

FD '00
PM

English 25502
MWF 8:00

Dr. Loretta Petrie
Consult before & after class
Phone: 734-7019

Texts: Heath *Introduction to Fiction*, 5th edition
Classics of Modern Fiction, Harcourt-Brace, 5th edition

The emphasis in this class will on your responses to the short stories and short novels. Reading in secondary sources is optional.

Objectives: The overall objective of the course is to enable you to read, write, and talk about the literature with understanding and appreciation. You will be introduced to a selection of stories, primarily from the twentieth century and given various methods of thinking about them--that leads to understanding. Appreciation, however, will keep you reading stories for the rest of your lives for they can, if you let them, bring you great pleasure. In addition, you will learn much about human nature and the world we live in.

Course Requirements: regular attendance, preparation, and participation in discussion	10%
series of three quizzes (5% each)	15%
reading journal	40%
short paper	20%
final examination	15%

Dates to Remember: September 25th--first quiz; turn in journal for initial comment
October 23rd--second quiz; turn in journal
November 15th--short paper due
November 20th--third quiz
December 1--turn journal in for grade

Initial Reading Schedule (our first readings will be in *Heath Introduction to Fiction*).

August 30: "A Worn Path," p. 478.
September 1: "A Rose for Emily," p. 426.
September 6: "The Open Boat," p. 230.
September 8: "The Chrysanthemums," p. 468.
September 11: "The Magic Barrel," p. 515.
September 13: "A Good Man Is Hard to Find," p. 544.
September 15: "A Silver Dish," p. 724.
September 18: "The Yellow Wall-Paper," p. 217.
September 20 - 22: "Sonny's Blues," p. 557; prepare for first quiz.

Reading Journals

A reading journal is a continuous record of your thinking about the literature assigned for this course. Since your journal cannot contain comments on every aspect of even a short passage, you should ~~not~~ write about what interests you, stirs your imagination or what puzzles you. Formulate your own questions and then try to answer them. Why did such-and-such character react to another in that way? What is the real conflict between them? Why does the story or play have to end in this particular way? —Included in this syllabus are questions that might be asked of any story or play. If you cannot formulate your own questions, then begin with one or more of these and soon these questions will lead to answers that move you into even deeper questions.

The purpose in keeping such a journal is to give form to your thinking. Reading literature cannot be a passive activity like watching television. You (and the author) must activate your imagination, your reasoning powers. Until you write down your thoughts, they are often circular or repetitious. Your response to the literature can be vague and/or purely emotional. The process of writing forces you to articulate what you think and feel, much as writing the story or poem or play expresses what the writer thinks and feels about his or her subject. Most of us are not poets because we have never tried to express our thoughts and feelings in ways that will stimulate other people to a vicarious and aesthetic experience. A vicarious experience suggests that reading literature leads to second-hand experience—but an experience that is nonetheless real. The aesthetic experience, however, is firsthand and yours alone. You can share that aesthetic experience in journal writing and class discussion.

Journal writing will do many other things for you. It will prepare you to write for quizzes, mid-terms, and final examinations; it will involve you more deeply in the reading and the class discussion; and it will make most of your other writing more fluent. It should lead you eventually into drafts for a term paper.

Journals need not be typed or revised. You can scratch out, even misspell if you must. Just remember that the journal must be legible; if I can't read it, you have wasted your time. The journal does need to be thoughtful, does need to develop ~~in~~ your response in some detail. Your journal grade will take into consideration the depth and detail of your thinking, the sensitivity of your responses, and your ability to put all this into language. There is no point in repeating what the editor, the class, or some critic says about the literature. Write what you think.

Here are possibilities—

Write down some answer(s) to questions you've raised. (What's the basic conflict here? What makes me sympathize with the villain?)

Compare and contrast two characters or two settings.

Trace a motif or set of images running through the story or play—darkness, paradox, revenge, greed, ambition, goals, values, what?

Disagree with some comment made in class and explain why you disagree.

Describe how the character changes in the process of the story.

Identify ways in which characters differ in their speech.

Define shifts in points of view.

See also separate sheet.

Journals due for first comment any time after the second week of class, but no later Feb. 10 for Shakespeare class or Feb. 17 for short story and novel class. If you are in doubt about what you are doing, let me react quickly to one of your entries even before the second week is up.