

SYLLABUS

English 104 (CRN# 34635) Introduction to Literature / Fiction
Spring 2014 M&W 4:00-5:20 195 Anstet
Instructor: John Witte (rhymes with city) 346-5935 jwitte@uoregon.edu
Office: 206 PLC Office Hours: T&Th 1:30-3:00, and by appointment

REQUIRED TEXTS: *The Norton Anthology of Short Fiction* (shorter seventh edition).
A book of fiction of your choice (a novel or short stories), by one
of the authors studied this term.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

DAILY ASSIGNMENT.

For every other class you will prepare a one-page paper (typed, double-spaced) on the story assigned for the day, answering the following question. **What is the author's intent in this story?** Consider a number of the following questions, insofar as they advance the author's intent:

How is the first sentence like a seed out of which the whole story emerges?

Who is the narrator? Is she/he reliable?

Why has the author chosen this point of view?

What back story is provided? Why is it necessary?

Why is the setting appropriate to the story?

What is the conflict in the story? Is there a protagonist and/or an antagonist?

Are the characters types or individuals? How are they defined? By their actions? Their speech? Their thoughts?

How are the thought processes revealed in characters whose thoughts are not described?

In what ways does the main character (or other characters) change in the course of the story?

Do any objects, acts, or situations have symbolic meaning? What do these contribute to the story?

Does the story make a general statement about life and experience? If so, how is this statement made?

Does the story stir up pity, contempt, amusement, awe, dismay, admiration, or a desire that life should be different?

Has the story given a new twist to traditional wisdom? If so, where have you encountered a similar theme?

In what ways does the supplemental material enhance our understanding of the story?

FINAL PAPER. A final paper, of four typed pages, assessing a full-length book of fiction *by one of the authors studied this term*, will be due on **June 4**. While writing, keep in mind the following:

Think about your topic and reread important passages several times, taking notes and exploring possibilities. Question yourself, and the text. Decide on a title and a main argument or thesis; then compose a detailed outline of your paper. Begin by writing an introduction that explains your thesis in one paragraph. The body of your paper should develop the thesis logically, with each paragraph enlarging on an important point with specific evidence (such as quotations) and clear explanation. Pay as much attention to the end of the essay as to its beginning. You should leave the reader with a clear sense of what you have demonstrated and why it matters. *Carefully proofread your paper*, rewriting as necessary, and correcting all grammatical errors.

Papers must be typed and double-spaced, with one-inch margins. Words or ideas not your own must be clearly identified by quotation, and, where necessary, a citation. Plagiarism is a serious academic crime that will result in disciplinary action up to expulsion from the University. If you are uncertain how to properly acknowledge other people's words and ideas, I'll be glad to discuss this with you.

GRADING. Your grade will be determined by your preparedness for and participation in class discussions (10%), by your nine daily written assignments (70%), and by your final paper (20%).

ATTENDANCE. Attendance is crucial. If you need to miss a class for whatever reason, an explanation will be required. You will be allowed **one unexcused absence**. Each additional unexcused absence will lower your grade one step (for example, from a B to a B-).

IMPORTANT DATES:

First day of class:	March 31.
Last day to drop without a "W":	April 7.
Last day to reg/add classes:	April 9.
Last day to withdraw from classes:	May 18.
Memorial Day Holiday:	May 26.
Last day of class:	June 4.

ASSESSMENT:

The English Department's assessment procedure evaluates six learning outcomes:

1. The ability to read literary and cultural texts with discernment and comprehension;
2. to draw on relevant cultural and/or historical information to situate texts within their cultural, political, and historical contexts;
3. to perform critical, formal analyses of literary, cinematic, and other cultural texts;
4. to write focused, analytical essays in clear, grammatical prose;
5. to employ logic, creativity, and interpretive skills to produce original, persuasive arguments;
6. to employ primary and/or secondary sources, with proper acknowledgment and citation.

CLASS SCHEDULE (all assignments are from *The Norton Anthology of Short Fiction*)

March 31: Orientation and review of syllabus.

April 2: Toni Cade Bambara, "Gorilla, My Love," p. 44. Group A presents. Group B responds.

April 7: Ambrose Bierce, "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge," p. 51. Group B presents.

April 9: Truman Capote, "Miriam," p. 66. Group A presents.

April 14: Raymond Carver, "Cathedral," p. 75. Group B presents.

April 16: John Cheever, "The Enormous Radio," p. 101. Group A presents.

April 21: Kate Chopin, "The Story of an Hour," p. 123. Group B presents.

April 23: Louise Erdrich, "Matchimano," p. 236. Group A presents.

April 28: Gabriel García Márquez, "The Handsomest Drowned Man in the World," p. 297. Group B presents.

April 30: Ernest Hemingway, "Hills Like White Elephants," p. 335. Group A presents.

May 5: Ursula K. Le Guin, "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelos," p. 454. Group B presents..

May 7: Vladimir Nabakov, "Signs and Symbols," p. 586. Group A presents.

May 12: Tim O'Brien, "The Things They Carried," p. 603. Group B presents.

May 14: Flannery O'Connor, "A Good Man Is Hard to Find," p. 616. Group A presents.

May 19: Isaac Bashevis Singer, "Gimpel the Fool," p. 693. Group B presents.

May 21: John Steinbeck, "The Chrysanthemums," p. 704. Group A presents.

Memorial Day Holiday: May 26.

May 28: Alice Walker, "Everyday Use," p. 776. Group B presents.

June 2: Eudora Welty, "A Worn Path," p. 799. Group A presents.

June 4: Tobias Wolff, "In the Garden of the North American Martyrs," p. 810. Group B presents.

FINAL PAPER DUE.

