Janice Doane
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Required texts:

Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, Drama and Writing (Tenth Edition of Portable
Ticket for a performance of “At Mrs. Dalloway’s Party.” Purchase at Le Fevre Theatre Box Office
(see syllabus for date) $8.

Why English 19?

This is a how-to course in literary analysis. In English 19 you will practice reading with
thoughtfulness and care, paying attention to such features of texts as point of view, tone,
characterization, plot, imagery, metaphor, and sound. You will learn about literary forms and why
they matter in interpretation. You will learn ways to discover meaningful patterns within texts. If
you conscientiously work at these skills, by the end of the semester you will have a solid grounding
in interpretation, which will make your later reading – in English classes, in Seminars, in life –
deeper, more insightful, and more rewarding.

Requirements: Please note the length of this section. There is a reason for this. Take these
requirements to heart.

1. Reading:

Most reading assignments are short; all of them require close reading. Read each selection, and
then reread it. As you read, mark your texts, write in the margins, and take notes on the issues that
strike you as central, or any passages that puzzle you. Only if you do this will you be prepared to
speak in class. And if you do it, you should have no trouble finding issues to raise in class.

The main text is Literature (an inspired title to be sure). Please note that there is a Glossary of
Literary Terms in the last book of the series, Part 4: Writing, which is arranged alphabetically and
is a good way to refresh your memory about important terms in this course.

Make it a habit to look up in the Glossary any terms that you don’t understand. If you hear an
unfamiliar term in class, check on its spelling with me, and then look it up.
2. Discussion:

Class discussion is a time to practice your developing interpretive skills, and you will not develop them without practice, so participation in discussion is required. The class is designed to teach you to notice details of texts and then to make something of those details. You will learn to formulate fruitful questions, to recognize a good answer when you see or hear it, and to use analysis of evidence to support one answer or another. You learn to do this by doing it every day. By participating in the class conversation, you will be using class time as it is meant to be used – as a time and place for to acquire and develop skills you don’t have and to perfect skills you already possess.

Don’t worry if you have only questions, if your questions seem naïve, or if you doubt your own interpretations. As long as your classroom questions and comments are based on thoughtful reading and are grounded in elements of the text, they will be valuable to the discussion. You are learning to be critics, and good critics ask questions even if they don’t know where the questions will lead, and they propose interpretations as a means of testing them. Test your ideas. The class will learn from you, and you will learn from others.

I follow College policy on attendance: For Tuesday, Thursday classes, you may miss no more than two classes during the semester without penalty. For each day beyond the limit, I reduce your participation grade by 1/3 (A “B” would become a B- for three absences, a C+ for four absences, etc.). I reserve the right to fail a student for excessive absences.

3. Writing Responses

In this class, reading and writing go hand in hand. For every reading assignment, there is a corresponding writing assignment—brief, to the point, often in response to specific questions. Please type your responses and keep them in a folder that you bring to class daily; I will collect your responses and folders regularly. We will often begin class discussion with your responses. These responses are a very important part of your work for this class and will be weighted in your final grade accordingly. Your responses must be done on time, that is for the day they are assigned.

Attendance and Participation: 15%
Writing Responses: 25%

4. Essays: The course requires three short essays. Essays must be submitted on time. (If you require a brief extension, you must speak with me ahead of time.) Essays: 60%

One last word on requirements: All requirements must be completed to earn a final grade. I expect everyone to abide by the College’s honor code. This means reading and writing carefully and thoughtfully, and not resorting to shortcuts such as Sparknotes. Do not ever submit anyone else’s work as your own. There is an excellent section on plagiarism in “Using Critical Sources and Maintaining Academic Integrity,” p. 2072 and “Guarding Academic Integrity,” p. 2149 in Part 4, Writing of Literature. I expect you to read these pages and to use them as your guide; if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask me.
Schedule of Readings:

Section 1: Reading Narrative: All readings in this section are in Literature: Fiction, ed. Kennedy and Gioia

Page numbers in brackets refer to Checklists and are especially important to review for writing purposes.

Please bring your writing journal to every class. Besides collecting these journals on the dates specified in the syllabus, I will also randomly choose certain journals to collect without previous notice. Consider yourself warned

T 9/1 Introductions to the course and each other. We will discuss response journals and what I expect you to write in them. Together we will read and discuss “A Very Short Story” by Ernest Hemingway (handout).

R 9/3 Fable, Parable and Tale

Read “Preface,” xlvii-xlx

“Chapter 1: Reading a Story,” 3-11

In your response journal, answer questions on p. 6, p. 8. Write a brief comment (approximately a paragraph of 50-100 words) on the Grimms fairytale “Godfather Death.” Your journals will be collected after class today.

T 9/8 The Short Story—Plot: Read carefully 11-14; [20-21]


“Happy Endings,” Margaret Atwood, 476-479.

“The Story of an Hour,” 523-525

In your response journal, answer questions on p. 19—do at least #3, 4, 5, 8. Also write up a discussion question or comment on one of the other two stories.

R 9/10 Setting: Read carefully 112-114; [151-152].

“Greasy Lake,” by T. Coraghessan Boyle, 130-137. In your response journals, answer questions #3, 5. 6.

“A Pair of Tickets,” by Amy Tan, 137-150. Answer question #1 in your journal.

T 9/15 Point of View: Read carefully 23-28. Pay special attention to the words in bold and try to apply them to the selected readings: [71-72]

“Teenage Wasteland,” by Anne Tyler, 35-42 (Questions 1, 2, 3)

“A Rose for Emily,” by William Faulkner, 28-35 (Questions 2, 3)

R 9/17 Point of View cont’d:

“Battle Royal,” by Ralph Ellison, 526-536 (Using the checklist for “point of view” (71-71) or “character” (110), write a question for class discussion.

Character: Read carefully 73-76; [110]

“Miss Brill,” by Katherine Mansfield, 83-86 (Questions 1, 2, 4, 6)
T 9/22 Character cont’d:
“The Rich Brother,” by Tobias Wolff, 86-98 (Questions 1, 2, 3 and one other of your choosing).
“The Moths,” by Helena Maria Viramontes, 649-653 (Using a checklist of your choosing, create a question for class discussion).
“A Clean, Well-Lighted Place,” by Ernest Hemingway, 156-160 (Questions, p. 160--choose at least one question to answer in your journal).

R 9/24 Theme: Read carefully 189-191; [227-228]
“Harrison Bergeron,” Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., 221-228
“How I Met My Husband,” by Alice Munro, 208-220. (For your Writing Journal, respond to either Vonnegut or Munro’s story in terms of “theme.” Write approximately one page.) Discussion of paper topics.

T 9/29 Tone and Style: Irony: Read carefully 172-173
“The Gift of the Magi,” by O. Henry, 174-177
“Saboteur,” by Ha Jin, 178-185 (questions—all, 185)
Please bring to class your choice of paper topic and initial brainstorming

R 9/31 Symbol: Read carefully 229-231
“Chrysanthemums,” by John Steinbeck, 231-239 (Question 9)
“The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas,” 248-253 (Question 5)

First Paper Due Date: Friday October 9 by 3 p.m. Please drop papers at my office, Dante 306.

Section Two: Interpreting Poetry

All readings in this section are from “Poetry,” Part Two of Literature
All page numbers in brackets are check lists—pay close attention to them.
Continue to write responses in your journal. Questions I suggest you respond to are in parenthesis.

T 10/6 Reading a Poem, 659-673; [673]. Concentrate on “Piano,” (question 1); “Out, Out” by Robert Frost (Question 4); “My Last Duchess,” by Robert Browning (Questions 1, 4).


T 10/13 Words; 706-721; [728-729]

R 10/15 Saying and Suggesting, 731-740 [741-742]. Choose a poem that appeals to you in this chapter and respond to it in your journal, either by writing a page about it in terms of the check list on pp. 741-42 or answering the questions at the end of the poem, or by fashioning a discussion question for the class, with your own response to the question.

T 10/20 Imagery, 743-757 [758-759]. Read as much of the poetry in this chapter as you can, including some poems and some haiku. Choose one or two poems to write about in your journal by applying the steps in the check list. OR, you can try the creative exercises on p. 765—question 2 or 3. Figures of Speech, 766-775 [784-785. Concentrate on “The Eagle,” Tennyson; “Shall I Compare thee...”, Shakespeare; “Shall I Compare Thee...,” Howard Moss; “The Flea,” John Donne, 1102. Answer question #1, p. 786 about “The Flea.”

R 10/22 Symbol, 894-906 [906-908]. Concentrate on “The Boston Evening Transcript,” T.S. Eliot; “The Lightening is a yellow Fork,” Emily Dickinson; “Neutral Tones,” Thomas Hardy (Questions 1-5). Look at the section “For Review and Further Study, Exercise: Symbol Hunting. Do the exercise for the six following poems. You can write a rationale if you like; we will certainly be discussing the reasons behind our decisions in class. Discussion of Paper Topics.


Comparing Poem and Song: Ballads, Blues, Rap, 791-797, all poems. Also read “Eleanor Rigby,” and answer the question on p. 802.


Rap: 799-801 (you may bring in an example of rap if you like, to share with the class. In your journal, write about whether the explanations and “Run D.M.C.” on p. 800 enhance your experience of rap).

Gwendolyn Brooks, “We Real Cool,” Alfred Lord Tennyson, “Break, Break, Break” and Ben Jonson, “Slow, slow, fresh fount,…..”

Alliteration and Assonance: 812-815, all poems

Second Essay is due in my office, Dante 306, Monday, November 9, by 3 p.m.

Section three: Analyzing Drama: In this section we will read several plays, watch a live performance, and view a film based on the Pulitzer prize winning John Patrick Shanley’s Doubt, comparing our reading of that play to the film adaptation of it.

T 11/10 Conflict, Theme, Plot: “The essence of drama is conflict and Glaspell’s play, “Trifles” is rich in this essential” (Drama 1237). Read 1220-21; 1223-25; 1241-43.
Read Trifles by Susan Glaspell, 1225-36, and respond to questions 1-10, p. 1237 in your journal.

R 11/12 Tragedy and the Tragic Flaw: 1249-51.
Read “Scene from Dr. Faustus” by Christopher Marlowe, 1251-56, and answer questions 1-3, p. 1256.

Before Tuesday’s class, please read the short stories by Virginia Woolf online, and see one of the performances of At Mrs. Dalloway’s Party.
The stories: “The New Dress,” “The Introduction” and “The Man Who Loved His Kind” are available through the library website at St. Mary’s: http://library.stmarys-ca.edu. Use the reserves tab on homepage to search for the texts by Course Title (PERFA 101: Virginia Woolf. The access code is PERFA101.
The performances: Nov. 12-14 at 8 p.m. in Le Fevre Theatre.

T 11/17 Mrs. Dalloway’s Party is an adaptation of three Virginia Woolf short stories. Saint Mary’s student-actors will be under the direction of Word for Word guest artist Delia MacDougall. Word for Word brings literary works to the stage without changing a word of the original. This is an interesting challenge, and we will discuss this means of adaptation and your thoughts about the characters and performance. Please write a response in your journal to share in class.

R 11/19 Doubt: a parable by John Patrick Shanley. Read the author’s “Preface,” vii-x. and pp. 5-37. In class, we will focus on title and epigraphs, dramatic monologue, character and conflict, setting.

T 11/24 Doubt: a parable cont’d. Read to the end of the play. Our focus will be on “tragic flaw” and we will begin viewing the film in class.
THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY 11/25-11/29

T 12/2  Continue viewing *Doubt* in class. Discussion of the film adaptation and social context of the film

R 12/4  Final discussion of *Doubt*.

**Third Essay and your complete journal due Friday, December 5 in my office by 3 p.m.**