

ENG 104: INTRODUCTION TO FICTION

T,Th 10-11.20 in 140 Allen

*Instructor: Professor Stephanie Clark
office: 374 PLC office phone: 346 3960
email: sclark11@uoregon.edu
office hours: T,Th 12-1.30
course website: on Canvas*

Part One: Course Description and Goals

Reading two novels, including John Crowley's classic post-apocalyptic fantasy novel *Engine Summer*, and a variety of short stories, ENG 104 addresses basic questions about the nature of prose narrative and the interrelated activities of reading, writing, and interpretation. Most of the course will focus on detailed study of the technical elements of narrative such as plot structure, narrative voice, characterization, etc. We will further consider how each of these elements opens up methods of interpreting and understanding narrative in ways that should deepen your understanding of literature, enhance your enjoyment of it, or at least help you articulate why you *don't* like something. The major writing for the course will consist of a series of targeted notebook entries allowing you to closely interact with and analyze the narrative techniques of the readings.

Grading Breakdown:

Daily Notebooks*	25%	Notebook Portfolio	35%
Participation	15%	Final Exam	25%

*In lieu of midterm

Required Texts.

On Canvas:

John Crowley, *Engine Summer*. Print this out, full size, and bring to class. If you do this in the library, the cost to you will be about \$8.40. I also recommend getting it spiral bound (basement of EMU), which costs a couple dollars.

The following texts are at the Duck Store:

Course packet (contains readings for the course)

Ross Murfin and Supriya M. Ray, *The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms*, 3rd ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2009. ISBN 978-0-312-46788-1.

Nicholson Baker, *The Mezzanine* (Grove Press, 2010). ISBN 978-0-802-14490-4.

Recommended:

Hacker, Diana. *Rules for Writers*, 6th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2010. (If you do not currently own a style book, you should buy this. Earlier editions won't have the latest word on citing electronic sources, but they'll do for most things.)

Part Two: Syllabus

All readings and assignments are listed on the day they are due.

All readings except those from the Bedford Glossary are in the course packet unless otherwise noted.

“Cogitation makes us expand, expansion stretches us out, stretching makes us roomier.”

– Augustine of Hippo (*Sermo CCXXV, PL 38, col. 1097*)

Week 1

- T Introduction: The Lies of the Poets
 Th The Role of Literature in Education
 Readings: Louis Menand, “Live and Learn” (Canvas)
 Andrew Delbanco, “College at Risk” (Canvas)
 “How to Do a Close Reading” (Canvas)

Week 2

- T John Crowley, *Engine Summer*, pp. 349-415
 Bedford Glossary, “Motif,” “Theme,” “Plot.”
 Th Crowley, *Engine Summer*, pp. 416-76

Week 3

- T Crowley, *Engine Summer*, pp. 477-548
 Th Structure: Climax
 Readings: Guy de Maupassant, “The Signal.”
 Bedford Glossary, “Freytag’s Pyramid,” “Conflict,” “Climax,” “Crisis,”
 “Protagonist,” “Antagonist.”

Week 4

- T Structure: Frame Story / Inset Narratives
 Reading: Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, “A Case of Identity.”
 Bedford Glossary: “Frame Story.”
 Th Narration: Narrators
 Readings: Willa Cather, “Paul’s Case.”
 Toni Cade Bambara, “The Lesson” (on Canvas)
 Bedford Glossary, “Narrator,” “Omniscient Point of View,” “Intrusive,”
 “Unintrusive,” “Unreliable Narrator.”

Week 5

- T Narration: Point of View / Focalization
 Readings: F. Scott Fitzgerald, “Bernice Bobs Her Hair.”
 Bedford Glossary, “Point of View,” “Free Indirect Discourse.”
 Th Characterization: Direct vs. Indirect
 Readings: Willa Cather, “The Enchanted Bluff.”
 Bedford Glossary, “Characterization.”

Week 6

- T Characterization: Flat and Round Characters
 Readings: Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, "Cinderella."
 Angela Carter, "Ashputtle, or *The Mother's Ghost*."
 Bedford Glossary, "Flat and Round Characters," "Stock Characters."
- Th Genre Fiction
 Readings: Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, "The Speckled Band."
 Bedford Glossary, "Genre," "Mystery Fiction," "Detective Fiction,"
 "Gothic, Gothic Literature."

Week 7

- T Playing with Genre
 Reading: Susanna Clarke, "The Ladies of Grace Adieu."
 Bedford Glossary, "Fantasy Fiction" (read this if you want; I don't think it's very helpful)
- Th Genre
 Reading: Kelly Link, "Stone Animals."

Week 8

- T Style
 Reading: Henry James, "The Jolly Corner."
Note: James's style is very dense, and you will need to set aside several hours to get through this story.
- Th Style
 Reading: Ernest Hemingway, "Soldier's Home."
 Bedford Glossary, "Style."

Week 9

- T Nicholson Baker, *The Mezzanine*, pp. 3-70.
 Th Baker, *The Mezzanine*, pp. 71-135.

Week 10: *Engine Summer* redux

- T Reread *Engine Summer*: Narrative Structure, Narrator, Characterization
 Th Reread *Engine Summer*: Motif, Themes, Style
 Bedford Glossary, "Motif"
 DUE: Portfolios

Finals Week

Final Exam (take-home) due by Monday, June 12, 10am

Learning Outcomes

Main Goals: To better understand and more accurately represent the main ideas and narratological techniques of literary texts, and to recognize how these techniques contribute to the meaning of the texts.

Read/Analyze. Your careful reading of the assigned texts in preparation for class should give you greater awareness of the particular characteristics of narrative-based or literary ways of knowing about the world. Lectures will orient you to the formal characteristics of narrative. Class discussion will give you opportunity to practice these skills.

Contextualize. The Reading Notebooks written in preparation for class and class lectures will introduce major terminologies and methodologies necessary for the study of narrative technique. In addition, the Notebook prompts help situate the texts read within their cultural, historical, and literary contexts. Both class discussion and the written assignments will give opportunity to practice and to try out your ideas.

Write. The written assignments are structured to train you in crafting persuasive and logical arguments from textual evidence. To gain greatest benefit, you must allow yourself adequate time for writing and revising. You should therefore gain skill in writing focused literary analysis in clear grammatical prose that advance an original argument. There are various resources on campus to help you; my office hours are one of them.