

## SPRING 2003

English 255  
 Novels & Short Stories  
 Office Hours: 9-10 MWF  
 11-12 TTH

English 102 8 MWF  
 English 102 10 MWF  
 English 255 9 TTH  
 English 315 1 TTH

Henry 206 A

Class Location: Eiben 201

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TEXTS: Fictions (4TH Edition)--Joseph Trimmer/C. Wade Jennings  
 The American--Henry James  
 The Old Man and the Sea--Ernest Hemingway  
 A Girl with a Pearl Earring--Tracy Chevalier

PURPOSE: This course has goals both in terms of literature and writing.

## LITERATURE:

This course will introduce you to the elements of fiction and functional analysis. In addition, you will be introduced to a variety of terms used in talking about literature, like "protagonist," "antagonist," "exposition," "conflict," and others.

## WRITING:

To help you to produce university level, analytic, precise, clear writing that uses the text to support specific generalizations stated in topic sentences at the beginning of unified paragraphs

To help you to use writing to find and test what works are about or to talk about literature in a more meaningful way

In examining the literature in this course, we will be attempting to do a perceptive and sensitive reading of the text. The kind of reading we will be doing is not "relaxing" reading. Our material is demanding and it is intended to be read AND REREAD carefully and thought about with pencil in hand. Most are intended to have a significant effect on the reader. Its rewards are of a different nature than a good television show or a clever poem in a card or a gothic romance or even a good adventure novel.

## GOALS OF THE COURSE:

1. To encourage you to see a story as a single action with a beginning, middle, and end. Something happens.
2. To encourage you to see a story as a "made" or built entity in which all the component parts or "elements" contribute to the single action.



3. To introduce you to the commonly recognized components or elements of a work of fiction: plot, character, setting, narrator.
4. To provide you with some examples of the sort of surprising answers you can get when you ask "why" and how those answers can lead to greater depth in understanding what happens in a story.
5. To encourage you to use questions of "why" and the elements of fiction to examine the stories we study in class by asking both factual questions and questions challenging you to account for facts in terms of what happens in the story.
6. To encourage you to use questions of "why" and the elements of fiction to examine stories by giving you two opportunities to work with a group to choose and present stories that illustrate how these techniques can be used.
7. To encourage you to use questions of "why" and the elements of fiction to examine stories by giving you 6 opportunities to read and use the techniques on stories your colleagues have chosen for class.
8. To give you an opportunity to write an extended 6+ page paper on one of the 8 group stories that demonstrates what you have learned about asking why and the elements of fiction.

#### STRUCTURE

The beginning of the course will introduce you to Functional Analysis as a way of finding meaning and significance. I will introduce you to the elements of fiction and the kinds of answers you can anticipate finding when you apply functional analysis to these elements. In a few weeks, groups will be formed, choose a story from Trimmer they think illustrates the elements of fiction and functional analysis, and "present" the elements of fiction to the class for as much of the 1:15 minutes needed. The idea here is that you will learn Functional Analysis better by doing than by hearing or reading about it.

I will use the first stories in the course to introduce you to Functional Analysis and the terms/methods associated with it. I will try to involve you in the search for meaning using functional analysis and establish at least one example of how the groups might achieve the goals of the class they lead. I will ask a variety of questions, some factual, some "open ended," and some that ask you to interpret segments of the text to explain how they create the meaning you see in the story. In some cases I will be looking for a particular response, but in every case I will be looking for students who have learned what the elements of fiction are, learned how to organize their reading around the elements of fiction, who have actually read the text, and who have attempted to understand each episode in terms of the whole.



## GRADING

You will be graded on your performance (questions you ask/observations you make) in 2 group exercises, your class responses during all the other groups and during the sessions I lead, on 1 out-of-class paper (1500 words or 6 typewritten pages minimum), and a midterm and final examination (1 hour). The total number of points available will be 800 points. In addition to the group work, paper, and 2 exams, there will be quizzes worth 5 points given regularly to stimulate in-depth reading. Since pop quiz scores are "free" points, there will be no makeups. Final grades will be assigned on a "straight" scale.

PAPER:	200 points	A = 800 - 720
		B = 719 - 640
TESTS:	200 points (100 + 100)	C = 639 - 560
		D = 559 - 480
GROUPS:	200 points	F = 479 or below

## CLASS

PARTICIPATION: 200 points

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TOTAL: 800 points

## TESTS

Tests will cover "content": i.e. what was taught in class or discussed in class. Emphasis will be on knowing the issues raised in class--and almost always these will involve a careful definition of the elements of fiction since they are the real "content" of the course. Answers will not be evaluated on whether you agree with some "right" interpretation or whether you agree with me, but whether you know what the elements of fiction are and how to use them effectively to support your answer. Knowing the text is important, as is the ability to organize and write well. You will be given the test questions before the examination.

## PAPER

The paper will focus on "process": i.e. using the elements of fiction and using the text and your interpretations of the text to support your ideas. Your paper will be on one of the 8 stories the groups select and will be a functional analysis of that story. This is clearly where you will discover that THERE IS NO RIGHT ANSWER. This paper will focus on the process of creating a consistent interpretation of the story.

Papers will be computer generated unless I learn that there are individuals who will suffer a hardship. I will deal with those situations (as all others) on an individual basis. Invention, thesis, development, structure, unity, order, coherence, and grammar are important in this class. Everything you learned in English 101 and 102 about structure, organization, and



development and everything you learned in grammar courses should be remembered when writing the papers in this course. WARNING: Grammar can cost you AT LEAST a full letter grade. In some cases, grammar may fail a paper. (There will be a rough draft required, so if you have significant weaknesses, you will know it and have time to correct them.)

**Class Participation:** The success of our class and your satisfaction with me and with the class will depend on you being prepared and responding in class and during the sessions when the groups lead the class. The idea of the course is for you to become your own expert--to learn how to interpret for yourself--, and to do this you will have to read AND SHARE your ideas. I will award points to those who are prepared with ideas about how plot structure, plot incidents, characters, settings, and choice of narrator work to develop meaning in fictional works. You are expected to know the facts in the works we are discussing in class.

As you participate in class, you anticipate writing your paper. Those who participate more tend to write better because they have a better feel for an audience and how much evidence is needed to present a convincing argument to an audience.

#### ATTENDANCE

**Attendance:** Attendance will be required. Two free absences are allowed. After that, an absence will result in the loss of 7 points from the final score. This has often meant the difference between an B and a C in the course. (It should be noted that an absence not only results in the loss of 7 points, but also results in a lost opportunity to make 5 points on the pop quiz--if there is one that day.) DO NOT MISS THE DAY YOUR GROUP PRESENTS THE WORK TO THE CLASS.

#### PLAGIARISM WARNING

Work is to be original. Using the words, phrases, structures, or ideas of others without proper acknowledgement is PLAGIARISM. If I discover plagiarism, I will immediately fail the student in this course. Papers will be graded on how effectively you appear to understand the elements of fiction and how effectively you are citing and interpreting the text to support your ideas.

#### CITATIONS FROM THE TEXT

I will encourage you NOT to use outside sources either in preparing the stories for class or in your papers. THIS IS NOT A RESEARCH COURSE! Therefore, in most cases, you will need only to put the page number of Trimmer in parenthesis: e.g. "I cannot, for my soul, remember how, when, or even precisely where I first became acquainted with the lady Ligeia" (526). Notice that the footnote did not require "p." or "Trimmer."

IF YOU MUST USE OUTSIDE SOURCES--consult me and use the MLA footnote style--see the SCOTT FORESMAN HANDBOOK FOR WRITERS from your 101 and 102 courses.



## GROUPS

Usually 5 or more members. Groups will submit a written proposal to me telling me what you intend to do--what the goals of the session will be in terms of functional analysis. I will meet for 1 hour with either members of the group or the whole group in preparation for the session. I will not tell you what you should say or make "right" or "wrong" judgments about your conclusions about the story. Should I think a group is missing very obvious things, I might suggest what others might bring up in the class. I do not want a group to have an unpleasant experience in front of the class.

During the time your group is teaching the class, I will keep close track of both the QUALITY and quantity of questions and responses from the group and the class. On this, I will base my primary judgment concerning the 200 points allocated to "class participation" and "group." So when the group assigns the class a story, the burden is on the members of the class to come prepared.

## LATE PAPERS

A late paper will be accepted ONLY if you consult me in advance. Otherwise, you will lose the entire 200 points. It is to both of our advantages if you are constantly aware of the due date of the rough draft and the paper. I will grant ONE PERIOD EXTENSIONS if you will consult me, but experience tells me that it is to your advantage to turn everything in on time. I will require you to construct a simple memo that says that the paper will not be turned in on the assigned date but will be turned in on the next class date--something I can use to jog my memory when the paper does come in.

E.G. I will not submit my rough draft on 11/27/01. I will submit it on 11/29/01. Signed by SICKENTIRE.

## SYLLABUS

JAN 14 Introduction: Syllabus/Cover Sheet

Elements of Fiction

16 Elements of Fiction (continued). Read:

21 CONFLICT: EXTERNAL/INTERNAL

The Adventure of the Speckled Band (Handout)

23 The Bass, The River, and Sheila Mant (1181)

28 CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT: HERE----->THERE

The Lesson (238)

SETTING/CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT:

Chrysanthemums (1081)

30 The Lottery (680)

HOME ASSIGNMENT: begin reading of THE AMERICAN

FEB 4 Barn Burning (491)

Choose Groups

6 The Swimmer (368)

Groups choose stories they will present

Araby (723)

Choose "student/characters" for THE AMERICAN.

GROUPS 1 AND 2 -- GROUP LEADERS-- NEED TO ARRANGE 1 HOUR  
MEETING WITH ME IN LIBRARY BEFORE THURSDAY, 2/13/03.

PRINCIPAL WRITER NEEDS TO SUBMIT "GROUP CONSENSUS"

BY 8:30 A.M. ON MORNING OF THE MEETING-- ON MY DESK.

(What group believes story is about, what THE conflict  
is, what the character development is, and a short list  
of teaching goals.)

11 THE AMERICAN -- complete the reading of the text by  
today. This is a long story. Exposition, conflict,  
climax, setting, foreshadowing: the problem of Claire.

13 THE AMERICAN -- Interviews with the characters.  
Group 1's Study Guide should be distributed TODAY

GROUPS 3 AND 4 -- GROUP LEADERS NEED TO ARRANGE 1 HOUR  
MEETING WITH ME IN LIBRARY BEFORE THURSDAY, 2/20/03.

PRINCIPAL WRITER NEEDS TO SUBMIT "GROUP CONSENSUS"

BY 8:30 A.M. ON MORNING OF THE MEETING-- ON MY DESK.

(What group believes story is about, what THE conflict  
is, what the character development is, and a short list  
of teaching goals.)

18 GROUP 1  
Group 2's Study Guide should be distributed TODAY

20 GROUP 2  
Group 3's Study Guide should be distributed TODAY