

Close Reading Essay Guidelines & Rubrics

DUE: Sunday, Feb 28, 11:59 pm

GUIDELINES

For this essay you will analyze **1-2 poems from *Brute and/or The Tradition***; if you choose two poems, then your essay should provide a comparative analysis. You might choose two poems by the same author or compare a poem by Skaja with one by Brown. You may also choose to revise and expand upon any of your reading journal entries or discussion board posts. Your essay should contain an effective title, an arguable thesis, and a clearly organized structure with appropriate evidence from the text. Your analysis should focus on **THREE** of the following literary devices in your selected text(s): speaker, tone, theme, situation, setting, figures of speech (metaphor, simile), diction (word-choice), imagery, symbol, sound, rhythm, structure/form. Be sure to read and apply the writing tips in the handout, "Writing About Poetry."

Close reading papers involve analysis of "the text and only the text"; your essay should not make references to your personal experiences or emotional response. Instead, you interpret the poem(s) only through the textual evidence, and primarily by focusing on several literary devices present in the text(s). By examining how the technical parts of the poem(s) contribute to an understanding of the "whole text," this will inform your thesis or interpretation. You may of course refer to any socio-historical contexts that seem related the poem's subject matter. However, the use of secondary sources is not permitted, since your analysis should be based entirely on **your** reading of the poem(s) without outside influence—if you use secondary sources, you will receive an F for this assignment.

The essay must be a **minimum of 1,500 words** (approx. 5-6 pages) and formatted according to the most recent MLA style guidelines, using Times New Roman 12-point font, double-spacing, and 1" margins; the word count should be indicated at the end of the paper (e.g. "WC: 1,535"). You do not need a Works Cited for this essay, but you should correctly quote and cite your primary text(s) using MLA style.

Your essay must be submitted to the Pilot dropbox in a Word attachment (.doc, .docx, or .rtf); if you do not submit a copy to the dropbox or submit your paper in a format that cannot be opened or assessed for plagiarism, it will not be graded. The dropbox closes at 11:59 pm on Sunday, February 28; late submissions will receive point deductions—one letter grade for each day it is late (10 points). See rubric below for grading criteria as well as the student sample essays in Pilot.

Close Reading Essay Guidelines & Rubrics

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 from the text(s). Demonstrates understanding of major concepts of the text(s) and literary devices. 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). 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 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

All references to primary texts are cited correctly according to MLA style guidelines, including punctuation. Paper is formatted according to guidelines. Phrasing and original wording of primary texts is correctly quoted; makes effective use of signal phrases when quoting from the text; language, tone, and verb tense appropriately follow MLA style guidelines. (Works Cited Page is not required.)

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