pages 41-44. The final of these unit examinations will *not* be comprehensive.

X. GRADING

For the grading scale, see page 12.

At about the middle of the term, I will make up a spread sheet with your averages so that you know where you stand in the class to that point. While I would never encourage anyone to drop a class, except in a case in which excessive absences make your passing impossible, the spread sheet average will help you make a better-informed decision about your possibilities for success in the course.

I will post grades confidentially on line no later than 9:00 a.m. on Monday, May 19, the deadline set by the Office of the Registrar.



XI. ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

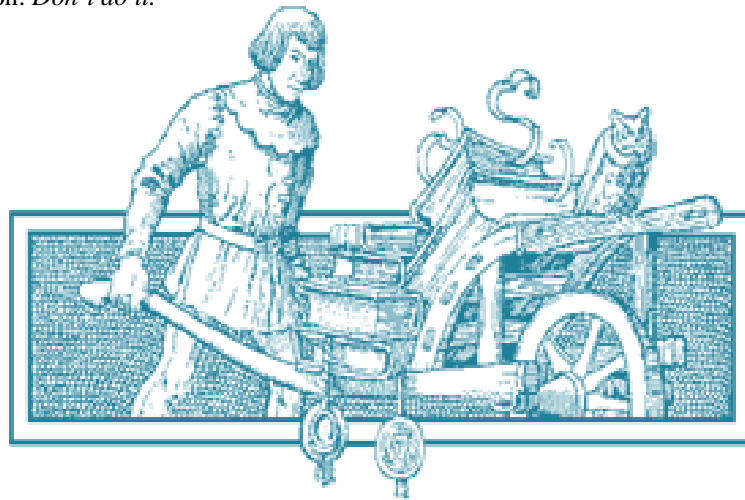
For definitions, I refer you first to the Sam Houston State University policy statement about academic dishonesty in Paragraph 5.3 of the “Code of Student Conduct and Discipline” in the official *Student Guidelines*. Please read through the short description very carefully.

Plagiarism (a word that comes from the Latin term for plundering) is literary theft, the intentional or sometimes merely careless stealing of someone else’s words or ideas and the passing them off as one’s own without giving due credit to the original author. Plagiarism not only defeats the very purpose of the educational process—to make an independent thinker and writer of you—but also constitutes academic fraud. Any written assignment convicted of plagiarism will fail; in serious and clearly deliberate cases, the student will fail the course and face the appropriate dean for further disciplinary action. *Don’t do it.*

Unintentional plagiarism is plagiarism nonetheless.

To avoid the temptation to plagiarize, do not ever consult outside sources when writing journal responses.

Any student convicted of cheating on an examination or quiz will fail the examination or quiz and will be subject to university disciplinary action: *Don’t do it.*



XII. NOTE ON NOTES: CLIFF’S NOTES, MONARCH NOTES, SPARKNOTES, AND OTHER SUCH DIGEST GUIDES TO LITERATURE

Usually such resources provide useful plot and character summaries, cultural backgrounds, and some critical commentary. You may find them helpful for establishing contexts and understanding the texts, which are not always easy..

Do not, however, read such digest guides as *substitutes* for the primary works themselves; a work of literature is not a paraphrase or summary. In order to pass any quiz or examination, you will have to read the original works.

Of course, to avoid plagiarism, you should never draw language or ideas from these guides in writing assignments. (I own copies of all these and can almost always spot plagiarism.)

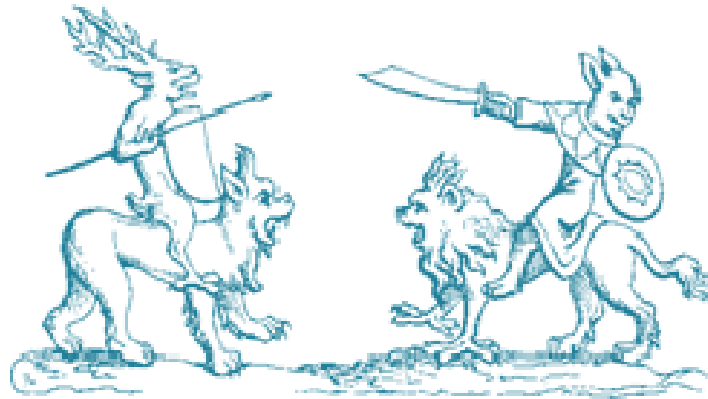
And please—as a matter of respect to your professor, your fellow students, and the venerable Homer, Chaucer, Cervantes, Shakespeare, et alia—do not ever bring such a guide into the classroom. Agreed?

XIII. CLASSROOM COMPORIMENT

Please observe the customary classroom courtesies. I will merely paraphrase the University’s policy statement here: Students will avoid any classroom conduct that intentionally or unintentionally disrupts the learning process and thus impedes the missions of the University. Please turn off or mute your cellular phone before class begins. Do not use/check a text-messaging device. You may not open a lap-top computer in class. Remove iPod “buds” and other such ornaments. You should not eat in class; use tobacco products; make derogatory remarks about fellow students or the class (your professor has a remarkably good sense for hearing whispers); read newspapers or do work for other classes; sleep (ouch);

talk with fellow students (or to yourself!) at inappropriate times; wear inappropriate clothing; or engage in any other form of distraction.

If you engage in disruptive or otherwise inappropriate behavior in the classroom, I will ask that you leave the room. Continued behavior of this sort will result in dismissal from the class and referral to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action.



XIV. ADDENDA

Students with Disabilities: Sam Houston State University responsibly observes the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you have a disability that may adversely affect your work in this class, please register with the SHSU Counseling Center and talk with your professor about how he can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. No accommodation can be made until you register with the Counseling Center, however. Contact the Chair of the Committee for Continuing Assistance for Disabled Students and Director of the Counseling Center, Lee Drain Annex, by calling (936) 294-1720.

Observance of Religious Holy Days: Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. University policy 861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. A student desiring to absent himself or herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day(s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s) early in the term.

Visitors in the Classroom: I always welcome visitors in the class-room—a chance for *you* to show off. But the visitor must not disrupt the classroom with his or her attendance.

Instructor Evaluation: The University asks that you complete a course/ instructor evaluation form toward the end of the term. So if you bide your time patiently, you will have the opportunity to turn the tables on your professor by evaluating *him*.

E-Mail Policy: I am always happy to answer questions or address concerns by e-mail (eng_pwc@shsu.edu). But in e-mailing, please address me (“Dear Professor Child”), and identify yourself clearly. (Thank you.)

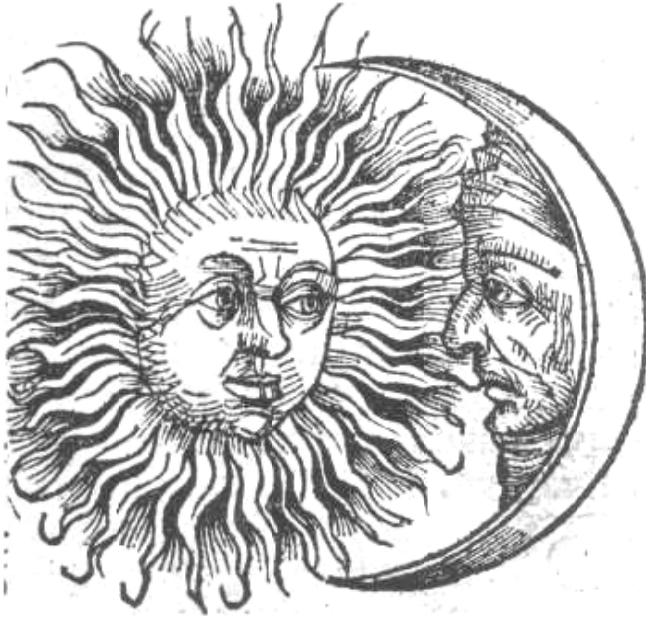
And Finally: I reserve the right to make minor changes in the syllabus.



GRADING SCALE

We follow a standard ten-point grading scale:

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	59 and below



CLASS CALENDAR

Unless indicated otherwise, we meet for class on all of the days listed below. Complete the writing assignment and reading assignment in Wilkie and Hurt (“WH”) for the indicated date. You should expect a quiz for every reading assignment.

The first several class days are devoted to introductions and to discussing various approaches to reading. Because there are no official reading assignments for these days, you should look at the calendar and try to read ahead.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16

Course Introduction

FRIDAY, JANUARY 18

Introduction: Approaches to Reading

MONDAY, JANUARY 21

Martin Luther King Day (No Class)

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 23

Introduction: Approaches to Reading

FRIDAY, JANUARY 25

Reading Assignment: “The Ancient World” (WH 1-15)

Deadline for Procuring Class Text

MONDAY, JANUARY 28

Reading Assignment: from Genesis (WH 68-91)

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 30

Reading Assignment: Overview of Reading Response Journal (pages 19-24 of this booklet)

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 1

Reading Assignment: from The Book of Job (WH 91-120)

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 4

Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal #1 (page 25 of this booklet)

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6

Reading Assignment: Homer, *Odyssey*, Books 1-4 (WH 273-330)

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 8

Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal #2 (page 26 of this booklet)

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 11

Reading Assignment: Homer, *Odyssey*, Books 5-9 (WH 330-87)

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 13

Reading Assignment: Homer, *Odyssey*, Books 10-12 (WH 387-433)

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 15

Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal #3 (page 27 of this booklet)

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 18

Reading Assignment: Homer, *Odyssey*, Books 13-17 (WH 433-507)

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 20

Reading Assignment: Homer, *Odyssey*, Books 18-20 (WH 507-46)

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 22

Reading Assignment: Homer, *Odyssey*, Books 21-24 (WH 546-94)

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 25

Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal #4 (page 28 of this booklet)

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 27

Reading Assignment: Aesop, *Fables* (WH 597-611)

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 29

Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal #5 (page 29 of this booklet)

MONDAY, MARCH 3

Unit Examination One

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5

Reading Assignment: Sophocles, *Oedipus the King* (WH 743-91)

FRIDAY, MARCH 7

Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal #6 (page 30 of this booklet)

MONDAY, MARCH 10, THROUGH FRIDAY, MARCH 14: SPRING RECESS

MONDAY, MARCH 17

Reading Assignment: Sophocles, *Antigone* (WH 791-839)

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19

Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal #7 (page 31 of this booklet)

FRIDAY, MARCH 21

Good Friday (No Class)

MONDAY, MARCH 24

Reading Assignment: Euripides, *Medea* (WH 844-77)

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26

Reading Assignment: Aristophanes, *Lysistrata* (WH 914-66)

FRIDAY, MARCH 28

Professional Obligation (No Class)

Reading Assignment: "The Middle Ages" (WH 1279-87)

MONDAY, MARCH 31

Reading Assignment: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* 1-2 (WH 1613-40)

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2

FRIDAY, APRIL 4

Reading Assignment: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* 3-4 (WH 1640-70)

MONDAY, APRIL 7

Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal #8 (page 32 of this booklet)

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9

Reading Assignment: Chaucer, *The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale* (WH 1708-33)

FRIDAY, APRIL 11

MONDAY, APRIL 14

Unit Examination Two

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16

Reading Assignment: "The Renaissance" (WH 1849-64)

FRIDAY, APRIL 18

Reading Assignment: Cervantes, from *Don Quixote* (WH 1990-2011)

MONDAY, APRIL 21

Reading Assignment: Cervantes, from *Don Quixote* (WH 2011-2030)

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23

Reading Assignment: Shakespeare, Sonnet 18: "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?" (WH 2246), Sonnet 73: "That time of year thou mayst in me behold" (WH 2247)

Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal #9 (pages 33-34 of this booklet)

FRIDAY, APRIL 25

Reading Assignment: Donne, "The Sun Rising" (page 47 of this booklet), "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning" (WH 2255-56), Holy Sonnet 14: "Batter my heart, three-person'd God" (WH 2258-59)

MONDAY, APRIL 28

Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal #10 (page 35 of this booklet)

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30

Reading Assignment: Milton, from *Paradise Lost*, Book I (WH 2104-16)

FRIDAY, MAY 2

MONDAY, MAY 5

Reading Assignment: Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Book IX (WH 2156-85)

WEDNESDAY, MAY 7: LAST CLASS DAY

Submit Bound Reading Response Journal for Final Credit (see page 36 of this booklet)

UNIT EXAMINATION THREE (FINAL EXAMINATION): DATE AND TIME TO BE ANNOUNCED

THE READING RESPONSE JOURNAL



RATIONALE

As part of the writing component of this “W” course, the reading response journal provides you with an opportunity to respond informally and privately to the literary work (although your instructor eavesdrops). It asks that you respond both intellectually and emotionally: What do you *think* about the work, and what do you *feel* about it? Consider a couple of matters as you respond:

- 1) The experiences that authors write about—including those from long ago and far away, with very different cultural experiences and expectations than ours—are not so very different than many of your own, even though the literary experience is fictionalized, objectified, and formalized by language. Ask these questions as you read and consider the journal responses: What of myself do I find in the work? How does the work read *me*?
- 2) Each reading of a work, if it is undertaken honestly and intelligently, improves your ability to read. Ask this question: How does my reading of a piece of literature improve my critical reading skills?

RESPONSE JOURNAL REQUIREMENTS

During the semester, you will respond to ten journal questions.

Typically I will ask for a minimum number of pages, which I think necessary to develop a valuable response. Never a maximum—write on, write on, but always avoid writing generally and superficially in a mere attempt to fill space. In your responses, strive for development of ideas, convincing demonstration of familiarity with the works, and honesty in plumbing your own depths.

I have designed the response journal questions in such a way that you will not be able to find answers anywhere else beyond your own reading of a work and your own careful intellectual searching. So do not *ever* consult any outside sources for these response assignments. Consulting an on-line source or a digest resource like Cliff’s Notes will not only confuse you and ultimately waste your time, but also tempt you to draw language and ideas that are not your own and that you will not be able to adapt to your journals. Don’t do it.

The objective of the journal is to think your way through the experience of reading. Since I’ll be seeing the *process*, not the product, of your thinking about the work, I don’t expect perfectly organized and polished essays. Accordingly, I will not be evaluating style, grammar, mechanics, and other such features (though, obviously, the better you write, the better your argument).



THE PROCESS

For each entry I have given a question or a set of questions about the work under discussion—a “prompt,” if you will, to stimulate thinking about the work and about your experiences in reading it. Answer *all* parts of each question that call for a written response.

In almost every case, you will read the work of literature and complete the journal assignment *before* we consider it in class. That way, you have the opportunity to come up with your *own* ideas about the piece. Thus the response journal encourages you to become an independent critical thinker.

The questions or prompts will vary in scope and extent. Sometimes I may ask you to explore your own ideas about a particular theme, then ask that you read the specific work of literature and respond to the author’s treatment of the same theme. At other times, I may ask that you try your hand at a certain literary technique before analyzing the author’s use of the same method in his or her work. At other times. . . .

The questions and your responses may end up corresponding closely to the classroom discussion of the work, or they may have little or no relation whatsoever. The primary aims, again, are to explore your own experiences in light of your reading and to develop your critical reading, thinking, and writing skills.

RESPONSE FORMAT

Type responses, double-spaced, in twelve-point serif font (that is, with the tails on it, like the font on this page), on clean white paper, with a one and one-half inch left-hand margin and all other margins one inch.

Submit individual responses on scheduled dates. Label each entry in the upper left-hand corner of the first page (only) with the following standard Modern Language Association (MLA) heading:

Stu Dent

Professor Child

English 265 W

Date of Submission

Paginate (put page numbers on) the journal entry by creating a header in the upper right-hand corner of your pages, like this:

Dent 2 [3, 4, etc]

Don’t put any commas, “page,” or “p.”

Follow the guidelines for heading and pagination precisely, down to the last mark of punctuation. Once you get the habit, it will become second nature.

Every journal response should have both a leading title (centered) and the response number. Center and double-space the titles. For example:

Sophocles' *Antigone*: Public Duty and Private Conscience

Reading Response Journal Entry # 10

When citing the title of a longer work (an epic poem or a full-length play, for example), put it in italics (*or underline it, but not both*); when citing the title of a shorter work (a Shakespearean sonnet, for example), enclose it within quotation marks. Do not adorn your own title in any way with italics, underlining, bold-face font, or larger type.

When you quote directly from pieces of literature—and you must always do so, in order both to demonstrate your familiarity with the works and to maintain your credibility as a literary critic—put the last name of the author and the page number on which you found the lines in a parenthetical citation after the quotation. For example:

Despite the monstrosity of his plan, the modest proposer “can think of no one objection that will probably be raised against [his] proposal” (Swift 2478).

Clearly separate any sections of a journal entry: Either leave space between discrete sections, or begin a new page. I like room to comment.

EVALUATION

I will mark each response that you submit for credit with a check, check-plus, or check-minus—each with a numerical equivalent—depending on the thoroughness, perceptiveness, enthusiasm, and *honesty* with which you respond:



check-plus: superior entry (10.0)
check: acceptable entry (9.0)
check-minus: substandard or late entry; failure to quote from the text (6.5)
X: incomplete entry (5.)
O: missing entry (0.0)

To avoid penalties, please turn in *all parts* of the assignment on time and develop *at least* to the minimum length.

You may not submit journal responses electronically.

I will accept a late entry up until one week after the original due date (provided, of course, that that week does not extend beyond the end of our term); after that point, it no longer serves either one of us, so I will not accept it.

I reserve the right to refuse unacceptable entries and to ask for rewrites.

After I check the entry, I will return it to you. *Do not throw the entry away after I return it to you:* Collect the returned entries in order in some sort of binder, to be submitted for credit at the end of the term. See page 36 for final submission guidelines.

At the end of the term, I will assign a grade by taking an average of the collected entries (30% of your final course grade).



READING RESPONSE JOURNAL ENTRY #1
DUE MONDAY, FEBRUARY 4

1. Submit at least one and a half full typed pages in response to the following: Why do bad things happen to good people? In addressing this question, what specific definitions does one have to make first? In your response, cite compelling examples; there are plenty of them from our recent history.

2. Now consider the following: *Theodicy*, a term used by theologians, is a vindication of God in the face of the existence of evil (either evils in nature or evils in human behavior). A theodicy seeks to explain why a just God would allow people to suffer. From your reading of Job, what is your understanding of the Old Testament theodicy? That is, how does it explain why God allows bad things to happen in this world? And why do bad things happen to “good” people? Submit at least one and a half full typed pages, citing specific lines from the text to support your generalizations.

READING RESPONSE JOURNAL ENTRY # 2
DUE FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 8

1. In Books 1-4 of the *Odyssey*, we find that Telemachus, son of the long-missing hero, is just coming of age. In his father’s absence he finds himself in the awkward situation of having to confront the brutish suitors who are vying for his mother’s hand and, in so doing, are trying to usurp Odysseus’ rightful role as husband, father, head of household, and king.

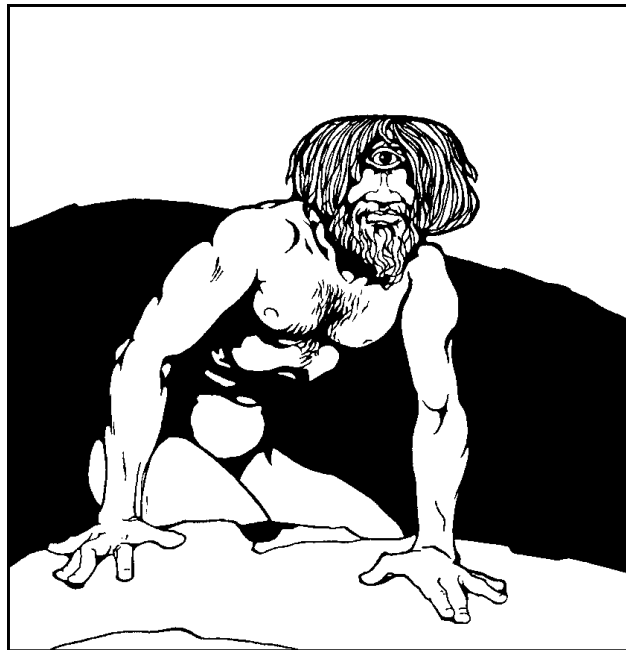
2. In at least one and a half full typed pages, relate an incident in which you were forced to assume the duties, obligations, or decisions of your parent(s) or other authority figures because of their absence or inability to fulfill the role of authority themselves.

3. In two or three *well*-developed paragraphs, consider the following: Why is all the attention in Books 1-4 of the *Odyssey* devoted to the situation in Ithaca rather than to the hero himself, who does not even appear until Book 5? What important information do we get and what important themes are established?



READING RESPONSE JOURNAL ENTRY # 3
DUE FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 15

1. In Book 11 of the *Odyssey*, Odysseus visits Hades, where he meets the prophet Teiresias, the recently departed Elpenor, various heroes from the Trojan War, and his own deceased mother, Anticleia.
2. Before giving attention to this scene, consider your own attitudes toward death and the hereafter: What, according to your understanding or imagination, becomes of us at death? What sort of hereafter do you foresee? What beliefs inform your understanding of the hereafter? Carefully considering this important question, submit at least one and a half full typed pages in response.
3. Now, consider the following: Odysseus is told by the enchantress Circe that he must go to the afterworld to interview the dead Theban prophet Teiresias, who will give him valuable information about how to get home, but the blind seer does not, in fact, supply any useful directions. *Why*, then, must Odysseus go to Hades? Write for at least two or three *very* well-developed paragraphs, generously citing the text as you go.



READING RESPONSE JOURNAL ENTRY # 4
DUE MONDAY, FEBRUARY 25

1. Writing for at least three or four *well*-developed paragraphs, consider the concept of justice (either earthly or divine) in our own lives: What is it? Is there anything like an absolute justice? In what ways is justice administered?
2. Now consider the same question as it applies to the *Odyssey*: Is justice well-served at the end of the work? Do the “good guys” and “bad guys” all get what they deserve? How so? Does the punishment fit the crime? Does the reward fit the good deed? Submit at least one and a half full typed pages, generously citing the text as you make your argument.



READING RESPONSE JOURNAL ENTRY #5
DUE FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 29

1. After reading all of the assigned selections from Aesop’s *Fables*, in a response of at least two full typed pages, discuss the typical structure of the fables: How are they usually titled? How are characters typically presented (not only as individuals but also in relation to one another)? What sort of conflict typifies the fables? What sort of resolution? You may cite as many of the specific fables as you need to make your points, but the primary goal here is to see if you can establish some general rules about the way that Aesop constructs his works.

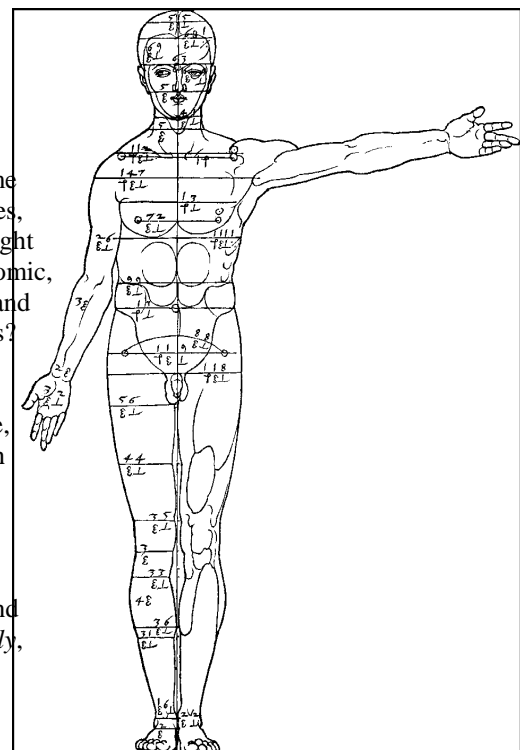
2. Now, in imitation of Aesop, write an extended beast fable of at least two full typed pages. Aesop’s are typically shorter, so you will have to develop your narrative by building characters, using dialogue, and going into greater detail of episode. (In so doing, you might ask yourself what is lost or gained and what complications ensue.)

**READING
 RESPONSE
 JOURNAL
 ENTRY # 6**

DUE FRIDAY, MARCH 7

1. Presuming that we are something more than mere stones, each of us has at some time asked the fundamental question: “Who am I?” In at least two full typed pages, explore this question thoroughly. In order to develop your self-definition, you might consider some of the following: What are my ethnic, geographic, religious, economic, and social heritages? What are my dreams and aspirations? What are my talents and interests? My prejudices and shortcomings? How do I define all of these qualities? How much of my identity—of who I am—is within my control? How much is determined for me? How do others perceive me? What impediments are there to knowing myself? You may take your self-definition in any direction that you like, with only these stipulations: Explore the question beyond the surface, try to reach some valuable conclusions, and be honest. That is, don’t settle for easy answers.

2. In what ways does *Oedipus the King* explore the same question, “Who am I?” Obviously the protagonist is involved in a search for self-identity, even when he does not realize it. What does he discover? In considering this question, go beyond the fact that he discovers the secret of his birth: Consider what he is *fundamentally*, what he represents. Submit at least one and a half full typed pages, citing the text generously to support your generalizations.





READING RESPONSE JOURNAL ENTRY #7
DUE WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19

1. At some time in our lives, we have all been caught in a conflict between private conscience and public duty (“responsibility”), that is, between what we feel is right and what we are *told* is right. In at least two full typed pages, recount in detail an incident in your life in which conscience and duty collided. How was the conflict resolved? What were the consequences?

2. After reading Sophocles’ *Antigone*, discuss in some detail the conflict of duty and conscience that Antigone faces. What form does each take? How is the conflict resolved? Where do the dramatist’s and audience’s sympathies lie—with the strict observance of conscience or the performance of public duty? Submit at least one and a half full typed pages to your answer, citing the text generously, as always.



READING RESPONSE JOURNAL ENTRY #8
DUE MONDAY, APRIL 7

1. Submit at least two full typed pages in which you discuss the nature of *heroism*. Consider some of the following, or take your own approach to the topic: What, by your definition, *is* heroism? Consider how much of your definition is your own and how much is constructed by popular culture around you (films, advertising, literature)? According to your definition, can true heroism exist? Can the hero or heroine be “human,” or must he or she, by definition, be somehow “extra-humanized” (that is, beyond human)? Who are your heroes or heroines, if you have any? Why? Illustrate your response richly with examples from life.

2. After finishing the anonymous *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, submit at least one and a half full typed pages in response to the following: How closely does Gawain match your definition of heroism? Why? What techniques does the *Gawain* poet use to develop—or subvert—Gawain’s heroism? Cite the text generously to support your points.



READING RESPONSE JOURNAL ENTRY #9
DUE WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23

1. Cervantes' *Don Quixote* brilliantly burlesques chivalric romances, those endless medieval stories like *Amadis of Gaul* in which noble knights rescue damsels in distress and conquer enchanters and giants. These kinds of tales were immensely popular in Europe until about Cervantes' own time. In Cervantes' comic version, the addle-brained *hidalgo* Don Quixana (is that his real name?), having read one too many of these romances, appoints himself as the defender of chivalry in the gritty world in which he lives, slaps an old helmet on his head, mounts his scrawny nag Rozinante, and sets out to reinstate the chivalric ideals that he has read about (if such ever existed beyond books). The result is a hilarious, slap-sticky story of misadventures, which not only presents a number of memorable characters but also effectively demolishes the genre of the chivalric romance.

2. To acquire an understanding of Cervantes' aims and methods, try your own hand at burlesque. Begin with an established modern literary, film, television, or song genre (for example, the detective novel, the horror film, the talk show, or rap music). Then, in at least two full typed pages, *burlesque* it. That is, make fun of the genre itself by exaggerating it, caricaturing its characters, making its typical episodes absurd, or introducing bizarre incongruities. You may work in any number of ways; for example, you might write a brief narrative with plot or might simply present a speaker or character who typifies those in the genre. The aim of your burlesque, however, is to make fun of the *genre* itself.

3. Now, after reading the selections from *Don Quixote*, make a well-considered argument of at least one and a half full typed pages in which you respond to the following: Although Cervantes makes fun of the genre of chivalric romances, which have driven Don Quixana (?) mad, does the author entirely dismiss the *ideals* of such romances? Despite his craziness, is there anything about Don Quixote that is *admirable* in the gritty world in which he lives? Can such qualities survive in such a world? In making your argument, cite the text liberally.



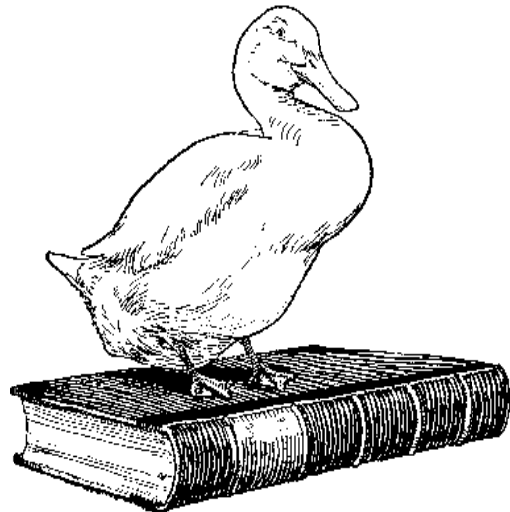
READING RESPONSE JOURNAL ENTRY #10
DUE MONDAY, APRIL 28

1. The subject is romantic and/or erotic love. Addressing a real or imagined lover (or love “interest”), write either a love poem or a seduction poem. Choose any approach or tone that you would like. There is no specified length, but give your poem an honest effort.
2. In an analysis of at least one and a half full typed pages, compare your poem with those of Shakespeare and Donne. What is similar? What is different? Be very specific, pointing to individual lines and passages and citing specific techniques in both your poem and theirs. Consider the following as you make your comparison: form, language, tone, and imagery. Avoid making value judgments about whose poetry is “better” (whatever that means); concentrate, instead, on analyzing specific features of the works.

SUBMITTING THE BOUND JOURNAL FOR CREDIT
DUE WEDNESDAY, MAY 7

1. Collect all of your submitted journal entries, which I have been checking and handing back to you over the term. Carefully arrange them in the order in which they were assigned. Make sure that each is marked clearly with the number of the entry.
2. Bind the collected journal entries in some sort of pleasing format. Attach a title page.
3. Submit the bound journal for credit.

N.B.: Failure to submit the completed journal—with the original entries checked by me—will cost you a penalty of ten points off the final journal. Make sure that you do not discard entries as I turn them back to you.



SAMPLE READING QUIZ

The following reading quiz appears exactly as students in a previous term received it.

English 265, Dr. Child
Reading Quiz, the *Odyssey*, Books 1-6

Name: _____

Take no more than ten minutes in completing the following reading quiz:

I. Using the list of characters below, identify the *speaker* of each of the passages that follow (put his or her name in the parentheses after the passage). Some characters may be used more than once; some (obviously) will not be used at all. (1 point each)

Odysseus	Telemachus	Athene	Zeus
Penelope	Calypso	Hermes	Helen
Nestor	Menelaus	Poseidon	

1. My friend...I will be honest too. My mother certainly says I am Odysseus' son; but for myself I cannot tell. No man can be certain of his parentage. Ah, if only I were the son of some lucky man overtaken by old age among his own belongings! As it is, and since you ask me, the man whose son they say I am is the most unfortunate man that ever lived.

()

2. Princess, I am at your knees. Are you some goddess or a mortal woman? If you are one of the gods who live in the wide heaven, it is of Artemis, the Daughter of almighty Zeus, that your beauty, grace and stature most remind me. But if you are one of us mortals who live on earth, then thrice-blessed indeed are your father and your lady mother; thrice-blessed your brothers too. How their hearts must glow with pleasure every time they see their darling join the dance! But he is most blessed of them all who with his wedding gifts can win you and take you home as a bride. Never have I set eyes on any man or woman like you. I am overcome with awe as I look at you. Only in Delos have I seen the like, a fresh palm-tree shooting up by the altar of Apollo, when my travels took me there—with a fine army at my back, that time, though the expedition was doomed to end so fatally for me. For a long time I stood spellbound at the sight....

()

3. Menelaus, favourite of Heaven, have we been told the names of these men who have come to our house? Shall I withhold the truth, or speak the truth? I feel that I must speak. For never in man or woman have I seen such a likeness before—I am lost in admiration. Surely this must be great-hearted Odysseus' son Telemachus, whom his father left as a new-born baby in his home, when you Achaeans [Greeks] came to Troy with war in your hearts for my sake, shameless creature that I was!

()

4. Damnation! I had only to go to Ethiopia for the [other] gods to change their minds about Odysseus! And there he is, close to the Phaeacians' land, where he is destined to bring his long ordeal to an end. Nevertheless I mean to let him have a bellyful of trouble yet.

()

5. As one immortal to another, you ask me what has brought me here; since you command me, I shall tell you frankly. It was Zeus who sent me; it was no wish of mine...He says that you have with you here a man who has been dogged by misfortune, more so indeed than any of those with whom he shared the nine years of fighting round the walls of Troy and left for home when they had sacked it in the tenth....now Zeus bids you send him off without delay. He is not doomed to end his days on [this] island, away from all his friends.

()

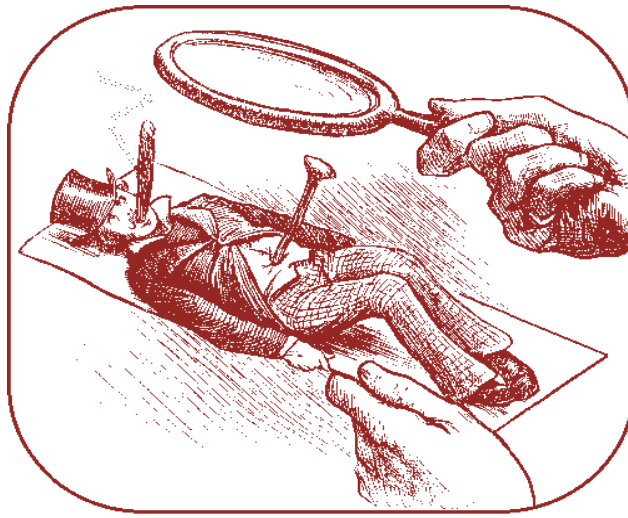
6. I urge you to find some way of ridding the house of these Suitors. Listen carefully to what I suggest...Choose your best ship, man her with twenty oarsmen, and set out to inquire after your long absent father. Someone may be able to tell you about him, or you may pick up one of those rumours from Zeus that so often turn out to be true. Go to Pylos first and question the excellent Nestor; then on to Sparta to see auburn-haired Menelaus, since he was the last of the bronze-armoured Achaeans [Greeks] to reach home....You are no longer a child; you must put childish thoughts away. Have you not heard what a name Orestes made for himself in the world when he killed the cunning Aegisthus for murdering his noble father? You, my friend—and what a tall and splendid young man you have grown!—must be as brave as Orestes.

()

II. Choose the *best* answer for each of the following questions. (1 point each)

7. ____ Which of the following characters is not divine? (a) Poseidon (b) Zeus (c) Penelope (d) Calypso
8. ____ The *Odyssey* gives great attention to the way that traveling strangers are treated as guests, and it works to establish a code for being a good host. Who among the following is *not* a traveling stranger in need of hospitality from a good host? (a) Calypso in the house of Zeus (b) Odysseus in the land of the Phaeacians (c) The disguised Athene at the house of Odysseus (d) Telemachus at the house of Menelaus and Helen
9. ____ On what pretense is the Phaeacian princess Nausicaä sent to the river by the disguised Athene? (a) to meet her boyfriend secretly (b) to bring water for her father's household (c) to wash wedding garments (d) to cut olive branches, which are symbols of peace and safety
10. ____ Which of the following characters was *not* a great Greek warrior who fought in the war against the Trojans? (a) Menelaus (b) Antinous (c) Odysseus (d) Agamemnon
11. ____ Which of the gods is referred to variously as "the Gatherer of the Clouds," "the Son of Cronos," and "the Thunderer"? (a) Poseidon (b) Hermes (c) Hades (d) Zeus
12. ____ Why does the princess Nausicaä ask Odysseus not to accompany her through the streets of her city, but to wait a while outside the city and then find his own way to her father's palace?
(a) He is a naked beggar who is unworthy of being seen by her side. (b) She is afraid that the townspeople will start rumors of a romantic attachment between her and the stranger. (c) She does not want her father to see her in the presence of a strange man. (d) Athene has warned her not to surrender to the charms of this "handsome stranger."

Bonus (+1) What crime did Aegisthus, whom we hear about several times, commit?



EXAMINATION FORMAT

Each of the three unit exams comprises three parts: a multiple choice section; a section that asks that you identify and make comment upon quotations from the works under examination; and an analogies section, in which you make an argument about similarities between characters or episodes in the works (sometimes making connections between separate works).

Examples of the three sections in a typical examination follow:

PART 1: MULTIPLE CHOICE

Instructions: Choose the *best* answer for each of the following. If you happen to find a question that you think has more than a single answer, make a brief argument in the margin about why you selected the answer that you did. (In other words, please make your argument now, rather than after the fact.)

1. _____ Which of the following does not appear in the *Odyssey*?

- a) a *Bildungsroman*
- b) a *deus ex machina* ending
- c) an *ab ovo* beginning
- d) dramatic irony
- e) an *in medias res* beginning

An *ab ovo* beginning to a narrative, you will find, occurs when the narrator tells the story from the very beginning (*ab ovo* means literally “from the egg”). Epic poems like the *Odyssey* invariably begin *in medias res* (that is, “in the middle of things”) so that the reader is pulled immediately into the narrative situation.

In this case, then, the correct answer is “C” because it does not fit with the others.

PART 2: IDENTIFICATION OF PASSAGES

Instructions: Demonstrate your familiarity with the works by choosing *three* of the following passages for response. Begin by identifying the author and work from which the passage comes. (Because some characters appear or are mentioned in more than one work, do not presume that I know which author and work you are thinking of.) Then establish a context for the passage by telling who the characters are and what the situation or episode is. Finally—and most importantly—make a brief argument about the importance of the passage to the work as a whole. As appropriate, indicate any important literary devices at work in the lines and make an argument about how they create or reinforce meaning. If you write on more than three, I will evaluate only the first three that I find.

PASSAGE: Princess, I am at your knees. Are you some goddess or a mortal woman? If you are one of the gods who live in the wide heaven, it is of Artemis, the Daughter of almighty Zeus, that your beauty, grace and stature most remind me. But if you are one of us mortals who live on earth, then thrice-blessed indeed are your father and your lady mother; thrice-blessed your brothers too. How their hearts must glow with pleasure every time they see their darling join the dance! But he is most blessed of them all who with his wedding gifts can win you and take you home as a bride. Never have I set eyes on any man or woman like you. I am overcome with awe as I look at you. Only in Delos have I seen the like, a fresh

young palm-tree shooting up by the altar of Apollo, when my travels took me there—with a fine army at my back, that time, though the expedition was doomed to end so fatally for me.

RESPONSE: Homer's *Odyssey*: In this scene, the narrator of the *Odyssey* shows the grizzled middle-age hero Odysseus facing the delicate and cultured young Phaeacian princess Nausicaä. A kind of "nobody" covered with brine and sea moss, swollen, battered, and bruised, Odysseus must somehow convince the princess both that he is not a threat and that he is, in fact, a great man. The masterful speech from which this passage comes begins with compliments to the young girl, then establishes his own heroic resume: In a few brief sentences, Odysseus manages to tell her that he is a heroic and well-respected man, who has led armies into battle; that he is a devout man, who has worshipped at the shrine of Apollo, the god of truth and reason; and that he is capable of appreciating beauty. The passage colorfully exemplifies the "nobody-somebody" motif that runs throughout the work.

This response not only demonstrates the student's familiarity with the work itself but also demonstrates that she or he understands the significance of the passage to the whole work. The response is admirable for its economy and its grasp of the larger contexts.

PART 3: ANALOGIES

Instructions: Choose five of the following pairs and, using *complete* sentences, succinctly describe what each pair has in common thematically. Some personages will appear as characters in the specified work while others are mentioned in the same work. Make sure that you treat the character *only* as he or she appears or is mentioned in the specified work. If you choose more than five, I will evaluate only the first five that I find.

PAIR: From the *Odyssey*: (a) Calypso and (b) Circe

RESPONSE: Both are seductive supernatural females in the *Odyssey* who seek to detain Odysseus through their sexual charms and prevent him from making his way home. By threatening to keep Odysseus from fulfilling his heroic mission, both imperil his very identity. Despite their apparent charms, then, both are very dangerous to the protagonist.





THE GREEK AND ROMAN GODS AND GODDESSES

Mythology (a word that comes from the Greek *mythos*, or story) is an important context for our reading of an ancient work like the *Odyssey* or *Aeneid*. Comprehensively, mythology includes stories about human and divine characters.

The Greeks and Romans were polytheistic, their gods and goddesses representing a broad range of functions. They all have their own idiosyncrasies, self-interests, petty squabbles and jealousies, and love intrigues. In other words, they are anthropomorphic (seen in the image of man). As a commentator once observed, the Greek and Roman divinities are basically oversized and immortal humans.

The Olympian gods, so-called because they were thought to live on Mt. Olympus, in the far north of Greece, are the chief actors in the literature of ancient Greece and, more narrowly, classical Greece, the age beginning about 500 BC. (The Romans adapted many of these divinities to their own interests and purposes.) Chief among the Olympians was Zeus, who ruled the heavens. His brothers Poseidon (god of the sea and earth) and Hades (god of the underworld) ruled the other realms of creation.

The table below may help to keep some of the important divinities straight as you read through the *Odyssey* and brief section from the Roman *Aeneid* (I've listed only those most important or those named specifically in the works):

GREEK DIVINITY	ROMAN DIVINITY	FUNCTION OR INTEREST
Zeus	Jupiter or Jove	King of the Olympian gods, ruler of the heavens; variously called the "son of Chronos" and "lord of the thunder"
Poseidon	Neptune	God of the Oceans; called the earth-shaker"
Hades	Pluto or Dis Pater	God of the underworld, lord of the dead
Hera	Juno	Wife of Zeus, queen mother of the gods
Athena or Pallas Athena	Minerva or Pallas	Goddess of wisdom and strategy; fittingly, Odysseus, the great military strategist, is her pet.
Aphrodite	Venus	Goddess of beauty and love
Hephaestus	Vulcan	God of the forge; the artisan god who makes beautiful armor for human heroes
Hermes	Mercury	The messenger god
Apollo or Phoebus	Apollo	Considered the most Greek of all gods because of his well-roundedness, he is god of truth, reason, light, archery, purification, both disease and healing, and music.
Ares	Mars	God of war