

Unit 8



Reading and Writing About a Novel

ASSIGNMENT 56

- Read “What You Are Assigned to Do for Unit 8” below.
- Read Discussion 56A: The Nature of a Novel and More Tips for Reading a Novel.
- Read Discussion 56B: A Preview of the Novels.
- Read Discussion 56C: Doing Research.
- Read Discussion 56D: Avoiding Plagiarism: How to Use Research Correctly.
- Read Discussion 56E: Citing Sources.
- Do Self-Check Test 56.
- Read the Sample Essay: “Fantastic Female Characters.”
- Finish reading the novel you have selected.
- Complete Examination 8 beginning on page 359 of this study guide.

WHAT YOU ARE ASSIGNED TO DO FOR UNIT 8

In the final unit of British Literature you will read a novel, and analyze basic literary elements in that novel on the examination. The last exam question on Examination 8 is a compare and contrast essay which is longer than those you have completed for previous exams.

With your course materials, you have received the novel *Sense and Sensibility* by Jane Austen. We have given you a choice, however, to read one of four other novels listed below. If you choose a substitute novel, you are responsible for obtaining a copy to read. You can buy a copy from a local or online bookstore, borrow one from the library or a friend, or read the text online.

Your choices are:

- *Sense and Sensibility* by Jane Austen – sent with course materials.
- *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte
- *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte
- *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding
- *Ivanhoe* by Sir Walter Scott

Read all of Unit 8, including the exam, before choosing a novel. This way you will know what is expected of you on the exam. The exam includes general questions that can be answered about any novel. The final question is an extended compare and contrast essay. Discussion 56B has short summaries of each novel to help you in making your choice.

After you have chosen a novel, read the novel carefully and take notes. Then read the novel again with the exam questions in mind; this way, you will know what to look for when you are reading. There are more tips for reading a novel in Discussion 56A.

You have already spent seven units analyzing literary elements; continue to do so as you analyze the novel. Because of its length, a novel is more complicated than a short story; you will have to read carefully. As you read, look for passages and details that relate to the elements you have studied: plot, character, setting, narrator(s), tone, and theme. Take notes as you read, especially when a passage could pertain to your essay. Be sure to note the page for quick reference while writing. Since you have used graphic organizers throughout the course, you know they are a good way to keep your notes organized.

Create a graphic organizer to use as you read. This will help you keep track of plot points, characters, setting, and themes. Always note page references – anything you feel you need to remember for your essay. A graphic organizer will also help you remember where a specific incident occurred in the novel and its page number for your in-text citations.

When you are prepared to take the examination, give yourself plenty of time. You do not have to complete the entire exam at one time.

When answering the final question on the exam, keep these points in mind:

You are required to write at least five paragraphs. Your essay needs an introduction that describes what it will be about. You will need two or more paragraphs for the body of your essay, which should contain the bulk of your comparisons. This is where you will use quotations, paraphrasing, and in-text citations. Finally, you need a brief conclusion that summarizes what you have written. You will read an example of an extended essay later in this unit. You should write at least 500 words. Be sure to give your essay an original title.

You are required to research and use in your essay information from two sources other than your novel and this study guide. Researching the ideas and views of other people about the novel you have read is a good way to stimulate your own thinking and to see if your understanding and analysis of the novel is sound. Use it to help provide support for the analysis you provide in your essay. You will find helpful advice about doing research in Discussion 56C.

You are required to have in-text citations. You have been encouraged to include the citations in your essay answers throughout this course. In this essay, you are **required** to have at least six. Every time you quote from the novel or describe details and incidents from the novel, you need an in-text citation. When you incorporate related material from an outside source to support the main idea of your essay, it is imperative to credit your sources by citing direct quotations, paraphrasing, and references correctly. Discussion 56D goes into more detail on how to reference outside sources

So now let's begin by getting more tips for reading a novel. On page 344 you will find a brief discussion of the nature of the novel. It is not required reading, but we do recommend that you read this discussion. Knowing the intended purpose of this particular genre of literature can greatly help you in reading it.

SAMPLE ESSAY

Below is a sample extended compare and contrast essay like you are expected to write for Examination 8. Before writing your essay, you should also review “Writing the Compare and Contrast Essay” in this study guide’s Introduction on pages viii–ix.

The question this essay is answering, which is not one you are assigned, is the following: Compare and contrast the characters of Viola and Olivia in *Twelfth Night*. Be sure to consider how Viola and Olivia interact with other characters and how they each development throughout the course of the play.

British Literature Examination 8
STUDENT NAME

STUDENT NUMBER

Fantastic Female Characters

INTRODUCTION

In William Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night*, the characters of Viola and Olivia demonstrate the development of two believable characters with similar backgrounds but with distinct personalities. Both Viola and Olivia are of high society and have adopted masks; Viola chooses a physical disguise, while Olivia uses emotional aloofness to ward off potential suitors. Seeing through these disguises, we come to understand that Viola is cautious and practical, while Olivia is actually impetuous and foolish.

MAIN BODY OF ESSAY

Both Olivia and Viola are of noble birth. Olivia has an estate and courtiers and feels a noble’s responsibility for those she considers unfortunate. When Aguecheek was injured by Sebastian, Olivia instructs her servants to look after him (Shakespeare 117). Viola arrives in Illyria with enough money to pay the ship’s captain to keep her secret. She tells the captain that her father knew Orsino, implying that the families were of equal status. Orsino knows the family as well; regarding Sebastian, he tells Olivia “Be not amazed; right noble is his blood” (Shakespeare 118). The noble status of Olivia and Viola gives them the power and money to determine their own lives.

Viola dresses as a boy while working for Duke Orsino in Illriya. Becoming Cesario demonstrates the practical aspect of Viola’s personality (Rolfe 15). Viola seeks employment with Orsino until she decides what to do with her life (Shakespeare 69). Then, the conflicts begin: Orsino sends Viola, disguised as Cesario, to woo Olivia, who, believing the disguise, falls in love with Viola. It is the “lie of her disguise, which prevents her from expressing her love” (“Commentary”) that shows Viola as a fully-developed character making real

decisions and mistakes. Even though Viola has created the confusion, she is still protecting her love and her safety by maintaining her disguise. In Act 2 scene 2, Viola is overwhelmed:

What will become of this? As I am man,
My state is desperate for my master's love
As I am woman – now, alas the day! –
What Thriftless sighs shall poor Olivia breathe!
O Time, thou must untangle this, not I;
It is too hard a knot for me t' untie. (Shakespeare 81-82)

Revealing her true nature would upset everyone, and would most likely end in Viola's exile, which would prevent her from learning her brother's fate and from revealing her feelings for Orsino.

On the other hand, the selfish and impetuous Olivia uses her disguise to keep love distant until she chooses her own love. While Viola's disguise is physical, Olivia's is emotional: she uses grief over her brother's death to keep herself aloof. Olivia is courted by fools and by Duke Orsino, who, when his "eyes did see Olivia first" (Shakespeare 67), fell in love with her. When Viola/Cesario woos Olivia on behalf of Orsino, Olivia throws a veil over her face, the literal mask to complement the figurative mask. However, all barriers crumble when Olivia herself falls in love at first sight with Viola/Cesario. Olivia impetuously sends a ring after Cesario after deciding that she is done mourning for her brother and it is time to move on. Her behavior is equally impulsive when she drags Sebastian to the chapel and says, "Blame not this haste of mine" (Shakespeare 113). The reader can infer that she is aware that this is exactly where the blame belongs.

CONCLUSION

In *Twelfth Night*, William Shakespeare created two female characters who are similar in many ways, but also distinctly different. Both Viola and Olivia are noble, strong, and independent. Their actions, however, reflect their different personalities: Viola is sensible while Olivia can be reckless. This makes this characterization both interesting and believable.

British Literature Examination 8
STUDENT NAME

STUDENT NUMBER

Works Cited

"Commentary." Hudson Shakespeare Company. 1 February 2007. <http://www.hudson-shakespeare.org/Shakespeare%20Library/Commentaries/comm_twelfth_night.htm>

Rolfe, William, ed. *Shakespeare's Comedy of Twelfth Night; or What You Will*. New York: American Book Company, 1907.

Shakespeare, William. "Twelfth Night." *British Literature*. Ed. David Damrosch. Boston: Pearson Custom Publishing, 2007.

Szany, Linda. *Study Guide for British Literature*. Lansing, IL: American School, 2007.

EXTENDED ESSAY FOR EXAMINATION 8

Here are the questions for Question 12 on Examination 8. Write an extended essay following the guidelines given on page 342 of this study guide and on the examination for the novel you choose to read. For *Sense and Sensibility* you have a choice of two topics; you should only choose one. Be sure to give specific details and examples from the novel to support your analysis in the essay. Remember to properly cite your sources, including the novel as well as the study guide and textbook if you use them for your essay. Be sure to include all your sources on your Works Cited page.

Sense and Sensibility by Jane Austen:

Your choice

- 1. Compare and contrast the characterization of Elinor Dashwood and Marianne Dashwood. How do they deal with life after their father's death? How do they represent sense and sensibility in their actions and reactions to love and society?
- OR
- Or 2. Compare and contrast the characterization of John Willoughby and Colonel Brandon. Describe their characters, and analyze their backgrounds, actions and their love for Marianne.

Jane Eyre by Charlotte Brontë

Analyze how the character of Edward Rochester fulfills the ideal of the Byronic hero, which you studied in Unit 5.

Wuthering Heights by Emily Brontë

Compare and contrast how the social standings of the Earnshaws and Lintons affect Heathcliff's character.

Lord of the Flies by William Golding

Choose a theme and explain how that theme influences the system of rules and order the boys establish when they arrive on the island, and what happens when the rules disintegrate. There are many themes in *Lord of the Flies*, such as, fear of the unknown, savagery vs. civilization, innocence vs. experience, and many more. You only need, however, to choose one to analyze in your essay.

Ivanhoe by Sir Walter Scott

Compare and contrast the characterization of the two fathers in *Ivanhoe*, Cedric and Isaac. Analyze how each is characterized, how they try to protect their children, and maintain their heritage.