

ENGL 233/1 CA

Suggested 1st Paper Topics – Due 14 July (at the beginning of class)

Write a short essay (600-750 words) on one of the following topics; or, if you have your own topic in mind, please consult with me before proceeding with the essay. Since the essay is short, be sure to be concise. Your paper should focus on a close reading or textual analysis and have a clear thesis statement.

Assignments must be typed (double-spaced and 12 pt. font) and conform to MLA guidelines. Your name, my name, course number and date in upper left corner, stapled, word count on last page. For information of MLA documentation style, see Ch. 21, p. 1276 or www.owl.english.purdue.com

Please note that email submissions will not be accepted unless special permission is granted. **Late papers** will not be accepted without a valid reason and marks will be deducted from papers over a week late. The latter will not receive any written comments.

Plagiarism: Presenting someone else's work or ideas as your own is a serious academic offence. See the Code of Conduct in the Undergraduate Calendar.

1. Is there an implied critique of gender roles in Anne Beattie's "Snow"? Discuss.
2. Consider how snow functions as a metaphor for love.
3. Consider the profound change both the narrator and Sonny undergo in James Baldwin's "Sonny's Blues." While the struggles both face can certainly be discussed in terms of racial conflict, does Baldwin's message have a broader application?
4. Discuss Ernest Hemingway's modernist approach to "Hills Like White Elephants" (you might like to consider his theory of the iceberg) and his use of symbolism and metaphor.
5. Consider the significance of the minor character Maggie in Toni Morrison's "Recitatif."
6. What does *recitatif* mean? How does it differ from an *aria*? How does that meaning illuminate the stakes of the story?
7. How does the weather and season described in each section of Anton Chekov's "The Lady with the Dog" relate to the action? If Gurov and Anna's affair heats up under the hot sun in Yalta, why doesn't it cool down, as we would expect, in the snow of a Moscow winter?
8. Is this a happy family with common troubles in Judith Ortiz Cofer's "Volar"? What issues are they dealing with, and do they try to resolve their problems realistically?
9. How does the meaning of Boukman's speech become more powerful at the end of Edwidge Danticat's story "A Wall of Fire Rising"? What does Danticat show about the importance of memory and history?
10. When do you become aware that your view of events in Stephen Crane's "The Open Boat" is limited to things seen and heard by the four men in the boat? In what specific ways is that important to the story's effect? Where does the story's perspective "expand" to include larger reflections and generalizations? How are they justified by the narrative point of view?

11. Discuss the effects of William Faulkner's use of third person plural narrator and/or the importance of setting in "A Rose for Emily."
12. Magic realism as a genre blends fantasy, myth, and the paranormal or supernatural with reality and actuality. Characteristics of the genre include plenitude (embellishment or use of the fanciful), hybridity (blending time periods or constellary realities), and unreliable narrator (the narrator withholds or does not justify events or characters' viewpoints). Write an essay in which you identify some of the characteristics of magical realism in Marquez's story.
13. In Tillie Olsen's "I Stand Here Ironing," we learn that her daughter Emily had a real talent for comedy. Do you believe that becoming a comedian harmed or benefited her? How did her stage identity become a form of escape from her reality?