

Name: _____
Ms. Murrell
English 102
21 March 2014

Guidelines for English 102 Poetry Explication Paper

- This assignment must be typed, and double-spaced. In the left hand corner please put the following: Your Name, Ms. Murrell, English 102 and the Date. Your paper **MUST** be stapled.
- Select a poem of your choice-You may select a poem in the *Literature: Craft & Voice* text or you may choose a poem from the list I provided in class. Next, use the internet to research biographical information about the poet.
- Remember that this is a two-fold assignment. Once you have selected your poem, begin to memorize your poem for the in-class poem recitation. In-class poem recitations will commence on March 31, 2014.
- This explication paper must be between 750-1500 words including a complete bibliography of works cited. (You must have 1 additional credible source in addition to the poem itself and a minimum of 3 quotes accompanied with in-text citations.)
- Refer to Chapter 4 ("Writing Across the Curriculum") of the text as a reference. Pay special attention to pages 70-76. I am also available as a point of reference should you have additional questions.
- Also note pages 1591-1609 of the *Literature: Craft & Voice* text (Note the "Poem in an Anthology" section located on page 1599) or part 4, section 23 entitled "MLA Documentation Style" of *The McGraw-Hill* text. These pages provide information on how to properly quote a poem and proper techniques for MLA documentation. A works cited page must accompany your poetry explication!!
- Your own original insights of the poem are what I am after, not a summary or paraphrasing of the poems literal meanings.
- The first draft of the Poetry Explication is due on Monday, March 31, 2014. You will upload a draft copy of your Poetry Explication in Safe Assign. This draft **WILL NOT** be graded. Uploading a draft copy of your Poetry Explication ensures that your explication meets all of the guidelines of the assignment and is not plagiarized. Remember that your explication must be less than 20% matching, which **EXCLUDES** the in-text citations and works cited page. The explication must be less than 40 % matching, which **INCLUDES** the in-text citations and works cited page.
- The final version of the Poetry Explication is due on Friday, April 4, 2014. You will upload the final version of your Poetry Explication in Safe Assign. This final version **WILL** be graded. Remember that your explication must be less than 20% matching, which **EXCLUDES** the in-text citations and works cited page. The explication must be less than 40 % matching, which **INCLUDES** the in-text citations and works cited page.

Ms. Murrell
English 102: English Composition II
Poetry Explication Paper

Additional Poems for Consideration

"Lipstick" by Tami Haaland
"Aunt Jennifer Tigers" by Adrienne Rich
"My Last Duchess" by Robert Browning
"White Lies" by Natasha Trethewey
"Rites of Passage" by Sharon Olds
"Hate Poem" by Julie Sheehan
"The Ruined Maid" by Thomas Hardy
"Lonely Hearts" by Wendy Cope
"The Bean Eaters" by Gwendolyn Brooks
"Fire and Ice" by Robert Frost
"Bitch" by Carolyn Kizer

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crack up and die, while the little puny punks keep sailing?" Now, this is a valuable idea. I have often thought that very same thing myself. But Frost's closing note ("If design govern in a thing so small") is really devastating because it raises a huge uncertainty. "Wing-Spread" leaves us with not much besides a moth stuck in a web and a moral. In both language and theme, "Design" climbs to a higher altitude.

Conclusion
restates thesis

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Works Cited

- Evans, Abbie Huston. "Wing-Spread." *Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, Drama, and Writing*. Ed. X. J. Kennedy and Dana Gioia. 12th ed. New York: Pearson, 2013. 1948. Print.
- Frost, Robert. "Design." *Collected Poems, Prose and Plays*. New York: Library of America, 1995. 275. Print.

HOW TO QUOTE A POEM

Quoted to illustrate some point, memorable lines can enliven your paper. Carefully chosen quotations can serve to back up your thesis, or to alert your readers to a phrase or passage they may have neglected. Quoting poetry accurately, however, raises certain difficulties you don't face in quoting prose. Poets choose their line breaks with deliberation, and part of a critic's job is to take those breaks into account. Here are guidelines for respecting a poet's line breaks and for making your essay more polished in the bargain.

- ▢ **Quoting a few lines.** If you are quoting fewer than four lines of poetry, transform the passage into prose form, separating each line by a space, diagonal (/), and another space. The diagonal (/) indicates where the poet's lines begin and end. Two diagonals (//) signal a new stanza. Do not change the poet's capitalization or punctuation. Be sure to identify the line numbers you are quoting, as follows:

The color white preoccupies Frost. The spider is "fat and white, / On a white heal-all" (1-2), and even the victim moth is pale, too.

- ▢ **Quoting four or more lines.** If you are quoting four or more lines of verse, set them off from your text, and arrange them just as they occur on the page, white space and all. Be sure to identify the lines you are quoting. In general, follow these rules:

- Indent the quotation one inch from the left-hand margin.
- Double-space between the quoted lines.
- Type the poem exactly as it appears in the original. You do not need to use quotation marks.
- If you begin the quotation in the middle of a line of verse, position the starting word about where it occurs in the poem—not at the left-hand margin.
- If a line you are quoting runs too long to fit on one line, indent the return one-quarter inch.
- Cite the line numbers you are quoting in parentheses.

At the end of the poem, the poet asks what deity or fate cursed this particular mutant flower

with being white,

The wayside blue and innocent heal-all?

What brought the kindred spider to that height,

Then steered the white moth thither in the night? (9-12)

- ▢ **Omitting words.** If you omit words from the lines you quote, indicate the omission with an ellipsis (...), as in the following example:

The color white preoccupies Frost in his description of the spider "fat and white, / On a white heal-all . . . / Like a white piece of rigid satin cloth" (1-3).

- ▢ **Quoting only a brief phrase.** There's no need for an ellipsis if it is obvious that only a phrase is being quoted.

The speaker says that he "found a dimpled spider," and he goes on to portray it as a kite-flying boy.

- ▢ **Omitting full lines of verse.** If you leave out lines of verse, indicate the omission by spaced periods about the length of a line of the poem you are quoting.

Maybe, she hints, when things in the universe drop below a certain size, they pass completely out of the Designer's notice:

The midge spins out to safety

Through the spider's rope;

.....

In a netted universe

Wing-spread is peril. (1-2, 11-12)

One last note: often a paper on a short poem will include the whole text of the poem at its beginning, with the lines numbered so that your reader can refer to it with ease. Ask your instructor whether he or she prefers the full text to be quoted this way.