

Papers are due in class on Monday, December 12 in hard copy.

Compose an essay that analyzes three related passages through close reading and arrives at an original, informative thesis statement. Your analyses will offer up a new or detailed understanding of the texts you have chosen. The thesis should be built around your observations on no more than 3 passages of poetry, prose or drama from the same text. Tackling too many passages will put you at a disadvantage, as the paper is only 5 pages in length. Please do not use secondary sources (online or print) for this paper but rely instead on your own *original* close readings.

You may choose any works or authors from our full syllabus. This is an opportunity to delve more deeply into any texts we did not have time to close read together during class. You may choose to write on texts that we have already read together, but in this case, avoid repeating any points we have already made together in class discussion. This assignment builds on the close reading skills you have been practicing in your weekly writing assignments.

The paper should be approximately 5 pages, double-spaced, and typed in Times New Roman font. Please use MLA citation style to cite your texts and block quote the passages you will close read within the essay. (Do not append them separately before or after your writing). Formatting and layout will factor into your paper grade.

I will ask to look over your outline, thesis, and selection of passages at a conference meeting on November 21 or 23. Please avail yourself of office hours as you start planning this paper, even beyond the one scheduled conference time.

1. Compare three passages of satire, wit, or humor that seem closely parallel. How does each author employ satire or wit in similar or different ways? Is the tone scathing and caustic, or whimsical and light? What is being critiqued? Is the social commentary effective? Consider examples of true wit vs. false wit.
2. Consider the representation of female speakers or characters in any poems, plays or essays we have read. What do you notice about the way they are represented? Is she given a major speaking role, or is she mute? Is she portrayed as a rational thinker, or an emotional creature? You may find it particularly interesting to compare women as they are portrayed by male versus female writers.
3. Compare three different representations of slavery from any of the readings we have read. However, be sure that your three passages are closely parallel and that reading them together will yield many similarities as well as differences. Which representations of slavery and suffering are more excruciating? Which are more veiled? How does the author use different literary devices to achieve different effects?
4. Choose 3 passages from Henry Fielding's *Shamela* or *Joseph Andrews* and explore how he satirizes both Samuel Richardson's form and content in *Pamela*. Or, choose 3 passages of *The Rape of the Lock* and show how Pope employs satire in his mock-epic. Locate parallel passages as the basis for your comparison.
5. Consider different representations of barbarity and civilization in texts where the author offers a surprising portrayal, opposite to what readers might expect. How does the author turn convention on its head? What literary devices are used to achieve this?
6. Choose 3 passages that deal with enlightenment and unenlightenment, either on a grand scale or in relation to a particular character. How is the enlightened person represented through language or imagery? How do animals or nature factor into an enlightened state? You may wish to discuss Kant, Milton, Wheatley, Defoe, etc.
7. Compare and discuss the conventions of the travel narrative genre. What is its claim to fact or truth versus fiction and adventure? How is it different from a journal or a novel? You may wish to look at introductions, prefaces, and title pages of some of the proto-novels we have read.
8. A topic of your choice, proposed succinctly to me in office hours or via e-mail.

**November 21 / 23:** Please show up for your conference in my office (Carman 392) at your appointed time with a hard copy of your 3 selected passages, close reading points, and a potential thesis statement.

**December 12:** Final paper due in hard copy.