

SYLLABUS

English 104 (CRN# 12179) Introduction to Literature / Fiction

Fall 2014 MW&F 3:00-3:50 204 Chapman

Instructor: John Witte (rhymes with city) 346-5935 jwitte@uoregon.edu

Office: 206 PLC Office Hours: T&Th 3:30-4:30 / W 4:00-5:00, 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 each class you will be either a PRESENTER or a RESPONDENT, depending on your group (A or B).

PRESENTERS will turn in a one-half to 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?

RESPONDENTS will be prepared to respond to the presentations.

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 **December 5**. 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 fourteen daily written assignments (70%), and by your final paper (20%).

ATTENDANCE. Attendance is crucial. If you need to miss a class, an explanation will be required. You will be allowed **two unexcused absences**. Each additional unexcused absence will lower your grade one step (for example, from a B to a B-). If you are sick, you will be required to produce a note from your pharmacist or personal doctor.

IMPORTANT DATES:

First day of class:	Sept. 29.
Last day to drop without a "W":	Oct. 6.
Last day to reg/add classes:	Oct. 8.
Last day to withdraw from classes:	Nov. 16.
Thanksgiving vacation:	Nov. 27-28.
Last day of class:	Dec. 5.

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

Sept. 29: Orientation and review of syllabus.

Oct. 1: Toni Cade Bambara, "Gorilla, My Love," p. 44. Group A presents, Group B responds.

Oct. 3: Ann Beattie, "Snow," p. 49. Group B presents, Group A responds.

Oct. 6: Ambrose Bierce, "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge," p. 51. Group A presents, Group B responds.

Oct. 8: Truman Capote, "Miriam," p. 66. Group B presents, Group A responds.

Oct. 10: Raymond Carver, "Cathedral," p. 75. Group A presents, Group B responds.

Oct. 13: John Cheever, "The Enormous Radio," p. 101. Group B presents, Group A responds.

Oct. 15: Kate Chopin, "The Story of an Hour," p. 123. Group A presents, Group B responds.

Oct. 17: Julio Cortázar, "A Continuity of Parks," p. 187. Group B presents, Group A responds.

Oct. 20: Louise Erdrich, "Matchiminito," p. 236. Group A presents, Group B responds.

Oct. 22: Gabriel García Márquez, "The Handsomest Drowned Man in the World," p. 297. Group B presents, Group A responds.

Oct. 24: Ernest Hemingway, "Hills Like White Elephants," p. 335. Group A presents, Group B responds.

Oct. 27: James Joyce, "Araby," p. 351. Group B presents, Group A responds.

Oct. 29: Franz Kafka, "A Hunger Artist," p. 418. Group A presents, Group B responds.

Oct. 31: Jamaica Kincaid, "Girl," p. 429. Group B presents, Group A responds.

Nov. 3: Ursula K. Le Guin, "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelos," p. 454. Group A presents, Group B responds.

Nov. 5: Bobbie Ann Mason, "Shiloh," p. 500. Group B presents, Group A responds.

Nov. 7: Vladimir Nabokov, "Signs and Symbols," p. 586. Group A presents, Group B responds.

Nov. 10: Tim O'Brien, "The Things They Carried," p. 603. Group B presents, Group A responds.

Nov. 12: Flannery O'Connor, "A Good Man Is Hard to Find," p. 616. Group A presents, Group B responds.

Nov. 14: Tillie Olson, "O Yes," p. 648. Group B presents, Group A responds.

Nov. 17: Isaac Bashevis Singer, "Gimpel the Fool," p. 693. Group A presents, Group B responds.

Nov. 19: John Steinbeck, "The Chrysanthemums," p. 704. Group B presents, Group A responds.

Nov. 21: James Thurber, "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty," p. 720. Group A presents, Group B responds.

Nov. 24: John Updike, "A&P," p. 765. Group B presents, Group A responds.

Nov. 26: Helena María Viramontes, "The Moths," p. 771. Group A presents, Group B responds.

THANKSGIVING VACATION Nov. 27-28.

Dec. 1: Alice Walker, "Everyday Use," p. 776. Group B presents, Group A responds.

Dec. 3: Eudora Welty, "A Worn Path," p. 799. Group A presents, Group B responds.

Dec. 5: Tobias Wolff, "In the Garden of the North American Martyrs," p. 810. Group B presents, Group A responds.

FINAL PAPER DUE.

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.