

Essay Guidelines & Rubrics

Critical Response Essays (2 x 200 points each = 400 points total)

Both essays must provide an arguable thesis and analysis of assigned readings for the first two units, comparing/contrasting at least one text by Carter with one by Winterson (Essay 1, Weeks 3-7 assigned texts; Essay 2, Weeks 9-12 assigned texts). Your essays should explore how the two texts relate to any one or more of the thematic and/or theoretical elements discussed in this class while also incorporating any relevant, scholarly secondary sources to support your analysis. Each essay is due any time before the last day of its corresponding unit: Essay 1 on Feb 29 and Essay 2 on April 4. Undergraduate papers should be a minimum of 1,200-1,500 words and incorporate at least three to five secondary sources; graduate papers should be at least 2,000-2,500 words and refer to at least seven to ten secondary sources. All essays should follow MLA Style guidelines and all sources must be scholarly and critical in nature; refer to syllabus for policies on academic honesty and plagiarism.

Rubric:	A: 18-20	B: 16-17	C: 14-15	D: 12-13	F: 0-11
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1. Depth of Subject: ____/20

Provides a clear subject/thesis and develops an argument with adequate support and evidence by examples. Demonstrates understanding of major concepts of text(s) and/or significant issues/contexts. Avoids lengthy explications or synopses of plot (if writing a literary analysis). Expresses originality of thought and sustains objective level of critical analysis.

2. Organization: ____/20

Analysis is precise, pertinent, and well supported. Provides a logical conceptual approach. Clearly links interpretive points to subject and/or argument. Avoids repetition, reductive arguments, or any tangential material that detracts from central focus. Provides clear transitions between and within sections of paper. Paragraphs and sentences are clearly structured and coherently and adequately develop their main topic.

3. Completeness & Accuracy: ____/20

Remains focused on exploring all elements of the stated thesis as fully as possible. Interpretation is appropriate and grounded within the text(s) and/or evidence from secondary sources. The paper adheres to and fulfills the requirements of the assignment, including the minimum word count and secondary sources.

4. Clarity of Expression: ____/20

Sentences are clear, concise, varied, and logical. Vocabulary and terminology are appropriate to the subject, purpose, and audience, and adhere to the standards of academic style. Subjects agree with verbs. Elements are parallel. References and word order are clear. Spelling, grammar, punctuation, mechanics, etc., are correct. Manuscript has been proofread and is free of typographical errors.

5. Style & Documentation: ____/20

Paper is formatted according to style guidelines. Does not heavily rely on quotations from secondary sources; paraphrases and summaries are in own words; phrasing and original wording is correctly quoted; documentation is provided for all quotations, summaries and paraphrases; makes effective use of signal phrases when quoting. Language, tone and verb tense correctly follow MLA guidelines. All references to primary and secondary sources are cited correctly and consistently according to style guidelines, including punctuation. Works Cited Page is correctly and consistently formatted. All in-text citations are included in Works Cited and vice versa.

Total Points: ____/100 x 2 = ____/200 (20% of Grade) **Letter Grade:** _____

Final Paper: Research Essay or Creative Story (25%)

Option One: Research Essay

For the first option, you may submit a literary research essay that significantly revises and develops material from one or both of your critical response essays. The paper may provide a comparative analysis between Carter and Winterson or focus on just one author; regardless of your approach, your essay should have a clear arguable thesis that develops analysis of your chosen text(s) in relation to significant contexts, themes, or issues explored in this class. Essays should develop a persuasive arguable thesis, be clearly organized, and provide relevant insights into your chosen theme and how it relates to the genre of myth and/or fairy tale. Undergraduate essays must be a minimum of 1,800-2,000 words (approx. 7-8 pages), incorporate at least five to seven secondary sources of literary criticism and/or theory, and be formatted and cited according to MLA style guidelines. Graduate essays should be 2,500-3,000 words with reference to at least ten secondary sources and clear discussion of primary texts within a relevant theoretical framework.

Rubric:	A: 18-20	B: 16-17	C: 14-15	D: 12-13	F: 0-11
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1. Depth of Subject: ____/20

Provides a clear subject/thesis and develops an argument with adequate support and evidence by examples. Demonstrates understanding of major concepts of text(s) and/or significant issues/contexts. Avoids lengthy explications or synopses of plot (if writing a literary analysis). Expresses originality of thought and sustains objective level of critical analysis.

2. Organization: ____/20

Analysis is precise, pertinent, and well supported. Provides a logical conceptual approach. Clearly links interpretive points to subject and/or argument. Avoids repetition, reductive arguments, or any tangential material that detracts from central focus. Provides clear transitions between and within sections of paper. Paragraphs and sentences are clearly structured and coherently and adequately develop their main topic.

3. Completeness & Accuracy: ____/20

Remains focused on exploring all elements of the stated thesis as fully as possible. Interpretation is appropriate and grounded within the text(s) and/or evidence from secondary sources. The paper adheres to and fulfills the requirements of the assignment, including the minimum word count and secondary sources.

4. Clarity of Expression: ____/20

Sentences are clear, concise, varied, and logical. Vocabulary and terminology are appropriate to the subject, purpose, and audience, and adhere to the standards of academic style. Subjects agree with verbs. Elements are parallel. References and word order are clear. Spelling, grammar, punctuation, mechanics, etc., are correct. Manuscript has been proofread and is free of typographical errors.

5. Style & Documentation: ____/20

Paper is formatted according to style guidelines. Does not heavily rely on quotations from secondary sources; paraphrases and summaries are in own words; phrasing and original wording is correctly quoted; documentation is provided for all quotations, summaries and paraphrases; makes effective use of signal phrases when quoting. Language, tone and verb tense correctly follow MLA guidelines. All references to primary and secondary sources are cited correctly and consistently according to style guidelines, including punctuation. Works Cited Page is correctly and consistently formatted. All in-text citations are included in Works Cited and vice versa.

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Option Two: Creative Story

For the second option, you may submit a creative story in which you rewrite a myth, fairy tale, Shakespearean text, a feminist dystopia/utopia, or an alternate history. Your story should be at least 5-6 pages (but no more than 10-12), employ similar strategies explored by Carter and/or Winterson, and demonstrate a clear understanding of literary adaptation (150 points). Accompanying your story, you will need to provide a brief (2-3 pages) analytical discussion of the literary contexts for your story, demonstrating understanding of the traditional or original tale and its key elements/themes (100 pts). Graduate students who choose this option will need to provide a slightly longer critical essay (5 pages) that also incorporates discussion of the story's historical and/or theoretical contexts.

Creative Story Rubric

CATEGORY	Excellent – 10 pts	Strong – 8 pts	Needs Work – 7 pts	Weak – 6 pts
Traditional Elements	The story contains many of the elements of the original story while providing a strong adaptation of themes and content.	The story contains a number of the original elements with an adequate attempt to provide an adaptation beyond simple reversals of plot, gender, etc.	The story contains several of the original elements with a minimal adaptation at a superficial level.	The story contains few or none of the original elements and/or no attempt to provide an adaptation.
Characters & Setting	Characters are named and clearly described in text. Most readers could describe the characters accurately. Many vivid, descriptive words are used to tell when and where the story took place.	Characters are named and described and story provides some idea of what the characters looked like. Some vivid, descriptive words are used to tell the audience when and where the story took place.	Characters are named. The reader knows very little about the characters. The reader can figure out when and where the story took place, but the author didn't supply much detail.	It is hard to tell who the characters are and/or what function they serve. The reader has trouble figuring out when and where the story took place.
Problem/Conflict	It is very easy for the reader to understand the problem the main character faces and why it is a problem.	It is fairly easy for the reader to understand the problem the main character faces and why it is a problem.	It is fairly easy for the reader to understand the problem the main character faces but it is not clear why it is a problem.	It is not clear what problem the main character faces.
Organization & Clarity	The story is very well organized. One idea or scene follows another in a logical sequence with clear transitions. There are no writing errors in the final draft. Character and place names that the author invented are spelled consistently throughout.	The story is pretty well organized. One idea or scene may seem out of place. Clear transitions are used. There are 2-3 writing errors in the final draft and some inconsistencies or confusing word choices.	The story is a little hard to follow. The transitions are sometimes not clear. There are 4--5 writing errors in the final draft and multiple inconsistencies.	Ideas and scenes seem to be randomly arranged. The final draft has more than 5 writing errors with confusing word-choice, spelling and syntax.
Creativity	The story contains many creative details and/or descriptions that contribute to the reader's enjoyment.	The story contains a few creative details and/or descriptions that contribute to the reader's enjoyment.	The story contains a few creative details and/or descriptions, but they distract from the story.	There is little evidence of creativity in the story. The author does not seem to have used much imagination.

Score: _____/50 x 3 = _____/150 (15% of Final Grade) **Letter Grade** _____

Essay Guidelines & Rubrics

Essay Rubric for Creative Story Option

A: 18-20	B: 16-17	C: 14-15	D: 12-13	F: 0-11
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1. Depth of Subject: _____/20

Provides a focused analysis of the original story's connection to a specific myth, fairy tale, or original story with adequate support and evidence by examples. Demonstrates clear understanding of the traditional or original tale and its key elements/themes. Expresses originality of thought and sustains objective level of critical analysis in discussion of how the story provides a contemporary, feminist reimagining or adaptation of the source tale.

2. Organization: _____/20

Provides a logical conceptual approach. Avoids repetition, reductive arguments, or any tangential material that detracts from central focus. Provides clear transitions between and within sections of paper. Paragraphs and sentences are clearly structured and coherently and adequately develop their main topic.

3. Completeness & Accuracy: _____/20

Remains focused on exploring all elements of the critical analysis as fully as possible. Analysis and interpretation is grounded within the text(s) and/or evidence from secondary sources. The paper adheres to and fulfills the requirements of the assignment, including the minimum word count.

4. Clarity of Expression: _____/20

Sentences are clear, concise, varied, and logical. Vocabulary and terminology are appropriate to the subject, purpose, and audience, and adhere to the standards of academic style. Subjects agree with verbs. Elements are parallel. References and word order are clear. Spelling, grammar, punctuation, mechanics, etc., are correct. Manuscript has been proofread and is free of typographical errors.

5. Style & Documentation: _____/20

Paper is formatted according to MLA style guidelines. Does not heavily rely on quotations from secondary sources; paraphrases and summaries are in own words; phrasing and original wording is correctly quoted; documentation is provided for all quotations, summaries and paraphrases; makes effective use of signal phrases when quoting. Language, tone and verb tense correctly follow MLA guidelines. All references to primary and secondary sources are cited correctly and consistently according to style guidelines, including punctuation. Works Cited Page is correctly and consistently formatted. All in-text citations are included in Works Cited and vice versa.

Total Points: _____/100 = (10% of Final Grade) Letter Grade: _____
