ENGLISH 104: INTRODUCTION TO FICTION

What makes a good story? Whether it’s strong on plot or style, told just in words, in pictures, or on film, a well-told story transports us into another place and reminds us what it means to be alive. Narratives of all kinds select and shape experience for maximum impact. In this course you will strengthen your own writing and increase your understanding and enjoyment of literature. The course requires you to read the stories carefully, develop ideas about them, polish your prose, and treat class meetings as vital. The theme for the readings in this class is “dark and mysterious happenings,” so we’ll start with Edgar Allen Poe’s gothic detective story, work our way through some Sherlock Holmes and gothic ghost stories and end with the modern science fiction of *Ender’s Game*.

TEXTS (UO Bookstore):
Arthur Conan Doyle. *Sherlock Holmes: Complete Novels V..1* (isbn: 9780553212419)
Henry James. *Turn Of The Screw and Other Short Fiction*. (isbn: 9780553210590)
Edgar Allen Poe. *Murders In The Rue Morgue*. (isbn: 9780679643425)

Note: While these texts are available at the Duckstore, it is possible that you already own one or more of these texts in some form or fashion. Most of these texts also come as part of other collections. My concern about texts is not where/how you get each text, it is that you make adjustments for the specific page numbers assigned for each day.

REQUIREMENTS
10% Paper I, 3-4 pages, due April 26
30% Paper II, 3-4 pages, due June 7
10% Midterm exam, in class, May 1
30% Final exam, Wednesday June 12 (10:15am)
15% Book group assignments: writing, small group discussion.
5% Participation and pop quizzes (quizzes cannot be made up)

**Note: If you either fail to turn in both papers or fail to take both exams, you cannot pass this class.**

NO EARLY OR MAKE-UP EXAMS WITHOUT DOCUMENTED MEDICAL EMERGENCY: IF YOU CANNOT BE PRESENT AT THE FINAL EXAM, DO NOT TAKE THE CLASS!!!

Late paper policy: I accept one late paper per term; use this option wisely. If you choose to hand your paper in late, you must inform me by the due date by phone, email or in person. “On time” means in class, on the due date. A late paper is due at the next class
meeting after the due date. Also, each paper must be uploaded to SafeAssign by the
beginning of class; if you do not hand in the hard copy AND upload to SafeAssign, your
paper will be considered late.

Attendance and participation: I will take attendance at every class using a sign-in
sheet. It is your responsibility to arrive on time and sign in. I very much appreciate your
talking in class, even (especially) if it’s an effort for you. Participating in class discussion
is also part of your grade and will help you master the material and get ideas for your
papers.

Essays: I’m looking for polished gems: thoughtful, concise, graceful treatments with a
clear focus. Every word counts. Plan on writing several drafts of each paper (this means
getting an early start).

SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS

WEEK 1 Terms: fiction, plot, Freytag’s pyramid, conflict, atmosphere
M April 1: Syllabus, Introduction
W April 3: Poe – “Rue Morgue”
F April 5: Poe – “Marie Roget”

WEEK 2 (Blue Group) Terms: point of view (1st/2nd/3rd person), flat character, round
character, protagonist, antagonist
M April 8: Poe – “Marie Roget”
W April 10: Poe – “Purloined Letter”
F April 12: Poe – Introduction; close reading workshop

WEEK 3 (Red Group) Terms: unreliable narrator, omniscience/limited omniscience,
M April 15: Doyle – “The Sign of Four” chs 1-4
W April 17: Doyle – “The Sign of Four” chs 5-9
F April 19: Doyle – “The Sign of Four” chs 10-12

Week 4 Terms: setting, social/historical context, sense of place

Paper 1 (3-4 pages) due April 26
M April 22: Doyle – introduction
W April 24: Doyle – Close Reading workshop
F April 26: Paper Due

Week 5 Terms: detective fiction, gothic, science fiction
M April 29: Review
W May 1: MIDTERM EXAM (in class)
F May 3: James. Turn of the Screw, chs I-X

Week 6 (Yellow Group) Terms: myth, hero, anti-hero, archetype
M May 6: James. Turn of the Screw, chs XI-XXIV
W May 8: (pdfs on BB) - Woolf, “Henry James’s Ghosts”; Edel, “Point of View”
F May 9: James. Close reading workshop

Week 7 (Green Group) Terms: apocalypse, satire, parody
M May 13: Card Ender’s Game chs 1-4
W May 15: Card Ender’s Game chs 5-6
F May 17: Card Ender’s Game ch 7

Week 8 (Orange Group)
PAPERS 1 & 2: Both papers for this course are open topic, based on your own ideas about the stories. You may focus on one story or more than one, as long as your argument completely covers the amount of material you choose. The main goal is that the paper has to contain serious and sustained close reading of at least one quotation from a story. I will grade the essays by the following criteria:

1. Detailed, sharp-eyed, interpretive close reading of quotation(s).
2. A clear, strong main point supported by evidence from the story/stories.
3. Clear linkage of each paragraph to the main point.
4. Polished, well-revised prose with no grammar or spelling errors.

A. These papers are close reading essays, not research papers. Do not consult secondary or critical sources. Instead, develop your own ideas about the texts. Pick a quotation from a story that catches your imagination and gives you something to say. Sit down to write with that quotation in front of you. Look at it very carefully and thoroughly and write down all the ideas that occur to you. Look closely at the word choices and meanings, images, figures of speech, voice (1st, 2nd or 3rd person), point of view, dialogue, repeated patterns of any kind, and relation to the story as a whole. Come up with your own interpretations of all these details and of the author’s writing. Don’t be afraid to go out on a limb with your ideas and interpretations. Include the quotation in your paper. If you are analyzing more than one quotation, repeat this close reading process with each quotation.

B. Next, start reorganizing your writing. Working from the close reading, come up with a main point about the story/stories. Write an introductory paragraph for your paper explaining the main point. The intro should do 3 things: state your thesis (main point), declare the paper’s focus, and give a “road map” to the paper (a “sneak preview” of the points you intend to make).

C. Organize your close reading into paragraphs, each paragraph illustrating a different sub-point that supports your main point. If some ideas or sentences don’t seem to fit in, cut them out, or make their relevance to the main point clearer. Add a topic sentence to
each paragraph, making clear its connection to the main point of the essay.

D. Go over the essay again, making sure each paragraph connects to the introduction and to the other paragraphs. Add transition (connector) sentences and expand on your thoughts.

E. Revise the essay’s style. Cut needless words and word repetitions. Break any over-long, run-on sentences into shorter ones. Read your sentences aloud and make your prose concise and graceful.

F. Sometimes the main point isn’t clear in our mind until after you’re done writing. Did this happen to you? Do you need to go back and modify your main point to match the paper that you’ve written? (Congratulations. This means your thoughts grew in the process of writing.) Also, does your concluding paragraph seem forced? Maybe you can just delete it. Sometimes the paper is really over in the next-to-last paragraph. Or maybe the conclusion needs to change, too, because you’ve changed your ideas.

G. An important tip: Do not summarize the story! You can assume your reader has read it and remembers what’s going on. Organize your essay according to the logic of your argument, not according to the order of the story itself. You don’t need to talk about everything that’s in the story, just enough to make the point you want to make. Instead of summarizing information, you can often substitute a direct quotation from the text combined with your own close reading and interpretation.

H. Check the essay’s spelling and grammar. Consult the Seven Key Problems sheet (below).

I. Your writing should be double-spaced. Long quotations should be indented and single-spaced with no quotation marks around them. Shorter quotations should be integrated with your prose and have quotation marks at the beginning and end of the author’s words.

SEVEN KEY PROBLEMS: After you write a paper, please go over it to make sure it contains none of these problems.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol in margin</th>
<th>Name of problem</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D-MOD</td>
<td>Dangling modifier</td>
<td>Phrase before comma should modify first noun after comma</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Wrong: As a mother of five, my station wagon’s always on the road.
Right: As a mother of five, I’m always on the road in my station wagon.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D-PREP</th>
<th>Dangling preposition</th>
<th>Preposition at end of sentence</th>
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</thead>
</table>

Wrong: These are the areas people should be evacuated from.
Right: These are the areas from which people should be evacuated.
L/A  Like/as  Use “as” after non-be verb.
Wrong: They act like they should.
Right: They act as they should.

CS  Comma splice  Comma too weak to support 2 sentences
Wrong: He tries to forget, however, it proves impossible.
Right: He tries to forget; however, it proves impossible.

VT  Verb tense change  Mixing past and present tenses
Wrong: He tries to forget; however, it proved impossible.
Right: He tries to forget; however, it proves impossible.

AGR  Subject/verb agreement  Mixing singular & plural
Wrong: The students, including the ASUO President, agrees with me.
Right: The students, including the ASUO President, agree with me.

ITS/IT’S  “Its” is the possessive; “it’s” with apostrophe means it is.
Wrong: Its a shame. The war and it’s aftermath still affect us.
Right: It’s a shame. The war and its aftermath still affect us.

BOOK GROUP ASSIGNMENTS: You will be assigned to a group and notified via email. (If there is a scheduling problem, please contact me for reassignment.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>April 10/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>April 17/19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>May 6/8*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>May 15/17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>May 22/24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purple</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>May 29/31</td>
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Your responsibilities:
*Read the stories or chapters assigned for your week ahead of time
*Writing assignment (email via Blackboard): due on the first date listed above
*Small group discussion: the second date listed

Writing assignment

Killingsworth
ENG 104 p.5
By the end of the day on the Friday before your group’s week, email me (using Blackboard) a written document containing:

1. Two questions and/or discussion topics readings assigned for your group’s week. Your questions should use our key terms to analyze it as a work of fiction. These ideas will form the basis for your small group discussion on the Friday of your group’s week.

2. Your favorite sentence from the week’s reading (with page number).

**Small Group Discussion**

On Friday of your book group week, the class will break into small groups and each book group member will lead a discussion in one group, using your study questions submitted to Blackboard as a starting point. Attendance is mandatory at this class; if you miss it, you will receive NO partial credit for your written work. If absences are necessary due to emergency or serious illness, they require prior notification by phone, email or in person and/or written documentation such as a doctor’s note. In most such cases, I will reschedule your participation to another group.

(* This will be the only group that must go lead discussion on Wednesday, so adjust the schedule accordingly.)