

ESSAY TWO

Due: Wednesday, November 26

Length: Five to Six pages

Please choose one of the following questions and answer it, with a prominently placed thesis (in the first paragraph), in a five- to six-page essay. In this essay you will need to quote from your primary texts on numerous (probably at least four) occasions. You are also required to quote from, and correctly cite following MLA guidelines, at least three scholarly sources. The articles that you use as your scholarly sources must come from peer-reviewed journals. You cannot use book reviews or abstracts as scholarly sources. The whole paper must follow MLA guidelines. Please use Times New Roman font, 12 point, and double-space throughout your paper.

1. Please choose three poems by a single poet that we have read this term. Obviously, you likely will need to find the second and third poems on your own, since we generally read merely one poem by each poet (except in a few instances, like Whitman or Poe). Based on your examination of the poet's three poems, your job is to analyze the poet's poetic strategies across poems. You will also need to identify the noteworthy features of the poems you have chosen. Do the poems employ a formal style (like a sonnet or a villanelle)? Are the poems in rhymed or blank verse? Are the poems narrative? Are they haiku? Do they take liberties with "established" poetic traditions for their time? What *is* the rhyme scheme of the poem/s, if there is one? Of course, ideally, your three poems will have different features that distinguish them, and these differences will provide you with the opportunity to discuss the choices the poet made in different circumstances. Because of the varying content of these poems, how did the poet's strategies change? Before you embark on answering this question, you will likely want to consult your textbook's Chapter Eleven, entitled "Approaching Poetry: Responding in Writing." Be sure to follow MLA guidelines for in-text citations of poetry.

2. Please choose one character from the play *Hamlet*, *other than* Hamlet himself, and examine how the character you have chosen helps to define Hamlet for the reader (here I am borrowing your textbook's question, which is a good one). We see Hamlet not only through the words he speaks, but also through what others say about him and how they interact with him. These interactions give us a much fuller picture of this young man and thus, these interactions have played a significant role in making Hamlet such a lasting figure in our cultural consciousness over these four centuries. In your analysis of your chosen character, please be sure to cite particularly pertinent passages from the play to support your arguments. Be sure to follow MLA guidelines for in-text citations of excerpts from plays. In your essay, do not only explain *how* the character helps to define Hamlet for the reader/viewer but also explain *what* in particular your chosen character illuminates about Hamlet.