

## ENGL 233/1 CA

### Suggested 2<sup>nd</sup> Paper Topics – Due 28 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](http://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. Examine the prevalent water imagery throughout Margaret Atwood's poem "Death of a Young Son by Drowning." How is water associated with life and death? Is there a deeper implication in Atwood's continual reference to water?
2. Analyze the tone of Rita Dove's "Daystar." Is it despairing? Are there points of hope? What does the title of the poem – "Daystar" – mean? What sort of implications do these words carry? Although "Daystar" is not spoken by the woman who is described in the poem, to what degree might one say that the poem's tone reflects the woman's sentiments?
3. Compare Maxine Kumin's "Woodchucks" and Adrienne Rich's "Aunt Jennifer's Tigers" using the guideline questions on pp. 532-33.
4. Like William Blake's "London," Yvor Winters' "At the San Francisco Airport" has a distinctive speaker and makes reference to a particular place. Write an essay that compares the role of the speaker in each poem and what the speaker's attitude is to each place. How important are these places for the poems? And how distinctive are the speakers' perceptions of the particular places?
5. While Sharon Olds talks about love in "Last Night," it can be said that she is making an argument. What is her argument? What is the speaker in the poem claiming? Or, what is the question that she is seeking to answer? In what way does she refer to death?
6. Choose any poem in chapter 11 and explore the meaning and effect of its metaphor(s). Does the poem make use of an extended or controlling metaphor or of multiple metaphors? If the latter, how do the metaphors relate to and build on each other?

7. Research the design of World War II bombers like the B-17 and the B-24. Try to find a picture of the gunner in the ball turret of such an airplane, and note carefully his body position. Write an essay in which you explain how Randall Jarrell's "The Death of the Ball Turret Gunner" uses visual to create its fetal and birth metaphors.

8. Write an essay that performs a close reading of "[That time of year thou mayest in me behold]". Examine the imagery, logic, rhymes, and rhythm and meter of the piece. Is there anything particularly emphasized? What does such a reading reveal about the speaker's tone?

9. Write an essay that examines the relationship between death and time in Emily Dickenson's "[Because I could not stop for Death-- ]". How is each presented? How do they relate to the speaker? How do death and time relate to the other people and things that the speaker notices?

10. Occasionally, a single, powerful poetic sentiment or image can be presented in just a few brief words or lines. Write an essay that compares the compelling situations or images presented in David Ferry's "At the Hospital" and William Carlos Williams's "The Red Wheelbarrow." How does each poet make use of brevity for further emphasis?

11. Is there a "correct" interpretation of Adrienne Rich's "Diving into the Wreck"? If one interpretation seems to fit all the particulars of the poem, does that mean it's better than other possible interpretations? Write an essay in which you explore the poem's symbolism and argue for or against the idea that there is a single best way to understand this poem. Can ambiguity serve a poet's purpose, or does it ultimately undercut a poem's meaning and significance?