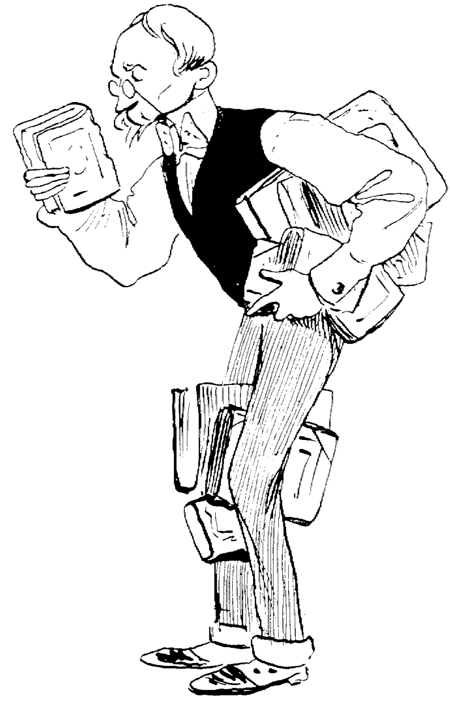
“Read in Order to Live”



Gustave Flaubert from a letter to Mlle de Chantepie

Dr. Bordelon’s 152 Packet

Summer 2009

The Latest in a Long Line of Quality Handouts for Your Writing and Reading Pleasure

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Course Preface

For the next fifteen weeks you'll be reading and responding in writing to a wide range of literature. To ease you into the course, I've included in this packet materials that should assist your understanding of the readings, clarify the writing assignments, and lend a helping hand (or a shoulder to cry on) as you progress towards becoming a full-fledged, Grade-A, Government Inspected, no-holds barred literary critic/thinker; at a more basic level, this packet should help you get the most out of the class – and leave it with a smile.

Reading

Although most people think only of books when they hear "reading," the activity takes many different forms. You read a movie, making connections between the girl in the red dress and the man with the revolver who appears in the car chase scene; you read the road from behind the wheel of your car, carefully avoiding skunks, pieces of wooden pallets, and orange cones; you read a teacher's demeanor on the first day of class wondering, "Is she a hard grader?" "Can I catch up on my sleep in this class?" All of these kinds of reading involve a studied, concentrated look at a particular event, landscape, or person in an effort to extract some kind of meaning. I bring up these different forms of readings only to show that even if you aren't used to reading books, you're used to reading. For this course, you'll use these same skills and apply them to the written word.

Now of course you're thinking "Like, I already know how to read – thanks." But the kind of close, analytical reading required to fully appreciate literature (and to fully appreciate any written work) is a skill that's faded in our media saturated age. Consider your computer for instance. Years ago we had to memorize a few text-based DOS commands such as COPY, MOVE, etc to make our computers work. Now? Move the mouse and point to a . . . picture. And think of the internet. What draws you to a web page – the eye-candy graphics or the rich and in-depth text which stimulates deep thought? I thought so. . . . In fact, reading any text over a screen length online is a cumbersome chore entailing much eye squinting and scrolling down of screens.

This course is designed to reacquaint you with the rigors and rewards of reading. First, the rigors. Reading closely means paying attention to not only the plot – or what happens in a story – it means paying even more attention to *why* it happened. This digging deeper, paying attention not just to the surface of the story but the implications behind a word or phrase – what is suggested by the story opening at midnight – and ending at dawn? Why are colors associated with flames so prominent? Why a cathedral and not a castle? – is what reading well is all about. And this is where the rewards come in. As you learn to attune your eye/ear to the more subtle gradations of thought and feeling in literature, you're learning to look more closely at the world around you – and I don't only mean the printed word. The kind of reading that this class fosters will be used both as you interpret a marketing report in your career as Assistant VP to the VP for Marketing at Widget© Inc., and as you see through the spin of a political advertisement that presents a candidate whose father and grandfather were both members of the senate (and whose father was a president) yet who proclaims that he's "not from Warshington."

As the two examples above suggest, we're still awash in a sea of words, and the skills you'll learn in this class – paying attention to the connotations of words, an awareness of how irony and point of view can affect meaning, understanding how figurative language can express complex and abstract ideas – will give you that edge you need to succeed in your careers – and be the life of the party. More importantly, learning to read analytically gives shape to that endeavor we call life. It clarifies the world around us, providing the language (and thus the thinking) we need to move from grunting, mewling automatons ruled by the latest marketing gimmick beamed to us via satellite from WeOwnTheWorld Inc., to thoughtful, skeptical, reasoning – and above all *alive and kicking* individuals. That "kick" is important because modern life, with its consumerist, let's-satisfy-my-basic-urges-first attitude, results in complacency and apathy. Reading allows you to get to the essentials of life, to cut through the mental static of the McJobs you suffer through to pay your car note, the fleeting satisfaction of the great shoes you bought at Nine West, and the empty sensations of screaming at the villain of the month on the idiot box, be it the behemoth with makeup on WWF, or the latest ruler of a small nation that dares to disagree with us. Reading allows us to, as Jay Pirani suggests, swing "a lantern ahead of us in the fog of our lives." I'll supply the lantern – great literature – you bring the matches (more prosaically known as your brain and your interest).

My approach to teaching literature is an extension of my approach to reading. First, I read and enjoy the work, willingly suspending disbelief and entering the world created by the author. Later, and on a more analytical basis, I work at a basic understanding of the mechanics – plot, character, point of view, theme, symbolism – but what I always come back to is the vision of life offered by the text. Just what are the prominent features of this fictive world, and how does it comment on or reflect the human condition? Thus, you'll find me continually turning to examples from everyday life – in other words, from history, psychology, anthropology, art, sociology, etc. – to explain the beauty, relevance, or meaning of a particular text.

On a different note, we – students of literature (and for the rest of the semester, you're included in this definition) – look at these works closely because any text worth reading closely is worth the same intellectual effort that goes into any critical examination of a topic. Looking for connections and meanings in a given work of literature is similar to figuring out the causes of the Civil War – or the effects of El Niño on world climate. By that I mean it is an intellectual exercise designed to get you to closely examine one particular aspect of life, and then derive some solace, moral, or understanding of the vast and complex web of human relations we call life. Thus the kind of thoughtful, reflective reading this course demands is meant to reshape the way you perceive the world around you, allow you to glean new insights into the workings of shetl life in eastern Europe, the emotional detachment of a worker in late twentieth century America, and the life of a despondent college student in medieval Denmark (or is it Elizabethan England?).

To foster this kind of attentive reading, you should read each assignment at least twice: if you're like me, the first time you read to see what happens and the second time around, you read to see *why* it happened. Remember, as well, to read with a pen or pencil in hand and mark up your book copiously. Jot down questions to yourself, note where odd lines of dialogue or description occur, argue with the author, or "nod" your head in agreement. While simply highlighting the text may work with a biology textbook, in literature what you say back to the text is just as important as what the writer says. This "talking back" to the text is a sure sign that you're reading attentively – which is the way you should be reading for this course.

Writing

Moving from reading to writing (this course is, after all, the second half of the writing requirement), I have some general remarks on essays. In formal writing, particularly in essays, you have to organize your thoughts and communicate them clearly to the reader. This means that instead of just pouring everything you know about a story or poem or play into your essay or body paragraph and saying "there – that oughta' do it," you have to form your thoughts into an organized piece of writing. Granted, in the early stage of writing, you do need to let it all out – put all of your thoughts down on paper, whether in lists, diagrams, or short paragraphs. But as you begin crafting your essay, you need to look over all of your brilliant insights and say "I like the quote about the lady as a cash register watcher, but it doesn't fit in my argument" – and then take it out..

As you draft your essay, keep in mind two common maladies in writing about literature: quote bloat and development deficit. To cure quote bloat, remember that it's not the number or length of quotes that makes a good essay – it's how well you explain them. Two short quotes in a paragraph, explained in detail, are better than four long ones that are merely glossed over. The remedy for development deficit is to get the reader to "see" and "read" a text the way you do. Without letting them get inside your head – in other words, writing your thinking down – the reader will be blind: and you're not writing in Braille. While you may think "any blockhead can see what I mean by this quote," you need to realize that I am the mother of all blockheads. Your job is to show the reader that *you* know how a particular quote – which is merely a string of words – supports your argument. Even something as patently obvious as the color red suggesting anger needs to be clarified. Instead of anger, red could mean love. So you must explain how, in general, red is associated with anger – or love. For instance, as a reader, every time I come across a quote in an essay I ask myself "Now how does this support the topic sentence?" or "Hmmm, why this quote? What's its connection to the rest of the paragraph?" The key is to anticipate and answer questions an ignorant reader may have with your thinking on a particular literary work. And since I cannot read your mind, I come to your essay as an ignorant reader: it's your job to make it as easy as possible for me to follow your thinking.

We'll be working together on your out-of-class essays, and while I encourage you to let others read and offer suggestions on your work, I strongly suggest you use myself, a classmate, or a tutor from the Writing Skills Workshop (R144) as your primary readers/reviewers. If you use anyone else, be sure that they do not correct your essay; let them read it and ask you questions about words, grammar, focus, but under no circumstances should you let them write out corrections: that's your job. In any case, be sure to save all drafts – especially those with questions from other readers.

That said, be prepared to enjoy the class: we'll be reading some great stories and having some good conversations about them.

See you in class.

General Information

Brain Food

Radio Stations:
If you'd like to keep up with current events but can't find the time to read the New York Times, try listing to NPR news radio. You have your choice of programs: Morning Edition 6:00 – 8:30 mornings, or All Things Considered 5::00-7:30. I listen on 90.5 FM (Brookdale's public radio station). You can also listen on the web at www.npr.org Check the site for the station in your area.

Suggested Reading:
Most available from OCC's library

Periodicals
The Nation: weekly information with a decidedly uncorporate view. It gives you the lowdown on how government and business are slowly eating away at our constitutional rights.

Harper's: monthly magazine which includes a mix of short excerpts from letters from insurance companies, internal memos from businesses, artwork, essays on contemporary issues and culture, and short stories.

The New York Times Book Review. Did you ever think to yourself "I don't know what to read?" This weekly magazine prints short reviews on recent books and is a great way to pick out your next book.

Smithsonian Magazine: Everything from art (great illustrations) to zoology, once a month. A fantastic way to painlessly gain the kind of cultural literacy that will make you a favorite at cocktail parties – and sure to make your boss think "I knew I did good when I hired her/him."

Books
Guerin, Wilfred, et al. A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature. 4th Edition. New York: Oxford UP, 1999.
A must have for any student of literature (it's on my bookshelf), this book offers several different ways to read literary texts, along with specific examples.

The Dictionary of Cultural Literacy, Ed. Ed. Hirsch, Joseph Kett, and James Trefil.
This belongs on your reference shelf. Contains short entries and illustrations on items/phrases which often fall under the radar of encyclopedia.

A People's History of the United States by Howard Zinn. A fascinating guide to America from the ground up. Instead of reading about George Washington's wooden teeth, you can read about the people who made his teeth, how much they were paid (or not paid), and why they kept rioting.

Amusing Ourselves to Death by Neil Postman. A, well, amusing look at how television, with its passive format, is slowly (quickly?) destroying our will.

Manufacturing Consent by Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky – see excerpts/summary in Fun Facts
Review by Amazon.Com: An absolutely brilliant analysis of the ways in which individuals and organizations of the media are influenced to shape the social agendas of knowledge and, therefore, belief. Contrary to the popular conception of members of the press as hard-bitten realists doggedly pursuing unpopular truths, Herman and Chomsky prove conclusively that the free-market economics model of media leads inevitably to normative and narrow reporting. Whether or not you've seen the eye-opening movie, buy this book, and you will be a far more knowledgeable person and much less prone to having your beliefs manipulated as easily as the press.

Maus I and Maus II by Art Spiegelman. A fantastic and graphic (literally and figuratively – it's literally a graphic [i.e. cartoon panels] and figuratively gut-wrenching) look at the Holocaust through the eyes of a cartoonist who interviews his father – who survived Auswich. By turns wickedly funny (the father is the kind of person who leaves the gas burner on at a summer house so he won't have to pay for matches to light it) and devastating (he also recounts walking over the bodies of concentration camp prisoners who had died of typhus), it puts a "human" face on a horrific event.

The Commissar Vanishes by David King. A fascinating collections of Stalin era fabricated photographs that illustrate the lengths to which a regime will go to protect its image.

Mr. Wilson's Cabinet of Wonder by Lawrence Weschler. Do you like books that make you question reality? That make you pause and say "Hmmm, this sounds too false to be true . . ."? Do you like the reader's whiplash when you blink and suddenly realize it *was* true? Do you like that added dollop of suspense when you realize you can't tell for sure what's "real" and what's "not real"? If so, you'll like this book. If not, you need to get a mental life.

Great Artists by Michael Cummings. A short and accessible history of painting and painters. Great format: a major work by each artist with commentary on how that work connects to the overall work of the artist. A perfect intro to art history.

From Dawn to Decadence by Jacques Barzun. History told as one long story – and made relevant today. A great antidote to the often rushed presentation of Western Civilization in college courses.

Jimmy Corrigan, or, The Smartest Kid on Earth by Chris Ware. One of the most touching graphic novels I've ever read. Funny, sad, moving – and a comic book. Ya gotta' read this.

Into the Buzzsaw: Leading Journalists Expose the Myth of a Free Press edited by Krinstina Borjesson. Filled with specific examples of how the government, business, and other competing forces interfere with your first amendment right to know what's going on around with.

The Craft of Revision by Donald Murray. Filled with ideas on how to revise your prose, this book is perfect for those interested in improving their writing skills – a group which includes everyone.

The Elements of Style by Strunk and White. A classic book on writing that wears its age lightly. Available on the net, but it's a browser's delight and worth purchasing.

Web Sites

GET FREE EMAIL which you can access on campus or at any other computer with internet access http://www.yahoo.com Click on the "Check Mail" button at the top of the screen, and follow the instructions for new user.

See online Course Site for a list of links

What to Hand In With Final Draft

Note: Completing this will take a while, so give yourself enough time.

When you hand in each out-of-class assignment, you will turn in not only the final revision, but all of the writing you did for that assignment. Put this work in a manila folder with your name, section, and the assignment written clearly on the tab of the folder. Each folder you turn in should contain the following seven (count'm) parts – along with one extra step. From top to bottom the parts should follow this order:

1. **(Right on top) Typed Reflecting** (See *Read* 9 below)
2. **Editing self-check list**: This must be completed by you (see Essay #1 *Read* 79; Essay #2 81).
3. **Final revision**: the final, revised version of the essay. Follow sample MLA format essay (98) for format. (This, my friends, is a no-brainer: take the sample essay in one hand, and your essay in the other and make your essay match the layout of name, line spacing, page numbering, etc. from the sample essay). All of the essays handed in need to have a title

   Be sure to proofread carefully – as the writer of the paper you are responsible for any grammatical or typographical errors.

   You can also follow the handy "How to Set Up MLA Format in Word" [*Read* 60), and be sure to include a correctly formatted Work Cited page. (See "Citing Sources" 67+)
4. **Invention/pre-writing**: numerous pages of rough, unpolished invention writing for that particular paper.
5. **Drafts**: at least one or two rough, exploratory drafts, and in any event, all of the drafts associated with that essay. They must be the original copies and labeled with the assignment title and draft number.
6. **Previous Final Drafts**: copies (retain originals for your records) of the final, graded drafts of your previous essays. They will be collected and retained by me to determine your final grade.
7. **Research**: all notes, copies of articles, etc. associated with essay.
8. **Email final draft to me**: Using your own (see yahoo.com for free email) or the college's email account, send me an electronic copy of your final and any rough drafts you have made (see instructions below). These should be named with your first and last name, rough/final draft, essay #. For example, for Essay #1 you would name the file **Emily Dickinson rough draft essay 1** or **Charles Dickens final draft essay 4.**

Make sure you have each of these before you hand in your paper. Hate to be a stickler, but . . .your paper will not be accepted and will be considered a "late paper" if you do not include all of the items noted above.

REMEMBER: You must make an appointment so we can review your rough draft before you can hand it in.

Reflecting on Your Work

Now that you've finished the agonizing task of writing your essay, it's time to reflect upon the process.

1. Write a paragraph discussing what you've learned about your topic. This could be specific (the importance of point of view?) or general (about the author/literature).
2. Write a paragraph discussing what you've learned about writing (writing in general) from this assignment.
3. Write a paragraph discussing how your research/outside sources affected your thinking about the story and your writing.

How to Copy and Paste and Email and Essay to me

Follow these instructions EXACTLY as written for most to copy and paste and email in most Windows based systems. Note: do not send an attachment: I realize the formatting will be lost, but for this electronic copy I'm only interested in the text.

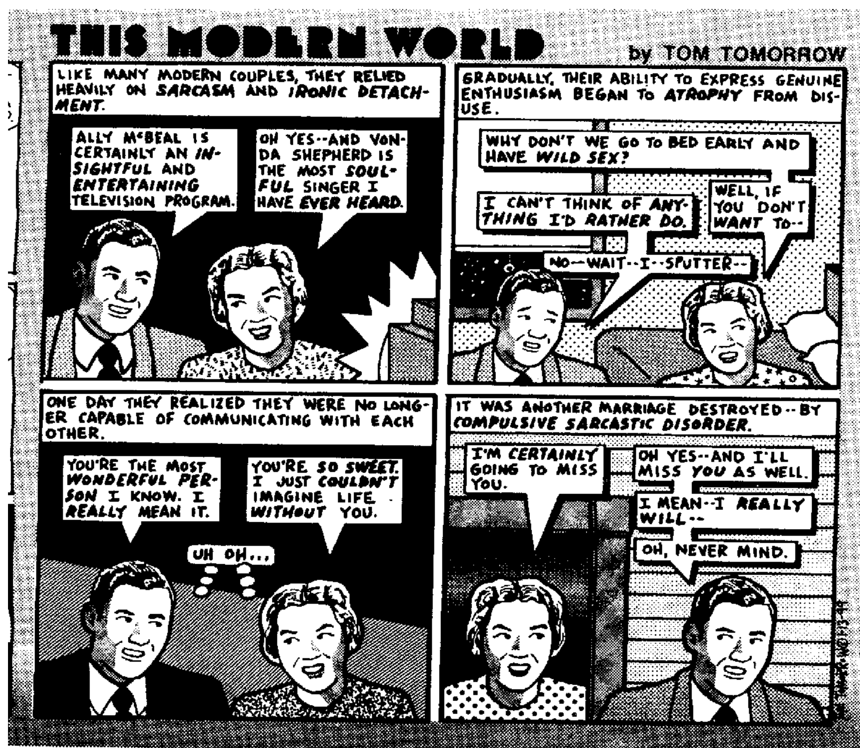
If you don't have a computer or need help completing this, bring in the file on a disk and ask myself or a worker in the Writing Lab (R144) for assistance.

1. Open the file containing your essay.
2. Highlight the text you want to copy with mouse and press Ctrl+c (this means holding down both the Control button [*on the bottom row near the space bar*] and the letter c at the same time) to copy.
3. Click on the "Start" button and open your internet software (AOL, Netscape, Internet Explorer, etc)

4. Follow the instructions for your emailer to write a message (usually by clicking on “Compose,” “Write Message,” etc. at the top of the screen)
5. In the “To” box, type dbordelon@ocean.edu
6. In the Subject/RE box, type in your full name, and the essay number (ex. Emily Dickinson Essay 1)
7. Move your mouse to the box where you would normally type out a message and click so the cursor is in the box.
8. Press Ctrl+v to paste – your body paragraph/essay should magically appear (ah . . . the wonders of technology).
9. click "Send" (or other appropriate button) to email essay to me.

If this doesn’t work, scream out loud, curse computers in general, and stop by my office where I'll show you how to do this – and discuss stress management techniques.

Too much iron(y) is unhealthy



Funny Times / March 199

Grading Guidelines

A paper: **An A essay is clear with rich content**. The organization is clear yet unobtrusive, and the paragraphs use rich, detailed examples and include explanations which clearly illustrate the writer's points. Transitions, both within and between paragraphs are smooth, and the writer avoids proofreading errors. Sentence structures are varied, and the specific wording, descriptions and insightful commentary make you eager to reread the essay. In sum, you feel the writer is holding an intelligent, reasoned conversation with you.

B paper: **In general, a B paper contains all the elements of a C essay, but uses more specific details or examples, and explains them more clearly so that the reader occasionally forgets they are reading an essay**. The reader seldom, if ever, has to ask "huh?" The introduction makes the reader want to read the rest of the essay, and the conclusion leaves the reader satisfied. The writer often varies sentences and uses specific wording, breaking away from the standard five or six paragraph mold and developing a single idea/division in more than one paragraph. The basics, such as formatting and proofreading, are handled competently, with a minimum of errors to impede the reader's understanding.

C paper: **This is writing that gets the job done – and the way most students write**. The essay has a clear thesis and contains all components of the specific assignment (i.e. counter-argument and rebuttal in argumentative essays or the required number of words or sources). While the essay is organized, more work on transitions and clearer cues to the reader (i.e. topic sentences) are needed. Examples are presented, but not in sufficient detail to let the reader "see" exactly what the writer means, and explanations of them are sometimes perfunctory. Additionally, C essays often show signs of being rushed with some formatting and proofreading errors, though not enough to prevent the reader from understanding the argument. Note: you do not get a "C" just for handing in the essay (see first sentence below).

D paper: **This does not mean that you haven't done any work; it means that the final draft needs further revision before it meets the standards of a "C" essay**. In general, these essays lack direction and/or have errors which prevent readers from understanding your thinking. Lacking a clear thesis, the paragraphs (often missing topic sentences) seem to wander and the essay is not focused around a single argument or theme. Additionally, the essay may lack a central component of the assignment -- say, a specific counter-argument. On a more basic level, the essay may have too many proofreading errors (If you make more than the maximum number of major errors for a given essay, you've earned a "D").

F paper: **As in D papers, this does not mean that you haven't done any work, it means that the essay has serious problems – missing research, pages, too many logic errors etc. – or exhibits a lack of understanding of the assignment**. They could also be too short (be sure to meet the minimum word requirement) or too filled with grammatical errors to be understandable.

The above is adapted from Holt's handbook.

NOTE: Essays will be returned in a week to ten days. I will only bring them into class once. If you miss that class, you must come to my office to pick up your essay. It is your responsibility to remember to do so.

Keep track of your grades below

Essay 1 Short Story	Essay #2 Research Project	Essay 3 Drama	Average of Body Paragraphs	Class Participation Not used to determine passing grade	Total

Breakdown of letter grades: A=4; A-=3.8; B+=3.5; B=3; B-=2.8; C+=2.5; C=2; C-=1.8; D+=1.5; D=1

A Note on Grading

The biggest surprise most students have with the difference between college and high school is the difference in the way their work is evaluated. Back in the early Jurassic period, when I was in high school, if you handed something in, you received a B for effort: if it was typed (remember, I used a stone typewriter), you received an A for going that extra mile.

The problem with this attitude is that in real life, effort doesn't count – results do. If you submit a poorly researched and worded report on the market for water widgets in Mongolia to the division supervisor of WasteYourMoneyOn PlasticThingAMajigsThatYouDon'tReallyNeed™ Inc. and tell her "I spent, like, fifteen hours on this, so it's like, perfect," she will show you the door. This is her way of saying "I evaluate your ideas and their communication to others – not your effort."

Similarly, in a college class (or at least the ones that make you fire off some neurons in your gray matter), the professor respects your intellect instead of your mental sweat. Instead of saying, with a trace of condescension, "Here, take this B and leave me alone – since you can't learn the material anyway, I don't want to be bothered," an honest professor sets a standard, and helps you reach it. I am an honest professor. To make it as clear as possible – effort does not count. Of course without effort, your essay will not convey its meaning and you will fail in your endeavor: to communicate your ideas to another person in writing.

It may help you to understand how I read your work. I treat any piece of writing that's placed in front of me as just that: a piece of writing. If it guides me through the author's argument/vision, it works. If it doesn't, well . . . it doesn't and I will a) make suggestions about how to improve the work (if it's a rough draft), or 2) grade according to how well the words in front of me explain or prove the writer's point (if it's a final draft). While I realize that self-esteem is the latest buzz word among educators, I must admit that the author fades away when I read, and it's the words on the page that engage me. Granted, it is a shock to some students to finally be judged by their words instead of their effort/personality ("but I got "A"s in my AP/previous class!"). . . . yet it is a shock that they must overcome if they want to improve as writers. And that is my goal: to improve your writing.

If you have any questions about my comments or your grade remember that I am here to help: make an appointment and bring in your essay so we can discuss them.

Proofreading Symbols (Dr. Bordelon's Cryptic Markings)

Words or phrases that are circled or have squiggly lines underneath them are problem areas that should have been revised. Underlined words or phrases means you're cooking with gas (Jurassic Age slang for doing well). The minus signs and numbers are the number of major errors.

You'll note on your essays will be returned with numbers on them. The numbers don't refer to a point system, they are just my way of keeping track of the number of your major errors.

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~ = idea is sound, but phrasing needs work (note squiggly underline).
______________ = sharp wording and/or idea– good.
Awk = Awkward phrasing or wording -- sometimes ungrammatical, sometimes, a phrase that's a mouthful and should be smoothed out.
Cit. = citation error
Confusing = cannot tell what you are trying to say
C/S = Comma splice: check glossary
Frag = Fragment: check glossary
huh? = confusing phrasing or sentence
Intro phrase = missing introductory phrase with source
Log. or logic = idea is not logical
MW__________ = missing word/s
rep. = repetitious
R/O = a Run-on Sentence: check glossary
Stet = an oops on my part – remain as is.
~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

S/V = Subject verb agreement error
trans. = Missing or awkward transition: check glossary
V/T = Verb tense error
W/W = wrong word (ex. "There" for "Their" or "should of" for "should have"

Getting Help (or "Can my aunt/uncle/girl/boyfriend read my essay")

While your Aunt Bertha or Uncle Hermie may be considered an "expert" in English (and may even be that rare species, an "English Major"), it's difficult to get honest criticism from family members or significant others.. Also, unless they've recently taken a college level English class, their standards are probably different (and lower) than a college professor's. The best place to get help is – surprise, surprise – me. Check my office hours and sign up for an appointment (see sign-in sheet on my door). There's also Smartthinking.com, an online writing tutor (see instructions The next stop is the college's writing tutor (see below). Finally, look around the classroom: your classmates can be your best source of criticism. They are familiar with the material, are familiar with my standards, and are familiar with you. Study groups? Peer review groups? Sounds like a good idea to me.

Be sure to study the comments I make throughout your essay very closely. Before beginning a new essay, look back over these comments, and be sure to continue doing what worked, and to focus on and improve what didn't. Remember that one of the best ways to improve your writing is to sit with me both before and after your essay is graded. This gives us a chance to see your writing "in action," and either address the rough spots in your prose or organization, or discuss ways to avoid future problems.

If you know already that proofreading problems plague your prose, be sure to set up regular appointments with the college's writing tutor. Similarly, if you notice after your first or second essay that you're having problems with proofreading, set up regular appointments with one of the college's writing tutor. By now you're probably wondering "Okay, where DO I find this great tutor?" Check in R144, The Writing Center, and sign up.

Checklist for Conference On Essays

So I can help your writing on an individual basis, you must bring in rough drafts of your out-of-class essays before handing in the final. This is not an option and is considered a regular part of the writing process. You essay will not be complete and thus will not be accepted if we have not reviewed it together.

You need to sign up for an appointment on the sheet posted on my door. If the times are not convenient for you, just let me know and we should be able to make other arrangements. Plan on spending about ten minutes to discuss your essay – more if you want to chat. Give yourself at least four days before the final draft is due so you have time to make revisions. I look forward to meeting each of you.

Before our meeting, you should complete the following checklist to be sure you're prepared (It's your responsibility to have me initial and date the sheet below).

- All body paragraphs
- All drafts of current essays (It's hard to help improve your essay if you don't have it)
- All drafts of previous essays from our class (You can ask questions about my comments; we can refer back to what you've been doing well)
- A written list of three things you think are good about the essay
- A written list of three things you want to change/improve in your essay
- A written list of any other questions you may have

Date and time of meeting: _________________

My initials _____________ Essay # 1

Date and time of meeting: _________________

My initials _____________ Essay # 2

Dr. Bordelon's Glossary of Writing Terms

(with a few literary terms thrown in for good measure)

Bold words in definitions means a cross-reference (check in glossary for the definition of that word).

Annotate: To mark up, comment on, or underline writing. In the margins of your book you need to ask questions of the writer, summarize a paragraph with a key word, note similarities in word choice, and in general, take notes. This is your way of communicating with a writer (even dead ones), and making sure you understand what is written. It also helps to prepare you for in-class discussions. Do this with a pen or pencil – hi-lighters prevent you from actually talking back to the text (ever try writing with one of those yellow markers?). Another hint, with longer works, is to use an index card as a bookmark and note page numbers of important quotes or descriptions.

Audience: Remember, you're writing for somebody else – whoever is reading your work can't get inside of your head or ask you "Uh, what do you mean right here?" You have to make your thinking clear to your reader, who is ignorant of what you're trying to say, is always hungry for more detail, and who (in my case) has high expectations.

Argument: A particular point or belief you are trying to prove. This works on two levels: 1) you have the argument for an entire essay (**thesis**): `Sammy is an everyday hero`; 2) you have an argument for an individual paragraph (**topic sentence**): `One aspect that makes him an everyday hero is his character flaws`.

Body Paragraphs: The individual paragraphs that make up the argument or provide the information contained in your **essay**. Each paragraph is focused on a single idea (and usually a focus word/s to explain what you will be saying about that idea), stated in a **topic sentence**. In turn, each paragraph supports, explains, or proves your **thesis**. When typed, a paragraph should roughly cover 1/3 to 1/2 of a page. Any more, and the reader probably needs a break; any less, and the reader isn't satisfied. This, of course, overlooks the occasional one sentence zinger paragraph.

Sample paragraph format: (see **Body Paragraph in syllabus for a more detailed example of a paragraph set-up)**

1) A main point stated in one sentence (make it an argument/statement – `Sammy is an everyday hero because his character is flawed` – a claim that needs to be backed up. I'll call this a **topic sentence**.
2) An definition/**explanation** of any general words in your main point. In this case, what do you mean by a "realistic hero"? How is that different from a regular hero? What do you mean by a "character . . . flaw"? Ex. `Writers often use character flaws – vanity, egoism, etc. – to make a particular character more realistic, more human. After all, few "real" people are without flaws and instead of making readers dislike the character, they can, if used artfully, generate a feeling of sympathy.`
3) **Examples** or details that support your point (use descriptions of characters or setting, quotes from the literary work, commentary by literary critics, etc.). Ex. `Sammy, for instance, refers to the customers in derogatory terms: "witch" (1540), "sheep" (1542) and "scared pigs in a chute" (1545).`
4) The reader cannot read your mind: after each quote, you have to tell him or her exactly what you want it to prove/show. Ask the following question in your head "how does this example prove my point?" and "why is this quote important in this paragraph?" and then it answer in your essay. This is where you prove your argument. As a sentence starter, try "This" or a restatement of your example (ex. `This criticism points to Sammy's egocentrism, a common flaw with younger adults.`) and then use an explanatory word (illustrates, shows, demonstrates, proves, suggests, defines, supports, indicates, or reveals) in a phrase to begin your commentary. Ex. `His egocentrism makes him a more realistic character: far from a sterling example of humanity, he shares the faults common in us all.`
5) A sentence to sum up.

Adapted from **Rules of Thumb**

Citation: Used to let reader know you have used an outside source. In this class, we'll be using the **MLA Citation** method.

Commas: Not when you pause, and not when the sentence is going on too long. Actually, there are four times when you need a comma: 1) with an introductory phrase; 2) with a list; 3) before a conjunction and between two

independent clauses; and 4) with a interruption or insertion (dependent clauses). See your grammar text for more information.

Conclusion: The last paragraph of your essay. You can ask yourself the question "What's it all mean?" or bring up a point broached in your **introduction**, or . . . . something else.

Context: This serves two purposes: 1) it sets up your point/argument by telling the reader why you're bringing up a particular source or quote, and 2) it gives the reader information to help identify the speaker or place the speaker or example in the given work. For example, if using a quote from "A&P," you might say `Sammy knew that he was not going to be like a typical hero and "get the girl" at the end of the story. As he walks out into the parking lot, he looks for "my girls," but notes that "they're gone, of course" (17). The "of course," with its knowing air, suggests that Sammy, even before he stepped outside, realized that his heroic deed would go unnoticed by the girls.` Context helps readers by making the reader think "Oh yeah, now I remember that part" and by letting readers better understand (and thus agree with) your argument by framing it in a manner so they can understand it. By setting up your example so clearly, your argument flows logically from your example and explanation leaving the reader with a satisfied "Ahhh" as opposed to a befuddled "huh?"

Cues: No, not sticks used in playing pool, but the way writers direct readers through their work. For instance, a **thesis** and **division statement** are cues writers use to tell their readers "This is what my essay will be about." A **topic sentence** is a cue that tells readers "This is what this paragraph will be about," and a transition tells readers "Okay, I'm moving from this topic to that topic."

Dependent Clause: A phrase which cannot stand by itself. Ex. `The dog, *which had sharp teeth*, was bit by the postman.` The italicized phrase "which had sharp teeth," needs to be set off from the independent clause with **commas**. See #4 in **Commas**.

Detail: It's your job to supply specific quotes, descriptions of characters, or settings, and other information from the work you are discussing to "show" them what you are talking about. You must supply the reader with the **evidence** that shaped your understanding of the story so that he or she can say to themselves "Yeah, I kinda' see that too" – as opposed to "Huh?" Remember, the reader is a hungry beast, and it is difficult to satisfy his or her desire to know, so be specific. After supplying details, remember to add **explanations**.

Direct Quote: Using the exact wording from your source: no words can be taken out (unless you use ellipsis dots), and no words can be added (unless you put brackets [ ] around them). You denote where the quote begins and ends with quotation marks. **NOTE: YOU MUST CITE DIRECT QUOTES AND USE AN INTRODUCTORY PHRASE.**

Division Statement: A phrase which sets out the different parts/**arguments**/reasons which prove the **thesis** of your essay (often part of your **thesis**). Think of it as a road map to the reader so they can see what's coming. Each of your **body paragraphs** needs to be accounted for in your division statement. (See also "Thesis Statements" 63).

In the sample **thesis statement** below, the **division statement** is in italicized.

In "The Lottery," Jackson uses *the behavior of the townspeople, the names of the characters, and the dark symbolism of the black box* to foreshadow the grisly results of the lottery.

Below are **topic sentences** based on the **division statement** above. Note how they follow the order established in the **division statement**:

1. The townspeople's behavior before the lottery sets a tone of uneasiness tinged with violence.
2. In addition to the townspeople's behavior, Jackson uses the names of the characters to cast a shadow of uncertainty and even death over the proceedings.
3. While the character's actions and names hint at the violent end of the story, the most potent foreshadowing lies in the dark symbolism of the lottery box itself.

Essay: An essay is a focused and organized presentation of your thinking on a particular topic – with an emphasis on the word focus. It is not everything you know or feel about a topic dumped into a collection of paragraphs, but a body of writing with a clear direction, a direction readily apparent to the reader and which logically proceeds from one part to the next. It usually consists of an **introduction**, **thesis/division statement**, **body paragraphs**, and a **conclusion**.

The main difference between academic essays and essays for general readership (such as articles in magazines) is audience. In academic writing, you communicate your thinking by following some basic conventions

(**introduction, thesis statement**, etc.) so that your primary reader, usually a tired, overworked professor, can quickly grasp your understanding of, or position on, a specific topic. When writing for general readers, more emphasis is placed on style; unlike the professor, these readers don't have to read the essay: the writer has to make them want to read it – and it has to be good enough to persuade readers to shell out the bucks to do so. The challenge in writing for college lies in combining the two: to follow the conventions without sounding, well, academic. As the sample essays included in this *Read* show, it is possible to stick to a "pattern," yet retain an individual and interesting voice: it just takes some effort.

Evidence: In essays on literature, this usually consists of **direct quotes** from the **primary source** which prove/illustrate the argument you are making. **Evidence** could also be quotes or summaries from **secondary sources**. These are all used to show the reader how you reached your opinion (but see **explanation** below for the second half of this dynamic duo).

Explanation: By answering the "why," "how," and "what" of your **evidence**, **explanations** prove your **argument**. As you draft and revise each paragraph, literally ask yourself the following questions each time you offer **evidence**: "How does this prove the **focus** of this paragraph?" or "Why should the reader know this?" or "What does this prove?" **Details**, **evidence**, and sources are mute: you must give them a voice by telling the reader exactly how and why they prove your point. Remember, the reader is a duh-head: he or she cannot understand what you are saying – ya' gotta make clear. To be blunt, try adding at least two complete sentences of explanation. See #4 in **body paragraphs**.

Focus Word/s: For me, a word or phrase in the **topic sentence** of a **body paragraph** that gives the paragraph a direction. Ex. The `townspeople's behavior before the lottery sets a tone of uneasiness tinged with violence.` In this topic sentence, the focus is on the "tone of uneasiness tinged with violence." Thus, the **examples** and **explanation** will concentrate on proving this. A clear focus lends a direction and helps you shape your paragraph.

Format: The physical way your essay looks on the page. I use the MLA format, which is standard for courses in the Humanities. Luckily, this is a no-brainer. Just match the sample essay and you'll have know problems. Pay attention to spacing, placement of page number, and works cited page. Note: those who use Word or Works do not follow the "Report" template: use your brain and follow the sample essay.

Fragment: A sentence that doesn't complete a thought – or more formally, lacks a subject and verb. See your grammar text for more information.

Independent Clause: A sentence, or part of a sentence, that can stand on its own. Ex. `The dog, which had sharp teeth, was bit by the postman.` The independent clause is `The dog was bit by the postman.`

Introduction: Use this paragraph to get your reader interested, or "hooked," on your topic – and thus the first paragraph in an **essay**. Beware of the boring start. Usually, your thesis and division statement are in the introduction (generally the last sentence of introduction), but are not *the* introduction. One good technique is to discuss in general the topic of your essay. For example, in an essay about Sammy as a realistic hero, you can discuss American's typical ideas of heroes, and then contrast them with Sammy.

Introductory Phrase: In my class, a short phrase which sets up a **direct quotation** (more generally, any short **dependent clause** used at the beginning of a sentence). You should provide a **context** for your quote by letting the reader know who wrote or said it. Ex. `As the critic Robert Fitzgerald argues "O'Connor's work is always infused with a sense of God's grace" (23).`

MLA documentation: The method used in this class and other Humanities courses to document **research**. It consists of two parts: **parenthetical citations** and **works cited entries**.

Organization: The structure of your **essay**. Your organization includes your **thesis, division statement, and topic sentences**. If they all connect, your essay is well organized; if the order of your divisions does not match the order of your paragraphs, or if the reader cannot follow the logic of your argument, then you need to work on **revision**.

Outline: A breakdown of the different parts of your **essay**. This doesn't have to be a formal, roman numeral job; it could be as simple as a list of phrases/ideas that set up your ideas/divisions for each paragraph. Interestingly, they can often be used after you've written your rough draft (I use both – and find that the ones I use after I've written a rough draft are the ones I usually stick with).

Paraphrase: Taking each word of your source, and finding a synonym for it. There can be no words from the original source in your paraphrase. **NOTE: THIS MUST INCLUDE A CITATION.**

Parenthetical Documentation/Citation (Or In-text Citation): In **MLA documentation**, this consists of two parts: the author's last name and the page number where the information cited was taken from: it is how the reader knows you are using a source, or research. If using a direct quote, the author's name must be included in an **introductory**

phrase with only the page number in the parenthesis: Ex. As the critic Robert Fitzgerald argues "O'Connor's work is always infused with a sense of God's grace" (23). Note that there is no p. or page in the parenthesis, that the author's name isn't repeated in the parenthesis, and that the punctuation goes to the right of the parenthesis.

If summarized or paraphrased, you could use an **introductory phrase**, or if not, the author's name in the parenthesis. In any event, the page number/s denoting where the source is located **source** must be included in the parenthesis.

Plagiarism: Taking any words or ideas from another writer or person and either a) not putting the wording you copied from the **source** in quotation marks; and/or b) not using a **citation** to let the reader know who you received the wording or other information (summary, paraphrase, or idea/s) from. This will result in a failing grade. If you have a question about a **source**, bring it and your essay in so we can review it together. Be sure to check and follow the definitions **Direct Quote**, **Paraphrase**, and **Summary**. (See also "Citing Sources" 67)

Pre-writing: Instead of staring at a blank piece of paper waiting for that perfect first sentence to drop from the heavens to your head, jot down notes, brainstorm, make lists, or just write for 10 minutes without stopping to get started. This technique helps you get started – and comes in handy for revision as well.

Primary Source: The actual literary text you are writing about. In an essay on John Updike's "A&P," the primary source would be "A&P." In an essay on Hamlet, the primary source would be Hamlet. See also **Secondary Source**.

Proofreading: A different way of reading an essay where you concentrate on clarifying wording and punctuation. After you're finished **revising** your essay, you go through the essay slowly, ideally, with someone else reading along on another copy, and question **EVERYTHING**. Do I need that comma? Do I need to add a comma here? Did I introduce that source correctly? Couldn't I use a more specific word here. Get used to reading your work as a workbook exercise, not as something you've written -- in other words, *actively look for and make changes.* Two hints: slowly read essay out loud, listening for confusing or tangled wording, and read essay from the last sentence to the first. Also, try the MLA editor software program in the writing lab. ("Uh . . . isn't that three hints" "Yes, I'm glad you can count")

Reasons: These are the **arguments** used to prove the validity of your **thesis**. Try to develop as many different reasons as you can (ask yourself "why is my main focus valid?"), and then choose the ones which you feel will best prove your point. You should **revise** and refine these as you write your essay.

Research: Articles or other material on the particular story or author from literary journals, letters or journals which the author wrote, historical documents or other authoritative **sources** that are used to support your **argument**. Often you use expert opinion to show how your **arguments** are valid, or you may argue with someone's beliefs. The key in most essays is to avoid using long quotes or letting the research overwhelm your essay: remember, you, as the writer of the paper, need to determine what helps your overall argument, and what just sounds good. See **source**. (See also "Citing Sources" 67)

Revision: To look at your writing not as the person that wrote it, but as a reader who feels differently than you on any given topic. A good place to start revising is by deleting as much as you can. While this strikes terror in beginning writers' hearts ("It took me forever to come up with this in the first place!"), it is essential for good writing. Almost all drafts have paragraphs and sentences that aren't detailed or don't support the thesis. It's a *very* good sign if you cut out large sections of your prose: it shows that you now know what you want to say. In short, revision entails looking at the entire work and determining what helps and what doesn't – and being brutally honest about what doesn't. As a student once told me, "All I'm keeping is the name at the top of the page."

After removing the "dead wood," you can work on communicating your thoughts more effectively. This often entails adding descriptions, facts, comparisons, or stories to make your point (**evidence**), and then **explaining**, in two or three different ways, exactly how these descriptions, facts, etc. prove that point. Remember, the **evidence** makes perfect sense to you – but not to the reader who looks at things differently than you do. In any case, make changes until you're sure the reader says "Oh, NOW I see what you mean."

See "So, You Wanna" (56) and Donald Murray's "The Maker's Eye" (95) for more ideas.

Run-on: Two **independent clauses** in one sentence. These need to be separated with a period, semi-colon, comma and conjunction, or rewritten. See your grammar text for more information.

Source: An individual piece of **research** used in your essay. This could be anything from an article by a literary scholar to an interview with an author.

Secondary Source: In literature, this refers to letters, notes, or journals from the author, essays or books by critics, historical documents, etc., which are used when writing a research paper to support your ideas. The **primary source** would be the work (Hamlet, "My Last Duchess," "Everyday Use," etc.) itself.

Summary: Taking the general idea or statement from a source using only your own words. **NOTE: THIS MUST BE CITED.**
Thesis Statement: The controlling idea of an **essay** stated in one sentence, usually the last sentence in the **introduction**. See **division statement** for example. (See also "Thesis Statements" 63)
Topic Sentence: The controlling idea of a paragraph. Usually phrased as a statement or claim that needs to be proved, it is related to and helps prove the thesis. Often uses a synonym of one of the divisions from the **division statement** to **cue** readers that a particular division is being discussed. See **division statement** for example. (See also "Thesis Statements" 63)
Transitions: Words or phrases used within and between **body paragraphs** that show readers you are changing direction or topic. For paragraphs, a good technique is to mention the topic from the previous paragraph in the topic sentence of the new paragraph.

Ex. topic sentence with transition:

`Not only do his character flaws contribute to Sammy's realism, but the lack of recognition he receives adds to it.`

In this example, the previous paragraph was about character flaws, and the new paragraph will be about his lack of recognition.
Working Bibliography: An ongoing list of possible **sources** gleaned from indexes and computer databases. Usually, out of four items, you'll find one good **source**.
Works Cited Entry: A notation, following MLA format, of a particular **source**. These are located on the **works cited page**. This is detail work: you must follow the guidelines exactly, paying particular attention to the placement and order of dates, commas and periods. Luckily, this is a one time deal: do it right and do it once. I have several examples of commonly used sources in *Read*: I expect you to follow them (see "Citing Sources" [67+] in *Read* for many specific examples).
Works Cited Page: An alphabetized arrangement (in MLA format) of all the **sources** actually used in a particular essay located on a separate page at the end of that essay. Follow sample essay and/or textbook for formatting instructions, and be sure to follow the MLA Works Cited entry format. (see "Citing Sources" [67+] in *Read* for many specific examples).

Instructions for Accessing the Course Site

The course site is the place to go for research, library access, and lesson plans.

1. Through your regular OCC Cruiser Account – click on English I from the list on the right.: See instructions for accessing your OCC Cruiser account in your registration material
2. Directly via the address below:
https://prod.campuscruiser.com/cruiser/occ/david_bordelon/152oncampus/152index.htm (note the "s" at the end of the http, and the space between david and bordelon is an _.
The disadvantage of #2 is that it is very long.
3. Send me an email (dbordelon@ocean.edu) and I will send you the link.

Body paragraphs

Drafting a body paragraph

Keep these three main points in mind when drafting a paragraph

1. Work from quotes
   a. With your thesis or topic sentence in mind reread the story (in case you misheard me I said "reread the story") looking for quotes that seem connected to your thesis/topic sentence. Type these up for quick copying and pasting into your paragraph.
   b. Try this format for using quotes in your work: 1) introduce quote by providing context – always include who is talking and where the quote appeared in the text (see 16) 2) insert quote; 3) explain how/why quote proves the argument stated in your topic sentence.
2. Explain your quotes
   a. Using your quotes as evidence which illustrates the argument of your thesis or topic sentence, explain to readers how a particular word, description, or event in the story that you're quoting proves the point you're trying to make. And yes, it's okay to repeat a word from your quote. Phrases such as
   This suggests _____.
   This symbolic use of ____ points toward _____.
   (a specific word) brings up the idea of ____, which shows that ____.
   push you into explanation – feel free to borrow them.
3. Don't kill yourself with your draft
   a. The main goal of a draft is to get ideas on paper. Once they're on the page you can shift from making things clear for you (the writer), to making things clear – and interesting – for your reader. In other words, revising.

How to Revise a Paragraph and Add Sources

When revising a paragraph or adding sources, you're aiming for two things: explanation and clarity. The first, explanation, means adding and deleting sentences to make your meaning clear to the "ignorant reader." And since all readers are ignorant of what you are trying to say, it's your job to experiment and find different ways of presenting your thoughts on paper (or a screen, as the case may be): "How, exactly, does the quote from the story or outside source prove your point?" "Why do you include this sentence?" "Where do you address the second part of the topic sentence?" These are all the kinds of questions that will prompt you to add explanation.

And this explanation can take the form of an analogy: a comparison to "real life," or another story, or a psychological trait, etc. Part of explanation of connecting your comments to the topic sentence or thesis: remember that repetition of the key "argument word" is useful here. Thus, if your argument is that Sammy (of "A&P" fame) is an everyday hero because his character is flawed, you'll be repeating (or using synonyms for) "everyday hero," "hero," "character," and "flaw" several times in that paragraph.

Clarity comes in as you whittle down and starting working on the wording of your sentences and placement of punctuation. Have you set up the quote with context (16)? Have you properly cited your source?

Note on citations:
We'll be using MLA citation for all of our work. Also, cite the articles as if you found them yourself on OCC's web site or checked out the book yourself (thus, you will not be citing from our web site, but from the articles themselves). Correct format for all sources can be found in the Read in Order to Live.

Here we have a paragraph that was submitted as a final draft.

Paragraph 1

Sammy is an everyday hero because his character is flawed. He is not perfect, nor does he pretend to be. Just like everyone else in the world, Sammy has his imperfections. This makes him a realistic hero because he is just that-real. He is an ordinary boy with an ordinary job, but he uses his courage to

quit his job for the girls that got embarrassed. He would be considered a hero in everyday life.

What's missing in this paragraph are quotes from the story that would provide evidence to support the writer's assertions. Without specific quotes, the assertions are just that: assertions. The moral? Be sure to base your assumptions/assertions on quotes.
Let's look at a revised version of the same paragraph -- which includes an outside source.

Revised Paragraph 1 -- with research added

Sammy is an everyday hero because his character is flawed. Just like everyone else in the world, Sammy has imperfections. For instance, his chauvinistic view of women marks him as a character in need of an attitude adjustment. When he poses the question "You never know for sure how girls' minds work (do you really think it's a mind in there or just a little buzz like a bee in a glass jar?)" (15), it's clear that Updike is fashioning a character who is burdened, much like others, with prejudices. This shows that, just like everyone else in the world, Sammy has imperfections. Updike, choosing a first person narrator that allows readers to "hear" Sammy's thoughts, puts these imperfections on display. Yet it is these same flaws that make him a realistic hero. His heroism is not of the rescue-a-woman-from-a-burning-building variety. Instead, he is an ordinary boy with an ordinary job whose courage forces him to quit his job because of Lengel's treatment of the girls. In fitting with his ordinary character, he decides to speak against an action that, as Updike notes in an interview "seems suddenly cruel and unethical," (Murray 34). In choosing to quit a job over the treatment of people he does not know, Sammy joins the long line of everyday heroes who stand up for others, regardless of the consequences.

Works Cited

Murray, Donald. "Interview with John Updike." "A&P". Ed. Wendy Perkins. Fort Worth, Texas: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1998. 33-37.
Updike, John. "A&P." Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry and Drama. Ed. X. J. Kennedy and Dana Gioia. New York: Longman, 2002. 14-19.

This is, quite literally, a revision. The writer has looked again at what was written and made the necessary changes (here mainly additions) to make their point clearer. Much of the original paragraph remains, but this version is more persuasive because it supplies information from the story, and, in particular, provides a more detailed argument. Pay attention to how the quotes, both from the story and from the source, are set up with context so that readers can understand why they are included -- even before they read them.

For clarity, pay attention to the placement of periods in both the in-text citations and the format of the works cited entries.

Here we have a paragraph that drifts away a bit from the topic at hand (Sammy's flawed character), and thus needs work with clarity -- and with correctly citing the source.

Paragraph 2

Sammy is an everyday hero because his character is flawed. Traditionally, a hero is a supreme being who always achieves in defeating adversaries and providing a happy ending. In reality, heroes of such epic proportions do not exist. Sammy is a realistic hero because while his intentions are righteous and he acts gallantly, he still fails in getting the girl. A traditional hero would have whisked the girl away, defeated the defeated the bad guy, Lengel, and become the new and most celebrated manager of the A&P. The flaws in Sammy’s character are seen clearly when in sticking up for the girls Sammy

falters and instead of saying something great he mumbles, “I started to say something that came out ‘fiddle-de-do’.” (18). When Sammy finally makes it outside the girls are gone. Now it is evident that Sammy is a realistic hero because the guy does not always get the girl, and can become tongue-tied just like everyone else.

Revision of Paragraph 2 -- with Secondary Source

Sammy is an everyday hero because his character is flawed. Traditionally, a hero is a supreme being always succeeds in defeating adversaries leaving readers with a happy ending. In reality, heroes of such epic proportions do not exist. Instead, Sammy is a more realistic hero because while his intentions, on the surface, are righteous -- he Lengel "You didn't have to embarrass them" (18) -- his behavior -- calling a customer a "witch" (14), focusing on the girls' body parts -- reveals not a hero but a stereotypical young adult male who has no patience for others and who views women as sex objects. His flaws are also seen when he tries to respond to Lengel's "It was they who were embarrassing us" (18). Instead of a clever come back, he falters, and mumbles "something that came out ‘fiddle-de-do’” (18). This response humanizes him: we've all had that moment when we need a great come back, but become tongue-tied. These flaws invest his actions with a realism that fits the situation: a young man whose conscience has awakened and who, as the critic Gilbert Porter suggests, "has chosen to live honestly and meaningfully" (66). In the tradition of the classic unsung America hero who rides out of town, Sammy makes his stand at an American institution -- A&P -- and, according to Ronald E. McFarland, "achieves a certain degree of heroism" (61).

Revision of Paragraph 2 -- with Secondary Source (and more closely proofread)

Sammy is an everyday hero because his character is flawed. Traditionally, a hero is a supreme being who gallantly defeats adversaries. In reality, heroes of such epic proportions do not exist. Instead, Sammy is a more realistic hero because while his intentions seem righteous -- he tells Lengel "You didn't have to embarrass them" (18) -- his behavior -- calling a customer a "witch" (14), focusing on the girls' body parts -- is contemptible. His flaws are also seen when he tries to respond to Lengel's comment about the conduct of the girls: "It was they who were embarrassing us" (18). Instead of a clever retort, Sammy falters, and mumbles "something that came out ‘fiddle-de-do’” (18). This response humanizes him; we've all had that moment when we need a great come back, but became tongue-tied. These flaws invest his actions with a realism that fits the situation. Sammy's actions reveal a young man whose conscience has awakened and who, as the critic Gilbert Porter suggests, "has chosen to live honestly and meaningfully" (66). Significantly, Sammy makes this decision, and according to Ronald E. McFarland, "achieves a certain degree of heroism" (61), at an A&P, an American institution which symbolizes the kind of mindless obedience that Sammy is fighting.

Works Cited

McFarland, Ronald. "Updike and the Critics: Reflections on 'A&P'." "A&P". Ed. Wendy Perkins. Fort Worth, Texas: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1998. 56-62.

Porter, M. Gilbert. "John Updike's 'A&P'; The Establishment and an Emersonian Cashier." "A&P". Ed. Wendy Perkins. Fort Worth, Texas: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1998. 62-66.

Updike, John. "A&P." Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry and Drama. Ed. X. J. Kennedy and Dana Gioia. New York: Longman, 2002. 14-19.

Note how the revision both refocused the paragraph on Sammy's flaws, and then incorporated two sources which help prove the argument. Note, in particular, how the last version (more closely proofread), smoothes out some awkward phrasing from the draft, resulting in a tighter argument.

Assignment Sheet: Essay #1 (Short Story)

Assignment

Choose one of the topics below and, after pre-writing and completing a reasons and evidence worksheet (see following page) and thesis statement, write an essay (title, intro, body paragraphs, conclusion: min. 1000 words) which answers it. Remember: your purpose is to argue that your view is correct.

Note: rough draft does not have to be 1000 words, but it must be a complete essay.

As you write your essay, save or print out each draft. Save all handwritten notes, scribbles, etc., as well. They will be submitted with the final draft. **Be sure to check "What to Hand In With Final Draft" (9) before submitting final draft.**

Research Requirements: Your essay must include at least one article from a source listed on the Secondary Sources page on the course site (see 19 for access instructions). You must correctly cite your story and the secondary source within the essay and include a works cited page.

Topics

1. Although in many ways Gimpel is a fool, much of his demeanor suggests otherwise. Write an essay which argues that Gimpel is not a fool. Remember to give your definition of what a fool is and contrast that with Gimpel.
   Consider who Singer is criticizing, Gimpel, or the townspeople. Look, especially, at the final section of the story. Be sure to explain how each of your examples make him "not a fool," perhaps by contrasting him with a "real" fool.
2. What is Walker saying about heritage in "Everyday Use?" How does she prove her point? Remember to first clearly state what you think Walker's definition of heritage is. One hint is to look at whose view of heritage she seems to approve.
3. In "A Rose for Emily," what is Faulkner saying about the aristocracy in the South? Is it flourishing? Withering on the vine? How can you tell?
   Be sure to clearly state what you think Faulkner is saying about the aristocracy.
4. Write an essay which explains how Boyle illustrates the narrator's passage into adulthood in "Greasy Lake." Look, in particular, for places that indicate a change in his reaction to a similar circumstance. Include transitions to show his before and after state.
5. One critic has brilliantly noted of Carver's later work that "the characters in these stories often come to grips with their situations and achieve, if not a state of grace, an enlightened acceptance of their lives." Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to explain what Carver suggests is necessary to achieve this redemption. (quote from *Encyclopedia of American Literature*, Raymond Carver entry which is available at our library) Alternately, you can prove that this statement is true: that the characters do, indeed, achieve redemption.
6. How could Updike's "A&P" be read as a critique of American society? What is he criticizing?
7. Another question that is approved by me at least four days before the rough draft is due.

Directions

Be sure you have read and understood the definitions of an essay, thesis and division statement, topic sentences, introduction, and conclusion included in "Dr. Bordelon's Glossary" (*Read* 15).
*****Follow the suggestions in "So, You Wanna' Write a Good Literary Essay" (*Read* 56). Remember to check with me if you have any questions or concerns. Also check "Writing about a Story" in the textbook.

Grading Criteria:

To receive a passing grade, you must successfully complete the following:
Organization: Have a clear thesis statement, which suggests how a particular question is valid. You must also include a clear division statement which is then developed in separate paragraphs with clear topic sentences.
Content: Paragraphs that use specific quotes and examples from the story to prove your point – AND a full and complete discussion on why and how that particular quote or word proves your point. REMEMBER: examples do not speak for themselves – the core of a good literary essay is in your commentary and explanations of the examples.
Proofreading: Sentences that are clear and no more than 4 major errors.
Major errors: Sentence fragments, run-on sentences, verb-tense error, subject-verb agreement error, unclear phrasing/tangled wording, words that I cannot decipher, and spelling/wrong word error.

Planning ideas: Thesis and Topic sentences

At the heart of academic writing is organization: and the heart of a well-organized essay are its thesis and topic sentences. Readers use these to get a quick overview of the argument of the essay (thesis) and to follow the development of the argument (topic sentences).

And so . . . below you'll find the skeleton of an essay (thesis/division and topic sentences) with explanations.

Thesis/division statement

Sammy, in Updike's "A&P," is an everyday hero because his character is flawed, his actions don't lead to glory, and most importantly, because his heroic deed is devoid of drama or excitement.

Thesis/division with parts marked

THESIS Sammy, in Updike's "A&P," is an everyday hero [DIVISIONS]because [DIVISION 1] his character is flawed, [DIVISION 2] his actions don't lead to glory, and most importantly, [DIVISION 3]because his heroic deed is devoid of drama or excitement.

For the thesis and divisions above, topic sentences such as those below would be used to set up paragraphs

Topic sentence for division #1

Sammy's character flaws separate him from "comic book" heroism, making him more life-like and realistic.

Topic sentence for division #2

In typical heroic fashion, Sammy stands up for others, but unlike the fireman or policeman who receive a medal for his actions, he does not gain any glory or reward for his efforts.

Topic sentence for division #3

The realism of Sammy's heroism is most dramatically revealed, ironically, by the lack of drama concerning the deed itself.

Note in each of these topic sentences how there is a word or phrase that refers directly back to the division. This kind of repetition is a reader's friend: it guides them through your thinking so they can concentrate on how well you explain/prove your point. It also helps you, the writer, out by reminding you to make your points concise and to stay focused on individual ideas.

This kind of organization results in essays that prove your point: which is the goal of argumentative writing . . . and should be your goal for this essay.

Organization Tip
To check your organization, copy out your thesis/division and the first sentence of each body paragraph. Can you follow the argument as clearly as in the A&P example noted above? If not, begin revising.

Have fun.

Reasons and Evidence Sheet: Essay #1 (Short Story)

Reasons	Evidence and explanation: Specific quotes, examples, and/or descriptions which support your reason.

Sample starter sentence for reason: (see "Example topic sentences" 39 for more specifics)
 	
[The] *(insert main idea/point of paragraph – "setting," "dark hat," "facial expressions of the protagonist")* suggests/ illustrates/ shows/ reveals *(insert main point of essay)*.
 	
Example:
`The flaws in Sammy's character suggest that he is a realistic hero.`
Or
`Sammy's lack of personal gain suggest that he is a realistic hero`
 	
1. ______________________________
____
____
	Example: (hint – use direct quotes from primary source)
	a. ______________________________
	______________________________
	Explanation: (how & why does example prove pt.)
	a. ______________________________
	______________________________
	Example
	b. ______________________________
	______________________________
	Explanation: (how & why does example prove pt.)
	b. ______________________________

2. ______________________________ ______________________________ ______________________________	Example a. ______________________________ ______________________________ Explanation: (how & why does example prove pt.) a. ______________________________ ______________________________ Example b. ______________________________ ______________________________ Explanation: (how & why does example prove pt.) b. ______________________________

3. ______________________________	Example
______________________________	a. ______________________________
______________________________	______________________________
	Explanation: (how & why does example prove pt.)
	a. ______________________________
	______________________________
	Example
	b. ______________________________
	______________________________
	Explanation: (how & why does example prove pt.)
	b. ______________________________

Thesis statement: (Thesis must be written below and handed in with final copy)

1st Try: ______________________________

2nd Try: ______________________________

3rd Try: ______________________________

Peer Review

On a clean sheet of paper write Reader: (then fill out your name); then Writer, and leave a blank space.

Read over essay once to get a general impression, and then read and provide detailed answers to the following questions.

To keep on the positive side, try the following to answer the questions: "Try ______," "Consider ______," or "How about _________"

1. How does the intro draw you in and make you want (or not want) to read the rest of the essay?
   a. Reference to "real-life"?
   b. Larger issue (growing up, love, truth, etc.) surrounding the story? (see 35 for more suggestions)
   c. Personal example?
   d. Is the story title and author's name mentioned?
   e. Do you need to define any terms? (adulthood, heritage, fool)
   f. Suggestions for new introduction?
2. Copy out the thesis and division statement.
   a. Take out the questions from the assignment sheet. Which words in the thesis connect it to the question? Explain.
   b. How could the divisions be made clearer or more specific?
3. Body paragraphs – answer the following questions for each paragraph
   a. Which word in the topic sentence connects back to the division statement?
   b. Where is more context needed to introduce a quote?
   c. Where is more detail (quotes, descriptions) from the literary work needed?
   d. Knowing that the explanation should connect/explain how the examples prove the topic sentence, where do you need to "see" more of the writer's argument? Consider where a "real-life" example or analogy would help?
   e. Where could the writer explain how the actual words (their verb tense, connotations, image patterns, tone, etc.) of the quote back up the argument of the paragraph?
   f. Where do you lose the train of the writer's thinking?
   g. Where could the writer break into a new paragraph (with more development)
4. Conclusion
   a. Does conclusion refer back to the introduction?
   b. Does it connect with an issue currently in the news?
   c. Is it the old, tired, dry, "repeat your main points" conclusion?
   d. Suggestions for new conclusion?

Using Sources Quiz 1

Name: ____________________

Sample paragraph from scholarly journal

> The farcical murder/rape and the comparison between car keys and Vietnam set the stage for the "nasty little epiphany" in the lake in the morning drive home. As I have said above, these are apparent bows to the conventions of epiphany and revelation, and if we are not careful, we can mistake the narrator's wordless reaction to the women with the drugs as a sudden insight into how badness is no way to live, how drugs and wild life will only get one into a watery grave in Greasy Lake. But the silence of the protagonist in the face of his experiences lets us know that these actions have not affected him deeply.

From page 253
Title: Boyle's "Greasy Lake" and the Moral Failure of Postmodernism
By: Michael Walker
Source: Studies in Short Fiction Volume 31
Pages 247-255

1. From student's essay

It's clear that the narrator's wordless reaction to the women with the drugs is a sudden insight into how badness is no way to live.

Plagiarism? Why or why not?

2. From student's essay

It's clear that the narrator's wordless reaction to the women with the drugs is a sudden insight into how badness is no way to live (Walker 253).

Plagiarism? Why or why not?

3. From student's essay

The critic Michael Walker questions the idea that the "the narrator's wordless reaction to the women with the drugs [is] a sudden insight into how badness is no way to live" (253).

Plagiarism? Why or why not?

4. From student's essay

The narrator of "Greasy Lake" isn't really changed by the events of the story.

Plagiarism? Why or why not?

5. From student's essay

The narrator of "Greasy Lake" isn't really changed by the events of the story (Walker 253).

Plagiarism? Why or why not?

6. Write out a correct MLA Works Cited entry for the essay excerpted above.

Using Sources Checkup

1. I understand that an in-text citation consists of two parts: 1) page number, 2) author's last name.
   ___ Initials
2. I understand that general online sources are not always reliable, and that the only online sources I will use without checking with Dr. Bordelon are those on the OCC library's home page (http://lib.ocean.edu). I also understand that using sources not approved by Dr. Bordelon could result in a "D" on my essay.
   ___ Initials
3. I understand that including *any* word (even one) from an outside source in my essay without putting it in quotation marks and citing the source means that I've committed plagiarism.
   ___ Initials
4. I understand that summarized information – even if I changed all the words – needs to be cited, and that if it is not, I've committed plagiarism.
   ___ Initials
5. I understand that merely copying the information from a source is not correct: it needs to be in MLA or APA format.

___ Initials

Revision Ideas Essay #1

Organization and Development

As you probably remember from English I, real writing starts after your rough draft is finished: and since your rough draft is finished, it's time to start really writing. To give you a clearer idea of the kind of writing expected in this course, below you'll find several sample paragraphs from previous students that you should use as a guide as you work your way through your revisions. And of course the plural "revisions" in the previous sentence means that, just as the writing process involves several steps, revision works best when you take it in stages. The first stage, as the heading above suggests, is organization.

The following paragraphs are from Janet Honzell's final draft.
Her thesis statement was

Walker believes that the memories and traditions we obtain from our families have more value than any item we may be given. She shows us this in the story through her views of education, of the Black Nationalist Movement, and through the Johnson family's handmade quilts.

And her first few body paragraphs follow:

Walker shows us that she approves more of the school of life than the school of higher education mainly through Mrs. Johnson. Walker portrays the school of life as the memories or traditions we learn from our family rather than an item that is given to us after a loved one dies. As we look at Mrs. Johnson's character, we see that her professional education went as high as the second grade. However the story shows that she was educated by life itself. We see that Mrs. Johnson still churns butter in the their family churn – the same churn that was whittled by her father and uncle. She can kill and fix a hog for meat for their family dinner as well as any man and make a quilt as well as any woman. She is used to working hard outside as well as inside. Mrs. Johnson was born in the time when things were hard and black people still did not trust a white person in fear of being beaten. With this fear, you have to believe that she had been raised seeing racism at its worst. What we see in Mrs. Johnson, however, is that growing up with that legacy had also given her a sense of pride and freedom. We recognize this sense of pride and freedom when Mrs. Johnson is describing herself. She says her "fat keeps me hot in zero weather. I can work outside all day, [and break] ice for washing" (72). We have to remember that during the period of slavery, the masters expected their slaves to do these types of chores no matter what the weather was like or the conditions were. Mrs. Johnson grew up with the knowledge of her ancestors' lives and because of this she knows who she is, what she can do, and she makes no apologies for her lifestyle. Instead of being ashamed of her lifestyle, she takes pride in it, knowing that she is continuing the family's rural traditions. Showing this pride and making Mrs. Johnson a positive character suggests that Walker, like Mrs. Johnson, believes our memories and knowledge of our ancestors' lives is what makes us who we are.

Walker also shows us why she prefers the school of life to the school of higher education through Dee. The professional schooling Dee received made her feel that she was superior to their family and others. We see how Walker looks down on this when Dee reads to Mrs. Johnson and Maggie. Mrs. Johnson states, Dee would be "forcing words, lies" upon them (72). She "pressed us to her with the serious way she read, to shove us away at just the moment, like dimwits, we seemed about to understand" (73). Mrs. Johnson's choice of words – such as "forcing" and "pressed us," "shove us away" – show us how belittled she felt as she sat under her daughter's

authority. She seems to feel trapped without a means of escape until Dee is finished with them. It seems Dee used her education to hang over people's heads rather than to help others become better educated themselves. Here, we see the distaste Walker has for higher education. She shows us during these reading times there are no memories, traditions, or compassion worth being passed on to the next generation.

Yet, we see the contrast Walker makes between Dee's schooling and Maggie's when Mrs. Johnson states "Sometimes Maggie reads to me. She stumbles along good-naturedly" (73). Walker uses this contrast to show that, in her view, stumbling along is much more important than forcing words on others as Dee did. Mrs. Johnson seems to enjoy Maggie reading to her. We can almost picture Maggie and her mama sitting together under the elm tree laughing while Maggie sounds out words in the book. There is no belittling during this reading time, only pure enjoyment and pleasure. Walker uses these reading times to make her argument for the school of life. We are led to observe the happy memories Maggie's reading evokes in her mama and compare them to the unhappy memories that were stirred up when Dee read to her family. This negative connotation leads us to see Dee's view of heritage as cold, lacking any deep feelings or compassion.

Walker also criticizes Dee's character when her education led her to be involved in the Black Nationalist Movement.

One of the elements that makes this a satisfying read is the clear organization that guides you through the paragraphs, with each topic sentence referring clearly back to her division. Note how her first topic sentence repeats the focus word "education" from the division, allowing the reader to quickly think "Oh yeah, she did say she was going to talk about education."

Notice that the next paragraph expands further on the idea of education – and to be sure the reader doesn't get lost, Janet again uses repetition – "school of life" – to guide the reader through her information.

Oddly, the repetition of focus words from the division statement doesn't seem forced or unnatural, which is something to keep in mind as you revise your own thesis and topic sentences.

Use repetition of key words (within reason, of course) or synonyms within the paragraph to keep readers focused on the topic of that paragraph. Think of them as a friendly nudge on the shoulder of the reader that says "Hey you, this is my point – stop thinking about what you'll have for lunch tomorrow and pay attention."

Development

Janet's meticulous explanations – repeating words from quotes, using "Walker" to keep readers focused on thesis, etc. – makes for a very convincing argument. I especially like how she makes the story "come alive" in the third paragraph, imagining a scene under the elm tree which vividly illustrates her argument that family memories – school of life – is more important than the book knowledge of Dee. While some additional proofreading would have smoothed out the rough edges of her prose, overall, you read the paragraphs and have to say "Yep, she's right" – which is the mark of a good argument.

In an essay on "Shiloh," another student used a similar technique to organize her essay.

Her thesis statement was

The changes in Norma Jean become evident in her new interests (and attendant energy), her relationship with her mother, and her attitude toward Leroy.

And her first few body paragraphs follow:

Of recent origin is Norma Jean's interest in physical fitness. Prompted by Leroy's physical therapy, she takes a body building class and seems to be taking it quite seriously. In fact, the story begins with Norma Jean "working on her pectorals" (490). During a conversation in the kitchen with Leroy, Norma Jean is "raising her knees as she talks. She is wearing two-pound ankle weights" (494). At the end of another conversation, Leroy sees her "marching through the kitchen. She is doing goose steps"(494) – an exercise move. Now, in the morning, Norma Jean eats a cereal called Body Builders. By the end of the story, she has quit smoking. Norma Jean seems determined to build up her physical strength.

Body building is not the only new interest for Norma Jean. When she graduates from the body building class, she moves on to an adult education course at the Paducah Community College. Leroy begins to see that "something is happening" (497). Time that Norma Jean would have spent with him is now filled with homework and experimentation with new things. Leroy sees her writing papers and reading books about other countries. She has taken to "cooking unusual foods–tacos, lasagna, Bombay chicken" (498). Strangest of all, she is staying up late when she used to "drag all day" if she lost "ten minutes' sleep" (497). Norma Jean is approaching these new interests with increased energy and enthusiasm.

In addition to pursuing new interests, Norma Jean is beginning to react differently to her intrusive mother, Mabel, who is first introduced through Leroy's new found realization of "how much time she spends with Norma jean" (493).

Like Janet, this student uses repetition very effectively here, making the connections between her divisions and topic sentences very clear. And yes, you should strive for something similar.

Development

Notice, though, the difference between the way this student and Janet developed their arguments. While the latter certainly gets the job done, it is not as detailed as Janet's, and therefore not quite as convincing. The lesson? Explain yourself to death – as a student of mine once noted.

In her paragraphs on Norma's attitude towards Leroy, this student does better

Although we are not told much about Norma Jean and Leroy's life before the story begins, we can fill in the blanks by what Leroy is observing now and see that Norma Jean is reacting differently to him. He comments on the fact that he is alone in the house a lot. When he came home in the past, Norma Jean would stay in with him watching TV and playing cards (things it would seem he wanted to do). Now they may sit at the kitchen table together, but Norma Jean is concentrating on her writing. In the past, "She would cook fried chicken, picnic ham, chocolate pie–all his favorites" (495), instead of the new foods she has been trying. With him home this much, Norma Jean seems impatient with him now and urges him to find a job. She "reads to Leroy from a list she has made. `Things you could do,' she announces" (494). At one point "She takes Leroy's needlepoint and shoves it into a drawer. `You have to find a job first'" (494) she tells him. All this sounds as though Norma Jean feels a certain disdain for what Leroy is doing with his time, while Leroy expected his wife to be happy to finally have him home. Leroy is taken up with the idea of building Norma Jean a log cabin, the home he always promised her. But Norma Jean just seems angry with him when he brings this subject up.

When they talk to each other, they are always conversing on different levels. Norma Jean talks about "the three stages of complexion care," he thinks "of other petroleum products–axle grease, diesel fuel" (491). She talks about the origin of names while "he is trying to get her to go to

Shiloh" (499). She talks about what her mother means by the things she says; he says "But she didn't really mean it. She was just talking" (497). Worst of all is what they don't talk about - had never really dealt with - the death of their son "at the age of four months and three days" due to "sudden infant death syndrome" (493).

So, in the final paragraphs when Norma Jean says to Leroy, "I feel eighteen again. I can't face that all over again" (500), you feel a weight upon her and wonder if she is referring to unresolved issues around her son's death. Or, is it that she feels stifled and kept a child herself by her husband and mother? For in Norma Jean we see a woman who, like many, lived her life meeting the expectations of other people - people who, as the song points out, never knew her at all. Yet whatever might be weighing upon her, it is a different Norma Jean who at the end of the story tells Leroy that she wants to leave him - an act that confirms that Norma Jean has truly changed.

The added details here make for a more convincing argument.

Karen Schreiber does a fine of explaining her thinking in the following paragraph. In particular, note how she doesn't stop at the quote: her explanations are what make for a fine argument.

Her thesis was as follows

The townspeople are the real fools and Gimpel is actually a more caring, wiser, and a much more religious man then they are.

One of her body paragraphs follows

In spite of the townspeople's foolish behaviors, Gimpel remained a caring man. When he was accused of calling everyone a liar, Gimpel thought to himself, "What was I to do? I believed them and I hope at least that did them some good"(79). Gimpel's thought process revels his superior caring nature. After continual harassment, Gimpel still cares enough about his fellow man to hope they get some satisfaction. It is a much less foolish thought to wish good on to others than it is to wish hateful things, which Gimpel has every right to do. When Elka, Gimpel's wife, gave birth to a child seventeen weeks after they were married and she told him that the child was his, Gimpel reveals, "To tell the plain truth, I didn't believe her..."(82). However, after the child was born Gimpel says, "I began to forget my sorrow. I loved the child madly and he loved me too"(82). Here Gimpel is showing his ability to care for a child that he has been lied to about. A foolish man might have turned the child away, but Gimpel seems to understand that a child needs love and that the baby itself had nothing to do with the betrayal.

The example paragraphs below offer a mixture of writing that's strong and writing that needs work.

Example 1

Decay is not only evident in Emily's physical being, but also in her home. The house too serves as a mirror for the Southern aristocracy's deterioration. Like Emily, the house's decay truly sets in after the death of Emily's father and the loss of her lover, Homer Barron. Initially, the smell was the first indication of decay, which was cured when the townspeople "broke open the cellar door and sprinkled lime there, and in all the outbuildings"(30). Then came the visual decay: "It was a big, squarish frame house that had once been white, decorated with cupolas and spires and scrolled balconies in the heavily lightsome style of the seventies, set on what had once been our most select street"(28). The outside deterioration

and smell were the only public indications, since "no one save an old manservant-a combined gardener and cook-had seen it[inside the house] in at least ten years"(28).

Example 2

Just as her house represented the decay of Southern aristocracy, Miss Emily herself represented the last bastion of Southern nobility. Miss Emily's refusal to relinquish the past, a past steeped in tradition and heritage, had become a symbol of decay and deterioration. To illustrate, Miss Emily -- once a young delicate flower of Southern womanhood -- had grown into a frumpish old woman: " She looked bloated, like a body long submerged in motionless water, and of palid hue" (29). Miss Emily's body had become fat and out of proportion in the same way that the old South had become out of proportion with the rising generation of Southerners. Miss Emily was deteriorating rapidly both mentally and physically. Her steadfast refusal to deny the present and hold on to past caused her much mental grief and anguish.

Miss Emily denied the death of Colonel Sartis, a member of the old generation of Southerners. Colonel Sartis was a link to the South's once glorious days. She admonished the deputation "See Colonel Sartis I have no taxes in Jefferson" (30). In refusing to accept that the Colonel was dead she was further able to deny the demise of Southern aristocracy and the birth of the new South. Miss Emily was gradually becoming more mentally unstable. The refusal to also acknowledge the death of her father years before also illustrates her precarious mental state. When her dear father died she did not don mourning clothes and act as a grief stricken daughter might. Instead she denied his passing to herself and the townsfolk who had made a condolence call. It was not until the authorities were almost called that she allowed his decomposing body to be buried. As Miss Emily's grasp on reality began to rapidly wane, her denial of the death and decay that surrounded her was also mounting. Her mental state had so deteriorated that when her Yankee lover tried to leave her she refused to let him go. She chose to poison him and to keep the decaying corpse in a shrine like room, a fitting tribute to the death and deterioration of her house, herself and Southern aristocracy.

The obvious question is which paragraph works better? It's clear that example two, with its detailed explanations and examples, makes a convincing argument.

Introductions

This is Janet's introduction – the thesis came after the last sentence below

Heritage, to me, is the warm feelings and happy memories I get whenever I look at the picture of my Grandma and Grandpa's house in Texas. One memory I recall from the picture is the old, worn-out windmill we kids used to climb. We thought if we could make it to the top we could touch the sky – Grandpa used to tell us that he and his brothers did the same thing. Once, years later, when we visited my grandparents, I looked out Grandma's kitchen window to see my children, Jennifer and Jason, climbing up that same rickety old windmill. when asked why, they said "we just wanted to touch the sky." Unknown to me, this tradition obviously had been engrained in our family and passed down from one generation to the next thought our childhood stories. The picture on my wall does not hold any monetary value, but the memories it evokes in me are worth more than any amount of gold. Like me, the author of "Everyday Use," Alice Walker, agrees that heritage lies in our family memories and traditions rather than in the items passed down to us.

Great use here of a personal example to set up the idea of heritage.

Proofreading

It's important to note that, in the heat of drafting and revision, mistakes are fine, and even necessary to ensure that you're getting all of your thoughts down on paper. But the relative cool of proofreading calls for a different kind of writing – and reading.

Instead of looking at larger areas of improvement such as organization and development, it's time to s-l-o-w down and delete unnecessary words. Strive for clarity and precision. Work on varying your sentence lengths – perhaps add a clause with a dash – to keep the reader interested and, more importantly, to vividly convey your argument.

Note that I emphasize words here. While many consider proofreading the land of colons and commas, it is really the land of words – and their prosaic relatives, punctuation. Often, what a sentence needs isn't a comma, but a rewrite.

The best way to proofread is to read your essay out loud, sentence by slow sentence, as someone else follows along with what you've written and asks questions on each sentence. This kind of line by line editing ensures that your meaning is clear and you've anticipated any questions a reader may have. If you can't get another critical reader (i.e. one that will read critically as opposed to just saying "yeah, that's good" for every sentence), you need to read the essay out loud to yourself and be honest when you ask yourself "Is this the best way to express this?" When you have to stop and fumble a bit with what you're saying, the poor reader (who has no idea of your intention or meaning) will be clueless: give them the clues they need by rewording awkward phrasing.

One final tip: proofread in stages. Complete a few paragraphs, take a break, and then come back to your essay. And of course you'll be proofreading several times . . . and wondering why you're still finding errors

Punctuation Workout

Colons

Consider these two versions of the same sentence:

```
Sammy's character suits the average teenager, spontaneous and easily able to
do things without thinking about the consequences.
```

The second phrase – "spontaneous . . ." – is really an explanation/definition of the "average teenager" in the first clause. To set this up more clearly for the readers (and avoid a sentence fragment), try a colon: AKA the definitizer.

```
Sammy's character suits the average teenager: spontaneous and acting quickly
without thinking about the consequences.
```

Better, right? The sentence now is like a set up and punch line – and it's always good to knock the reader out. Note also the switch to "acting."

Setting up quotations

```
It is obvious that the rising generation viewed Emily differently: as the sole
representative of this generation, the youngest alderman states, "[i]t's
simple enough, send her word to have her place cleaned up.  Give her a certain
amount of time to do it in [. . .]" (30).
```

In addition to the colon which sets up the quote, note how the repetition of "generation" really tightens up the sentence. And note how the introductory phrase right before the quote prepares the reader to understand the quote as the writer does. Good work here.

Proofreading Sample
(NOTE: THIS ESSAY CONTAINS ERRORS WHICH WILL BE CORRECT IN CLASS)

Jane Doe

Dr. Borderlon

English 152-17

The Uncertainty That Is Life

In life, redemption is one of those fickle terms, rarely in use outside church walls. Because the idea of redeeming another or achieving redemption in the twenty-first century, is simply odd. However, in the literary world, redemption nestles nicely in to the pages of Raymond Carver's works, especially "Cathedral" and "A Small, Good Thing." In both stories Raymond Carver suggests necessities for achieving redemption. Necessities that include an intrusion by an external force or being, physical or verbal contact with the intrusive force, as well as acceptance of redemption.

One of Carver's requirements for redemption is an intrusion by an external force or person. This intrusion aids in collapsing insulating barriers, Carver's characters create "for walling out threatening forces even as they wall themselves in" (Nesset, 52). This invasion is essential for the characters since liberation in Carver's literary realm, "is not a thing one finds and secures on one's own" (Nesset, 52). Thus, guidance is key to extracting the introverted narrator of "Cathedral," as well as Ann and Howard Weiss in "A Good, Small Thing." And this guide, be it blind man or baker, is "entering unexpectedly into one's life," to "help one along, leading one, if not toward insight, than at least away from the confining strictures of self" (Nesset, 52).

Robert, the blind man in "Cathedral," is already an unwelcome intrusion in the narrator's life, invading through tapes which he and the narrator's spouse mail "back and forth" (Carver, 448). Tapes on which "she told him everything," that had happened over the ten year span, since she left Robert's employment (Carver, 449). And now "he was on his way to spend the night," unexpected and unwanted by the narrator, who already harbors jealousy for the blind man (Carver, 448).

Assignment Sheet: Essay #2

Assignment

After choosing ONE of the questions below (or one of your own that you have run by me before writing the rough draft), write an essay which answers it. This is an argumentative essay, so you need to include a clear thesis which states your point, and the three or four reasons (taken from the story you're writing about) which led you to your point.

Your paragraphs should be constructed around your reasons, and each should offer examples from the story to prove the validity of your claim, and then a clear and detailed explanation of how and why these examples support the claim in your paragraph.

While this essay must include at least three secondary sources (see Glossary), the main emphasis is on your own thinking: the research doesn't determine what you say in your essay – you do. The quotations from literary critics, the author's letters, or other books from the time period will *support* your own ideas.

Requirement

A minimum of 1250 words is required, as are a minimum of three secondary sources (reminder – general encyclopedias, dictionaries, and the primary source itself do not count as secondary sources – though if used, they have to be cited).

Sources

The first place to check for sources is the Secondary Sources link on the course site (see 19 for access instructions). At least two of your sources must be taken from this list on the course site. See also the essays beginning on page 88.

Other sources should come from the library, textbooks, or the databases on the library site (also accessed via the course site) **NOTE: Any sources from the Internet must be approved by me well before (two weeks) the final draft is due. Failure to do so will mean an automatic D (I had to give two D's last semester because of this – please follow instructions).**

And last time I checked, Sparknotes, Cliffnotes, encyclopedias or dictionaries were not academic sources.

Naturally, you must correctly document your sources using MLA parenthetical documentation style.

Directions

Be sure you have read and understood the definitions of an essay, thesis and division statement, topic sentences, introduction, and conclusion included in "Dr. Bordelon's Glossary" (*Read* 15).

Follow the suggestions in "So, You Wanna' Write a Good Literary Essay" (*Read* 56). Remember to check with me if you have any questions or concerns.

Remember that while your final draft must include secondary sources, the bulk of your quotes/examples must be from the primary source/s. If your essay contains only a few quotes from the primary source, your grade will reflect this lack of work with the issue at hand – namely, the story/novel itself.

Topics

The Things They Carried

1. Using the description of postmodernism from the packet (40) and/or the course site, write an essay that explains how the novel can be interpreted as a postmodern novel.
2. In an interview, O'Brien writes that "If there is a theme to the whole book it has to do with the fact that stories can save our lives" (qtd. in *Publishers* 202). How does the novel show this? Trace out this theme in the novel by showing that, indeed, the novel does argue that "stories can save our lives."
3. Though ostensibly a war novel, the stories touch on many other issues as well. What, for instance, does the novel suggest about ideas such as love, or how people cope, or _____ (idea of your own)? Your goal in this essay is to narrow down to one idea and then state this clearly in your thesis statement (i.e. "the novel says that

love is ____; " or "the novel says that people cope by ________"), then argue how the novel illustrates this single theme in your divisions.

4. Much of the novel deals with questions of truth: write an essay that first states O'Brien's definition of truth ("For O'Brien truth is _______.") and then explains how the novels illustrates this definition.
5. How does one of the questions O'Brien raises in the novel – the slipperiness of truth, the ease with which people can be fooled, the apathy and willful ignorance of much American society, etc. – manifest itself in 21st century America? Another way of answering this questions is to ask yourself "How is this novel still relevant?"
6. Many critics have noted that it is impossible to write an anti-war novel, because in the act of describing its horrors, authors create the very excitement and sense of camaraderie that entices people to embrace war (see "Why Men Love War" 88). With this in mind, write an essay that argues the novel can or cannot be read as an anti-war novel.
7. Another question you'd like to explore? Check with me for approval.

Grading Criteria

To receive a passing grade, you must successfully complete the following:
Organization: Have a clear thesis statement which suggests how a particular question is valid. You must also include a clear division statement which is then developed in separate paragraphs with clear topic sentences.
Content: Paragraphs that use specific quotes and examples from the story to prove your point – AND a full and complete discussion on why and how that particular quote or word proves your point. REMEMBER: examples do not speak for themselves – the core of a good literary essay is in your commentary and explanations of the examples.
Proofreading: Sentences that are clear and no more than 5 major errors. Correctly documented sources: at least three outside sources (such as literary criticism, letters of the author, interviews, other works by the author) are needed.
Major errors**:** Sentence fragments, run-on sentences, verb-tense error, subject-verb agreement error, unclear phrasing/tangled wording, documentation, formatting, and spelling/wrong word error.

Have Fun!

Definitions of Postmodernism

Below you'll find a few different definitions of Postmodernism. We'll be using them as a way into *Things*.

Postmodernism

postmodernism A disputed term that has occupied much recent debate about contemporary culture since the early 1980s. In its simplest and least satisfactory sense it refers generally to the phase of 20th-century Western culture that succeeded the reign of high modernism , thus indicating the products of the age of mass television since the mid-1950s. More often, though, it is applied to a cultural condition prevailing in the advanced capitalist societies since the 1960s, characterized by a superabundance of disconnected images and styles—most noticeably in television, advertising, commercial design, and pop video. In this sense, promoted by Jean Baudrillard and other commentators, postmodernity is said to be a culture of fragmentary sensations, eclectic nostalgia, disposable simulacra, and promiscuous superficiality, in which the traditionally valued qualities of depth, coherence, meaning, originality, and authenticity are evacuated or dissolved amid the random swirl of empty signals.

As applied to literature and other arts, the term is notoriously ambiguous, implying either that modernism has been superseded or that it has continued into a new phase. Postmodernism may be seen as a continuation of modernism's alienated mood and disorienting techniques and at the same time as an abandonment of its determined quest for artistic coherence in a fragmented world: in very crude terms, where a modernist artist or writer would try to wrest a meaning from the world through myth, symbol, or formal complexity, the postmodernist greets the absurd or meaningless confusion of contemporary existence with a certain numbed or flippant indifference, favouring self-consciously 'depthless' works of fabulation , pastiche , bricolage , or aleatory disconnection. The term cannot usefully serve as an inclusive description of all literature since the 1950s or 1960s, but is applied selectively to those works that display most evidently the moods and formal disconnections described above. In poetry, it has been applied most often to the work of the New York school and to Language poetry ; in drama mainly to the 'absurdist' tradition; but is used more widely in reference to fiction, notably to the novels (or anti-novels) and stories of Thomas Pynchon , Kurt Vonnegut , Italo Calvino , Vladimir Nabokov , William S. Burroughs , Angela Carter , Salman Rushdie , Peter Ackroyd , Julian Barnes , Jeanette Winterson , and many of their followers. Some of their works, like Pynchon's Gravity's Rainbow (1973) and Nabokov's Ada (1969), employ devices reminiscent of science fiction , playing with contradictory orders of reality or the irruption of the fabulous into the secular world.

Opinion is still divided, however, on the value of the term and of the phenomenon it purports to describe. Those who most often use it tend to welcome 'the postmodern' as a liberation from the hierarchy of 'high' and 'low' cultures; while sceptics regard the term as a symptom of irresponsible academic euphoria about the glitter of consumerist capitalism and its moral vacuity. For more extended discussions, consult Brian McHale , Postmodernist Fiction (1987) and Ian Gregson , Postmodern Literature (2004). See also post-structuralism .

"Postmodernism." *The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*. Chris Baldick. Oxford University Press, 2008. *Oxford Reference Online*. Oxford University Press. Ocean County College Library. 11 May 2009.

Metafiction: Fiction about fiction; or more especially a kind of fiction that openly comments on its own fictional status. In a weak sense, many modern novels about novelists having problems writing their novels may be called metafictional in so far as they discuss the nature of fiction; but the term is normally used for works that involve a significant degree of self-consciousness about themselves as fictions, in ways that go beyond occasional apologetic addresses to the reader. The most celebrated case is Sterne's Tristram Shandy (1760 – 67), which makes a continuous joke of its own digressive form. A notable modern example is John Fowles's The French Lieutenant's Woman (1969), in which Fowles interrupts the narrative to explain his procedures, and offers the reader alternative endings. Perhaps the finest of modern metafictions is Italo Calvino's Se una notte d'inverno un viaggatore (If on a winter's night a traveler, 1979), which begins 'You are about to begin reading Italo Calvino's new novel, If on a winter's night a traveler.' See also mise-en-abyme, postmodernism, self-reflexive . For a fuller account, consult Patricia Waugh , Metafiction (1984).

"metafiction." *The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*. Chris Baldick. Oxford University Press, 2008. *Oxford Reference Online*. Oxford University Press. Ocean County College Library. 11 May 2009.

From “Can a worldview be healed? Students and postmodernism.”
By Joseph Feeny.

In 1967 the American novelist John Barth caught the essence of postmodernism without ever using the word. In his essay "The Literature of Exhaustion," published in The Atlantic Monthly, he described a writer's "exhaustion" as "the used-upness of certain forms or exhaustion of certain possibilities." Novelists, he wrote, could no longer reuse the old, tired forms of Dostoevski or Tolstoy or Flaubert. Rather, like Beckett and Borges, they ought to be "technically contemporary" and invent new forms for the novel. They might, for example, "write a remarkable and original work of literature, the implicit theme of which is the difficulty, perhaps the unnecessity, of writing original works of literature."

To make his point clearer, he looks to music and architecture: "Beethoven's Sixth Symphony or the Chartres Cathedral if executed today would be merely embarrassing." The forms and techniques of art have changed, and Beethoven and Chartres are "technically out of date." They are acceptable only if done "with ironic intent"--i.e., as a contemporary comment on both the history of art and today's culture. As contemporary works, we cannot take them seriously, yet they have an ironic beauty as old forms to be enjoyed but never embraced as ours. In similar manner, Barth continues, the novel may well be finished as a form, and "one way to deal with such a feeling might be to write a novel about it"--for example, a novel about writing a novel (Barth wrote several of these).

Thus--I now extrapolate from Barth's essay--comes the film about making a film, the building that parodies old architectural forms, the painting that questions the possibility of a painting. Losing its link with the outside world, art grows self-referential, and fiction becomes no more than a dream. Literature--words themselves--are recognized as unstable, and texts no longer have meaning. Basic questions emerge: Can anything make sense? Are any patterns normal? Can any truth be found? But the outside world is not forgotten. The Holocaust, the atom bomb and random terrorism make people conclude that anything can happen. Surprises are no longer possible; and coolness, laughter and parody are the only fitting response to life. Postmodernism prevails.

For clarity, I offer a description of postmodernism based not on theories of postmodernism (this area is a morass) but on works that people recognize as "postmodern." Some names may first crystallize what I'm talking about. By post-modernism, I mean such writers as Julian Barnes, John Barth, Donald Barthelme, Jorge Luis gorges, Italo Calvino, John Fowles, Vladimir Nabokov, Thomas Pynchon, Kurt Vonnegut, Jeanette Winterson. I mean such composers as Luciano Berio, John Cage, John Corigliano, Lukas Foss and Alfred Schnittke; such rock groups as Depeche Mode, Faith No More, Nine Inch Nails and Primus. I mean such artists as Joseph Beuys, Jeff Koons, Louise Lawler, Roy Lichtenstein, Richard Long, Claes Oldenburg, George Segal, Cindy Sherman and Andy Warhol; and such buildings as Philip Johnson's AT&T Building in New York, Frank Gehry's Santa Monica House, and Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown's Sainsbury Wing of the National Gallery in London. I include such films as Derek Jarman's "Caravaggio" and Quentin Tarantino's "Pulp Fiction," such television offerings as "Saturday Night Live," "Beavis and Butt-head," David Letterman and MTV.

Examples without analysis, though, are not clear. I draw conclusions, then, from some works of high and popular culture. In John Fowles's novel The French Lieutenant's Woman, for instance, the narrator finds a fictional character of 1867 and the real author of 1967 sitting in the same railway carriage. Such a statement cannot be believed, though, nor such a narrator trusted, and the novel--a great novel--in one stroke destroys the credibility of the narrator and the boundary between fact and fiction. In Donald Barthelme's story "The Balloon," the narrator tells how one night a balloon covered Manhattan from 14th Street to Central Park. With no explanation given, causality and probability disappear, and the bizarre becomes normal. In Thomas Pynchon's story "Entropy," the city of Washington undergoes thermodynamic equilibrium; young people insulate themselves in an apartment to put off the inevitable decay of variety, individuality and hope.

In classical music, Lukas Foss's orchestral "Phorion" has the concertmaster play Bach's Partita No. 3 in E major from beginning to end while the other musicians play the same partita a few notes at a time, as tempos waver and the music falls apart. The piece self-destructs, destroying coherence, order and purpose. In rock, Jethro Tull's "The Hair Who Lost His Spectacles" and Primus's "Pork Soda" are nonsensical stories done with full seriousness, and Faith No More's "Cuckoo for Caca" is a solemn, reverent tribute to fecal matter. Listeners are unsurprised, no longer expecting a link between form and content. Other composers--classical and rock--create pieces for radios, toy pianos, tapes of Jack Benny shows, audience noise, street sounds and human voices imitating French horns.

In sculpture, Andy Warhol's "Brillo Pads" (in the Philadelphia Museum of Art) is a sculpture-pile of huge, bright Brillo boxes; tradition, restraint and seriousness give way to fun and to the play of primary colors and simple forms. Such examples show how "normal" patterns and expectations collapse, as creative people turn to parody as their only artistic approach. Like John Barth, they can just play with, make gentle fun of, pay light homage to, the art forms of the past. Freedom is surely maximized, while meaning and form perish.

Revisiting the question "What is postmodernism?" I offer a four-part answer. (1) Postmodernism is a set of attitudes: Human feelings, human art, and the world itself are exhausted; humans are limited and lonely; human existence is random, impermanent, nightmarish, without firm values; humans cope with absurdity by laughter and parody. (2) Postmodernism shows itself in art's content: Humans are objects or comic-strip characters; action takes place on the surface; colors are simple and bright; fact and fiction blur into the bizarre and the fantastic; reality and art grow untrustworthy; self-contradiction is normal; absurdity and play are common subjects; sometimes the only content of art is the very act of writing or painting. (3) Postmodernism shows itself in art's forms: Shapes grow simple; bizarre mixtures are common; forms are self-referential, often parodied, and form itself is a game. (4) Postmodernism involves new expectations: A reader, viewer or listener should never be shocked or surprised; never expect coherence or meaning; be ever willing to help construct the text or art-object; be willing to see a work self-destruct; always be cool and distant, protecting the self through laughter, play and parody. Such is postmodernism.

"Can a worldview be healed? Students and postmodernism." By Joseph Feeny.
From *America* Nov 15, 1997 v177 n15 p12(5)
Opposing Viewpoints Resource Center Database

Using Sources Quiz 2

Name: ____________________

Sample paragraph from scholarly journal

> Before the United States became militarily involved in defending the sovereignty of South Vietnam, it had to, as one historian recently put it, "invent" (Baritz 243) the country and the political issues at stake there. The Vietnam War was in many ways a wild and terrible work of fiction written by some dangerous and frightening storytellers. First the United States decided what constituted good and evil, right and wrong, civilized and uncivilized. freedom and oppression for Vietnam, according to American standards; then it traveled the long physical distance to Vietnam and attempted to make its own notions about these things clear to the Vietnamese people--ultimately by brute. technological force. For the U.S. military and government, the Vietnam that they had in effect invented became fact. For the soldiers that the government then sent there, however, the facts that their government had created about who was the enemy, what were the issues, and how the war was to be won were quickly overshadowed by a world of uncertainty.

From page 43
Title: The Undying Uncertainty Of The Narrator In Tim O'brien's The Things They Carried ,
By: Kaplan, Steven,
Source: Critique, Fall 93, Vol. 35, Issue 1
Pages 43-52

1. From student's essay
The Vietnam War itself was a work of fiction.
Plagiarism? Why or why not?

2. From student's essay
The Vietnam War itself was a work of fiction (Kaplan 48).
Plagiarism? Why or why not?

3. From student's essay
Steven Kaplan calls the Vietnam War a "wild and terrible work of fiction" (48).
Plagiarism? Why or why not?

4. From student's essay
The American government believed their own lies about Vietnam.
Plagiarism? Why or why not?

5. From student's essay
The American government believed their own lies about Vietnam. (Kaplan 48).
Plagiarism? Why or why not?

6. Write out a correct MLA Works Cited entry for the essay excerpted above.

Using Sources Quiz #3

Name: ____________________

From a student's notes:

Tim O'Brien is speaking
"The best literature is always explorative. It's searching for answers and never finding them. It's almost like Platonic dialogue [. . . .] Fiction is a way of testing possibilities and testing hypotheses, and not defining"

page 5

Naparsteck, Martin.
"An Interview with Tim O'Brien."
Source: *Contemporary Literature*
Page numbers: 1-11
Volume 32, Number 1
Date: 1991

1. From student's essay

A) Tim O'Brien believes that "The best literature is always explorative" (qtd. in Naparsteck 5).

B) "The best literature is always explorative" (O'Brien 5).

Which is correct? Why?

2. From student's essay

A) "Fiction is a way of testing possibilities . . . not defining them" (qtd. in Naparsteck 5).

B) O'Brien argues that "Fiction is a way of testing possibilities [. . .] not defining" them (qtd. in Naparsteck 5).

Which is correct? Why?

3. Write out a correct MLA Works Cited entry for the essay excerpted above.

Reasons and Evidence Sheet: Essay #2 (Research Essay)

Reasons	Evidence and explanation: Specific quotes, examples, and/or descriptions which support your reason.

Sample starter sentence for reason: (see "Example topic sentences" 39 for more specifics)
 	
[The] ___*(insert main idea/point of paragraph – "setting," "dark hat," "facial expressions of the protagonist")*___ suggests/ illustrates/ shows/ reveals ___*(insert main point of essay)*___.
 	
Example:
`The slight variation in repeated descriptions shows the difficulty of deciding what is "true" or "real"`
 	
Or
`Physical contact suggests one way Carver's characters grow to accept their lives.`
 	
1. ______________________________
____
____
	Example
	a. ______________________________
	______________________________
	Explanation: (how & why does example prove pt.)
	a. ______________________________
	______________________________
	Example
	b. ______________________________
	______________________________
	Explanation: (how & why does example prove pt.)
	b. ______________________________

2. ______________________________ ______________________________ ______________________________	Example a. ______________________________ ______________________________ Explanation: (how & why does example prove pt.) a. ______________________________ ______________________________ Example b. ______________________________ ______________________________ Explanation: (how & why does example prove pt.) b. ______________________________

3. ______________________	Example a. ______________________ ______________________ Explanation: (how & why does example prove pt.) a. ______________________ ______________________ Example b. ______________________ ______________________ Explanation: (how & why does example prove pt.) b. ______________________
______________________ ______________________	

Thesis statement: (Thesis must be written below and handed in with final copy)

1st Try: ______________________

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2nd Try: ______________________

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3rd Try: ______________________

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Revision Ideas: Essay #2

Introductions
In an essay titled "The Truth about Stories," Alison used events currently in the news to help readers identify with her topic:

Remember the recent sniper scare in the Maryland area and all the false information that surfaced? Was it a white van? A terrorist? No one knew, but we remained glued to our television sets to find out the latest rumor the media was happy broadcast. The truth is people were scared, and although not all of stories which dealt with story accurate, people heavily relied on them for their own comfort and version of the truth. It seems that even when dealing with facts, people need and desire stories to help them cope with reality. In his novel The Things They Carry, Tim O'Brien takes a similar view of stories. His novel says that stories, such as the ones that were exposed during the sniper attacks, help individuals manage their present lives life by comforting them when there is a lack of information, enabling them to remember others who may be dead or alive, and by allowing past situations to be applied to their current and future lives.

While the intro is now a bit dated, using current events can be a way to ease readers into your topic by providing a basis for comparison that they may be familiar with.

Joni, as you'll see below, took a different approach with her intro. She took the idea of magic and worked with it to fashion an intro that pulls readers in.

Do You See What I See?

The world of magic is shrouded in mystery and deception. The magician performs a trick and the audience marvels, "How'd he do that?" The magician is the master of deception. He can make the audience believe that what they are watching is truly happening. The audiences' eyes witnessed the trick. Each person, though, will perceive the illusion differently, wondering if is it real or not. It will depend on their unique "angle of vision"(O'Brien 71), whether they will be misled. A good magician never reveals his secret. Even after the audience has witnessed the trick, they are left to doubt whether it was real because it was left unexplained. After all, the object of a good magician is to leave the audience in a true state of unbelievable suspense.

This object is certainly what author, Tim O'Brien, magician of words, is conveying to the readers of his book, The Things They Carried. Even though his book is fictional, he leaves his audience wondering if the stories in his book are really true. He tells his readers, "This is true"(67), yet later writes "Almost everything [. . .] is invented"(179). This constant tug-of-war between truth and fiction is what keeps the audience engaged. Maria Bonn acknowledges this concept in O'Brien's fiction, writing that "All of the literary tricks are part of the mystery and ambiguity that O'Brien purposely cultivates about his life and writing. He wants readers to be uncertain about the book"(174). Through the magical use of his words, O'Brien persuades his readers into believing that the truth is ambiguous. The author uses the different definitions of ambiguous to cleverly show that truth is: 1. doubtful and uncertain 2. inexplicable 3. capable of being understood in two or more possible senses.

And finally, Helen Stafford came up with a novel way to refer to her general topic, truth in *Things They Carried*, in her introduction.

Courtroom dramas are among my favorite television shows. A basic tenet of these shows is for witnesses to "swear to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth," yet accounts of an event can vary as much as the witnesses themselves. The jury's decision regarding guilt or innocence is then based on whose "truth" is believed. And in a trial, the truth is absolute: a guilty verdict can mean death. However, the circumstances surrounding that absolute are subject to many interpretations. Was the perpetrator dark haired and wearing a green jacket, as witness Smith described him? Or should witness Jones's account of a sandy-haired man wearing a navy jacket be taken as the "truth?" The difference between Smith's and Jones's testimony suggests that instead of being an absolute, truth is perception. This belief in truth as a construct is central to Tim O'Brien's The Things They Carry. Throughout the novel, he explores this idea of truth as perception by repetition, distinguishing between different kinds of truth, and by showing how easily people are misled by fiction.

This kind of introduction eases you into the topic, resulting in a very satisfying read.

Adding sources/Explaining your points

Alison did a good job here incorporating a quote by Steven Kaplan regarding the novel, and, in particular, explaining how the novel proved her argument.

In addition to reliving such events and remembering individuals, one can use these memories to gain insight of his or her present life. In fact, this is what O'Brien does by writing his stories. As the critic Steven Kaplan notes, "a main theme of O'Brien's writings is that people create and live their lives with the help of memory and imagination. O'Brien does not just write stories: he believes that stories are a vital part of human existence" (9). This idea is what sets the narrator apart from a character named Norman Bowker who took his own life due to the stresses of war. Throughout the novel, the narrator mentions several times that he is a writer now and by being a writer he can write stories. He opposed being at war and by writing stories and remembering various events, he is able to cope with his war experience. It is this type of coping mechanism that enables a person to reflect on the past to better the present and ultimately strengthen his or her "human existence."

O'Brien further supports this idea when he discusses all the things Bowker would say if he were alive. If he had not taken his own life, he would have so much to talk about, and would have saved himself from self-destruction. For instance, he would have boasted about his awards. O'Brien mentions that "the ribbons looked good on the uniform in his closet, and if his father were to ask, he would've explained what each signified and how he was proud of all of them" (141). If Bowker had the chance to write or even tell stories, some of them would include his recognition for the duties that he performed. Although the war experience was gruesome, he could be "proud" that he did his duty. In this sense, it would have enhanced his "human" condition by allowing him to deal with the war experience rather than letting it destroy him.

Lisa shows that often non-literary sources can be used to prove your point.

Psychologically, what caused Bowker to be eaten alive was his shame. From a psychological stance, "People who feel shame perceive that they have failed to meet certain standards of conduct. Their failure may be moral or it may center around their incompetence or faults"(Vangelisti 603). Bowker felt that he failed in Vietnam. He failed to save his comrade's life and he failed to get a better medal than the seven he already had. He felt everything was his fault and was ashamed. Psychologists say that,

> When people feel shame, they are conscious of being critically observed. They perceive they are being scrutinized and evaluated -- others are all too aware of their flaws. Those who feel shame often want to hide or disappear. If one focuses on the self as a bad person who is evaluated as such by others, then the only recourse is to die, disappear, or at least withdraw from evaluating others. (Vangelisti 603)

Bowker cannot deal with his faults and it shames him to imagine what other people will think of his faults. He can not cope with the burden of shame and decides to die, or "disappear," by committing suicide.

O'Brien argues that story telling is a way of avoiding this kind of shame. He writes that "By telling stories, you objectify your own experience. You separate it from yourself"(158). He suggests here that Bowker would have been able to justify and make better sense of his experience with stories. They would allow him to "separate" them from himself -- get them off his chest and liberate him from their emotional gravity. It would have helped him overcome what is called "post-Vietnam syndrome," which is classified under post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)(Figley 528). Charles Figley notes that this syndrome results from exposure to any life threatening event such as war. The stress that is associated with the traumatic event and experienced well afterwards is post-traumatic stress(528). He adds that "trauma causes emotional tension until it is dislodged or discharged" (529). If Bowker had the courage to "dislodge" the tension – or tell his story – he would have been able to dislodge the trauma that caused him to develop PTSD and avoid suicide.

Lisa bridges the gap here between the world of the novel and the world of psychology, helping readers see that the novel is really "about" what happens after the war.

Jackie Geller, in the samples below, explored the different ways that humor could be used as a coping mechanism.

In <u>The Things They Carried</u> by Tim O'Brien, the men of Alpha company resorted to different means of coping. They coped by joking, telling stories, and by fantasizing.

Because people have unique personalities, they develop their own personal coping mechanisms. Some people turn to joking as a way to cope. Joking is an effective coping mechanism because "it is a potent agent for psychological removal from stressful situations" (Henman 87). One man who resorted to joking as a way to cope was Azar. This was apparent upon the death of Kiowa , who was killed during a battle and was lost in a mud pit. While they were searching for his body, Azar started joking about the circumstances of Kiowa's death, how Kiowa was "wasted in the waste" (165) and how it was "a classic case [of] biting the dirt" (165). The other soldiers didn't appreciate his humor because they held Kiowa in high regard and they were devastated by his death. They felt Azar's humor was inappropriate at such a sad time and they kept telling him to stop with the jokes. What the soldiers didn't realize, however, was that Azar was using humor to cope with Kiowa's death.

While humor may seem an inappropriate response to a stressful situation, many soldier's turn to humor as a way to cope. This was documented by the United States Navy, who, in 1975, began a research program to evaluate Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in 566 Vietnamese Prisoner's of War. The study found "there [was] no more increased incidence of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder [...] in the VPOW group than in the general population" (Henman 84). The study concluded that the prisoners were better able to cope because they took every opportunity they could to make jokes in order to cheer each other up. According to Linda Henman, "prisoners often found humor to be an effective coping mechanism, a way of fighting back and taking control" (83),

and for the VPOW's, humor played an important role in their survival. The use of humor as a coping mechanism is widespread. Humor also was a key factor in the survival of Holocaust victims during their imprisonment in concentration camps. Victor Frankl, a Holocaust survivor, stated that "humor was another of the soul's weapon's in the fight for self preservation" (Henman 86). It "allowed [us] to escape the confines of the [camp], if just for a few seconds" (Henman 86). When Frankl realized how his mood lightened up after he had a good laugh, he and a friend decided that during their captivity they would "invent at least one amusing story daily" (Henman 86) to help them cope with their imprisonment. Much like the VPOW's and Holocaust survivors, it was humor that Azar turned to in order to cope. Humor allowed him to escape from his sadness for a little while. While it may have seemed inappropriate, it was his unique way to deal with Kiowa's death.

The reference to Holocaust survivors works well here, connecting the events in Vietnam to the larger world.

Thomas Palczewski explores how the novel forces the reader to question truth

O'Brien's use of repetition when telling a story shows how truth can become a jumbled thought of what actually happened and what seems to have happened. In "How to Tell a Good War Story" the narrator recalls the death of one of his fellow soldiers, Curt Lemon. The absolute truth to the story is "Curt Lemon stepped on a booby trapped 105 round. He was playing catch with Rat Kiley, laughing, and then he was dead" (78). This story is told and retold through out the chapter, and every time it is told there are details added to it. What started off as an actual account of Curt Lemon's death becomes filled with details placed by the narrator to replace those forgotten by memory, and to form it into a way that he wants to remember the event, rather than how it actually happens.

The narrator confesses to the reader how "it's difficult to separate what happened to what seems to happen. What seems to happen becomes it own happening and has to be told that way" (71). O'Brien explains in the story how the truth can become an askew thought and "when a guy dies, like Curt Lemon, you look away and the look back a moment and then look away again" (71). He then explains how "angels of vision are skewed" (71), and when "the picture gets jumbled; you tend to miss a lot. And then afterward, when you go to tell about it, there is always that surreal seeming ness, which makes the story seem untrue, but which in fact represents the hard and exact truth" (71). Giving the story teller no single unbroken view of what actually happened, the story becomes a vague reference in his mind. The more a story is told the more that is added to fill in the blanks at the moments he looked away. This makes the story no longer a moment by moment re-enactment of what actually happened, but a story of what little the narrator can recall. With each telling the obscured moments are filled in by what the narrator believes to have happened and moments that the narrator wants to believe have happened. O'Brien explains in an interview that if you take "almost any experience of your life that means something to you, that really hits you, […] over the course of time your imagination is going to do things with that experience to render it into something that you can deal with." (7). While the story is no longer a completely accurate account It contains the emotions and the feelings of how one would remember such an event.

Proofreading Tips

Proofreading – it's not just commas anymore.
Before proofreading

Those experiences in Vietnam that Norman Bowker could not get out of him, by simply telling a story, ate him inside, "three years later hanged himself in the locker room of a YMCA" (155).

After proofreading

Because he could not tell his story, the demons from Vietnam ate him inside: as the narrator sadly notes "three years later he hanged himself in the locker room of a YMCA" (155).

Which sentence is more persuasive? As noted in the proofreading comments for essay #1 (36), it's often the words, not the punctuation, that needs work.

Wordiness
Sometimes, a single word can mess up a sentence:

These examples are from two different essays

By making up stories about everything that happened in Vietnam aids O'Brien in making sense of everything that still doesn't seem like reality to him.

By taking this trip back to Vietnam was a way to relieve his conscious of guilt for a friend's death that he felt was his fault.

In both of these cases, the "By" that opens the sentence ends up causing confusion. The solution? Easy: delete it.

Colons:
To set up a list of divisions

O'Brien demonstrates that "truth" is the feelings felt and expressed by the narrator through three distinct events: the story about Ted Lavender's death, the death of Curt Lemon, and the narrator's story about the Vietnamese soldier that he killed.

To set up a repetition for emphasis: (note that this example also shows the need to set off quotes longer than four lines with block indent)

The second account of Lemon's death offers more details: details derived from a twenty year perspective.

> **Twenty years later, I can still see the sunlight on Lemon's face. I can see him turning, looking back at Rat Kiley, then he took that curious half step form the shade into the sunlight, his face suddenly browning and shining, and then his foot touched down, in that instant, he must've thought it was the sunlight that was killing him. (84)**

In this account, the descriptions of the soldier's smiling face and the sunlight makes death seem almost benign.

To set up a quote:

The first time the story is told, it is done so matter of fact that it is overlooked: "On the third day, Curt Lemon stepped on a booby-trapped 105 round. He was playing catch with Rat Kiley, laughing, and then he was dead. The trees were thick; it took nearly an hour to cut an LZ for the dustoff" (78). The bald phraseology – "and then he was dead" – at once tells us everything and nothing.

and

But as we arrive at the conclusion of this short story, the narrator has this to say about his contact with the Robert: "I had my eyes closed, I thought I'd keep them that way for a little while" (458).

And I deserve extra points for not stooping to any easy "poop" jokes when mentioning colons.

Assignment Sheet Essay #3 (Drama)

Assignment

Choose one of the questions below and, after pre-writing and completing a reasons and evidence worksheet and thesis statement at home, come to class center prepared to write a full essay -- title, intro, body paragraphs, conclusion: min. 5 paragraphs) which answers it. Remember, your purpose is to argue that your view is correct.

Directions

The best advice I can offer is to REREAD PLAY. This will provide you with the understanding and quotes necessary to set up and write a strong essay.

Be sure you have read and understood the definitions of an essay, thesis and division statement, topic sentences, introduction, and conclusion included in "Dr. Bordelon's Glossary" (*Read* 15).

Follow the suggestions in "In-class Essay Suggestions" (*Read* 55) and "So, You Wanna' Write a Good Literary Essay" (*Read* 56). Remember to check with me if you have any questions or concerns. Also check "Writing about Drama" in textbook.

What you may bring in

1. Thesis statement and reasons and evidence worksheet
2. Your brain

NOTE: Any other material, sections of essays, introductions, etc. will be removed by me.

BUDGET YOUR TIME

Do all of your thinking at home and come to class prepared to write. Even your titles and introductions and conclusions can be worked on at home, and jotted down quickly.

I cannot grade on what might have been: I have to base my grade on what is in front of me, so be sure to complete the essay.

Questions

Glass Menagerie

1. What does the play suggest about conformity v. individuality or instinct v. civilization? Is Williams saying individuality is best? Instinct? Conformity? Civilization? Neither? State clearly in a word or short phrase your answer to this question, and then explain yourself. How does the rest of the play support your point?
2. Through Tom, what is Williams saying about the position/role/dilemma of an artist in society? State clearly in a word or short phrase your answer to this question, and then explain yourself, and focus on only one thing. How does the rest of the play support your point?
3. How could the play be read as a critique of American society? First decide exactly what Williams is criticizing and state it (focus on only one thing Williams is criticizing), and then write an essay which shows this. Your body paragraphs should explain how your examples can be considered criticisms, and should be rooted in the time span of the play (1930-1945).

Grading Criteria

To receive a passing grade, you must successfully complete the following:

Organization: Have a clear thesis statement, which suggests how a particular question is valid. You must also include a clear division statement which is then developed in separate paragraphs with clear topic sentences.

Content: Paragraphs that use specific quotes and examples from the story to prove your point – AND a full and complete discussion on why and how that particular quote or word proves your point. REMEMBER: examples do not speak for themselves – the core of a good literary essay is in your commentary and explanations of the examples.

Proofreading: Sentences that are clear and no more than 5 major errors. Note on handwriting: if I can't read it, you will receive a failing grade: if in doubt, print.

Major errors: Sentence fragments, run-on sentences, verb-tense error, subject-verb agreement error, unclear phrasing/tangled wording, words that I cannot decipher, and spelling/wrong word error.

Reasons and Evidence Sheet: Essay #3 (Drama)

Reasons	Evidence and explanation: Specific quotes, examples, and/or descriptions which support your reason.

Sample starter sentence for reason: (see "Example topic sentences" 39 for more specifics)
 	
The _(insert main idea/point of paragraph – "setting," "dark hat," "facial expressions of the protagonist")_ suggests/ illustrates/ shows/ reveals _(insert main point of essay)_.
 	
Examples
 	
`The comments about the complacency of the middle class suggest that Williams is criticizing the American success myth.`
 	
Or
 	
`Tom's final soliloquy illustrates the psychic damage/cost of individuality.`
 	
1. ____________________
____
____
	Example
	a. ____________________
	____________________
	Explanation: (how & why does example prove pt.)
	a. ____________________
	____________________
	Example
	b. ____________________
	____________________
	Explanation: (how & why does example prove pt.)
	b. ____________________

2. ____________________ ____________________ ____________________	Example a. ____________________ ____________________ Explanation: (how & why does example prove pt.) a. ____________________ ____________________ Example b. ____________________ ____________________ Explanation: (how & why does example prove pt.) b. ____________________

3. ______________________________ ______________________________ ______________________________	Example a. ______________________________ ______________________________ Explanation: (how & why does example prove pt.) a. ______________________________ ______________________________ Example b. ______________________________ ______________________________ Explanation: (how & why does example prove pt.) b. ______________________________

Thesis statement: (Thesis must be written below and handed in with final copy)

1st Try: ______________________________

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____

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2nd Try: ______________________________

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3rd Try: ______________________________

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In-Class Essay Suggestions

Complete 1-7 at home. At the end of each class, I will collect your work and then give it back to you the next class. **General Note:** You need to explain all of your thinking: act as if I haven't read the work. This doesn't mean you have to summarize the story, but it does mean you have to go into great detail explaining exactly how and why each example proves your point. Think of me as an ignorant reader: I don't understand anything unless you clarify it in detail.

Directions:

1. After choosing question, re-read story, poem, or play.
2. If you have any questions about the story or question, check with me.
3. Write a list of different reasons which support your answer, and then look for evidence quotes) to support these reasons. Add these reason to the "Reasons and Evidence Worksheet" which you can bring in to class – remember, you must use this sheet for any pre-writing.
4. Construct thesis statement (see below) to organize your thoughts and guide readers through your argument. Note: you should write three different versions of the same statement and choose the clearest one.
5. Read over (yet again) "So You Wanna' Write a Good Literary Essay" (56) – especially Drafting and Revision sections.
6. Practice writing several body paragraphs. You cannot use them in class, but the brain sweat will result in a much improved in-class essay.
7. Come up with idea for title (make a list of five and choose the best one) and introduction (see below)

In-class:

8. Using **Paragraph Format** on Body Paragraphs (Syllabus), draft body paragraphs of essay, making each topic sentence a claim which the rest of your paragraph supports. Your purpose in each paragraph is to show readers (with quotes from story, poem, or play) what your evidence is, and then to explain, in detail, how these examples prove your claim. **You should provide at least two sentences of explanation for each quote. Explain the importance or connotations of particular word or action.**

   Remember to provide a context to your quotes, page numbers and to use quotation marks around direct quotes – even if you just use a word or a phrase. Ex. **By the end of the story, Mrs. Johnson, like Walker, sees through Dee's pretensions, and realizing the worth of her remaining daughter," sat there just enjoying" being with Maggie (97).**
9. Revise essay: pay particular attention to the explanation of your quotes. Remember, quotes do not speak for themselves. You have to write down *your* reasoning – the why and how that particular quote proves your point. My crystal ball has been at the shop for years now, so I cannot read your mind: you have to write out the thinking behind your reaction to the text. This is the heart of a good essay on literature.
   1. In the time remaining, proofread essay. You may cross out words and write corrections in the blank lines above or below.

Keep in mind these questions:

1 What are you talking about? (introduction) Hint: don't just start with thesis; if essay is about heroism, you could discuss heroes in a general way, and then narrow down to your thesis.
2 What's your point? (thesis – remember to include division statement)
3 Can you prove that? (body paragraphs)
4 What's it all mean? (conclusion)

Budget your time: Work on finishing draft first class and then revising next class. Leave time at end of class for proofreading.

How To's and Assorted Tips

So, You Wanna' Write a Good Literary Essay?

Writing a competent essay takes work – and writing a good essay takes even more work. The steps below should help make the process easier

Organization

1. After choosing question, re-read story
2. Copy out quotes that seem related to your question/topic and group them down into categories, labeling each group with a key word or phrase
3. Looking over the quotes you've chosen and/or your notes, write a list of different reasons which support your answer, and then look for evidence (quotes) to support these reasons.
4. Try making two columns – one "Reason" (The idea that proves your point) and one "Evidence" (the quotes/actions from the story that prove it). Move these to the Reasons and Evidence sheet (see 26, 45, and 53 for Reason and Evidence sheets).
5. Construct thesis statement (see **Thesis and Topic Sentences** in the **Glossary** and on page 63, 25) to organize your thoughts and guide readers through your argument, and then construct an outline with reasons and evidence.

Drafting

6. Using your rough outline/Reasons and Evidence sheet, start drafting essay. Start with the thesis statement and then develop your body paragraphs using the examples/arguments from reasons and evidence sheet to back up your topic sentences.

   Remember to form your body paragraphs around topic sentences (**Thesis and Topic Sentences** 25, 63) that make a claim (use your reasons as topic sentences), and then work from quotes to back up your assertion (I often type out the quotes I may use separately, then insert them as needed).

   Your purpose is to explain the quotes in detail: not just what they mean, but how specific, individual words (and their connotations), convey the point you are trying to make.

Tip #1: Explaining Yourself
- **After writing down quote, tell readers how it supports the topic sentence/thesis by explaining – out loud – exactly how and why it does indeed back up your argument.**
- **Break down an important quote into parts and describe how the connotations/meanings of individual words support your reading of the passage, and compare it to other patterns/ideas or quotes in the story.**
- **Discuss how the tone (angry, sad, amused, sarcastic) of a particular passage contributes to the meaning.**

7. Write introductory paragraph: answer the question "what are you talking about?" Remember to include author's name and story title – underline novels and long short stories, use quotation marks for short stories.
8. Write conclusion paragraph: answer the question "what's it all mean?".
9. Come up with five possible titles, and choose the best one. Make title a reflection of your own focus.

Revision – Where You Really Write Your Essay

Overview on Revision

Adapted from *The Concise Guide to Writing*

The goal of revision is simple: making your essay more accurately express what is on your mind to another person. You'll find that even though you've spent hours planning and writing a first (or second, or third) draft, your essay will still need work if your goal is (as it should be) to fully and vividly communicate your ideas. You have two choices: 1) give up and watch reruns of *Alf*, or 2) roll up your sleeves and get to work. Surprisingly, experienced writers know that good writing takes many drafts, and thus know that the real writing doesn't begin until the first drafts are out of the way. Only after they get their thinking down on paper can they delete, move, rephrase, and add material in order to say what they want to say more clearly and thoughtfully.

While a first draft (or zero draft) is a time for low expectations, when you shift from drafting to revision, you move into a different zone: you're now in "high expectations" time. Don't be satisfied with what's written: keep pushing yourself to make it more interesting and more specific. In fact, I've found that the students who are sure that "this is the best paper I've written" often need more work on their essays, while the students who aren't fully satisfied with their work often do well.

What these latter students have is a positive attitude towards writing. They realize that essays aren't "born" (i.e. written in one or two sittings), but are "made" by attention to details. This positive attitude is crucial when you look in despair at your first draft and think "Uh oh!" Don't just give up if you think most of your essay isn't any good (most writers feel this way).

Tip #2
The key is to divide the work into a series of steps
Start with just your organization, then rest, then work on individual paragraphs, one at a time. This makes the revision process seem less onerous -- it may even make it fun.

Specific Revision Ideas

Follow the steps below to help focus your essay.

1. Clarify and revise your idea and/or thesis statement.
2. Complete **Organization and Revision** Exercises (see *Read* 63)
3. Make sure each paragraph revolves around a particular argument forecasted in your thesis statement.
4. You have to be the "ignorant reader;" thus as you reread your essay, bombard it with the following questions, and be sure your sentences answer them:
    - "What in the work backs up the point I'm making here?"
    - "Why did the author choose this way of saying it?" (tone of words [angry, melancholy, excited, etc.])
    - "How does this quote back up my point?"
    - "What about the symbolism/connotations etc. of this word?"
    - "Why do I think this is important?"
    - "What does this compare with in real life/history/psychology/economics/etc.?"

This anticipates the kinds of things a careful, respectful, thoughtful, intelligent reader (that's me) will be looking for.

Tip #3
When typed, a paragraph should roughly cover 1/3 to 1/2 of a page. Any more, and the reader probably needs a break; any less, and the reader isn't satisfied. This, of course, overlooks the occasional one sentence zinger paragraph.

Work on explaining the reasoning behind your choice of examples. Remember that the ignorant reader has no idea how that quote from "Gimpel" shows that he is really not foolish. It's your job to explain exactly why and how you think that quote proves that he's not really the town fool.

Revision Ideas #2

Use “Real Life” Comparisons

When making connections/explanations from the example to your argument, try comparing the quote/situation to “real life” – how do people, in general, react to such events/statements. Example? Okay. In an essay on Sammy (of “A&P” fame) as an everyday hero, you can compare his character flaws with the apparent absence of such flaws in a stereotypical hero like a New York firefighter (of course, you would note how the first person point of view helps reveal Sammy’s flaws). Since ignorant readers don’t usually grasp your explanation the first time, you need to compensate by explaining how your quote supports your argument from several different perspectives. Keep in mind that this – the explanation – is the basis of your argument, and the quality of your argument, not the work you put into the essay, or your great examples, is what determines your grade.

Revision Ideas: Odds and Ends

Introductions: you should always develop a new introduction, one that leads reader into your topic. Try addressing the general topic of your essay and working down to the specific story. For instance, in an essay on the theme of history in *The Things They Carried*, you could discuss, in general, how most people view history. Or what about the personal? Try linking an incident in your personal life (or a reminiscence about a relative) to the main point of your essay. You can also start with a key line from the work of literature you are writing about, or focus on a specific character. In short, be inventive – avoid the “yawn” intro.

Conclusion: Ditto for conclusions. Avoid merely summing up your main points (sure to invoke the yawn reflex). Try to answer or refer back to your introduction – this creates a kind of “circle” for the reader and results in a very satisfying read.

How to incorporate Quotations from story/novel
BE SURE to provide a context (see Glossary) for each of your quotes.

Always introduce speakers for your quote, and always double-check your punctuation when using quotes.
Comma
1. As Hamlet tells Horatio early in Act I, ". . ." (I, v, 23-25);

“that” without comma
2. Madame Ratignolle shows her concern for Edna's reputation when she tells her that ". . ." (13).

Dash
3. Sammy never did like his job. His constant reference to the customers as farm animals – "sheep" (14) and "pigs in a chute" (17) – suggests . . .

Colon
4. The narrator's lust for Alena is shown right from his first description of her: "Bare-legged, fluid. . ." (98).

Adding Research

Look over your essay for areas where additional evidence may be needed. In general, there are three kinds of research you can include in your essay: 1) literary critics who support your reading of the story/novel; 2) quotes from the writer him/herself (letters, journals, articles, interviews) that support your reading of the story/novel; 3) historical, cultural, or psychological information from textbooks, articles, etc., that support your reading of the story/novel. Note that in each case, the sources aren’t inserted for their own sake: they support *your* argument.

When reading secondary sources, be sure to have a copy of your essay handy and refer to it.

Remember that you are using these sources to support your own arguments – treat them as you would examples from your primary source. These examples do not speak for themselves – you have to connect them to the argument in that specific paragraph.

Introduce quote with critic's name and correctly cite both in-text and on works-cited page.

Use MLA parenthetical documentation (see **Citing Sources 67** for specifics and examples).

Proofreading

This is what separates the good from the bad. When proofreading, read the essay several times.. In the privacy of your room, read your essay out-loud, and listen for the places where the prose stumbles a bit and an ignorant reader could become confused. Clarify those passages. Then read over your work ONE SENTENCE AT A TIME. After each sentence, stop and reconsider your choice of words (do you need that “that”?), punctuation (is that comma really necessary?), format (Where does my name go?), etc. In short, make your prose accurately reflect your thinking. Strive for concise diction that is vivid and clear.

The main thing to keep in mind here is deletion. Rephrase sentences/phrases to make them shorter: remember that if a word doesn’t help your essay, it hurts it.

Finally, be sure to correctly format (see **Glossary** and **Sample Essay** [end of *Read*]) your essay.

Computer/Word Processing Instructions

Some Basic Editing Commands

To highlight text:
1. Hold down shift key and use arrow keys to mark text

To copy and paste text:
1. highlight text (see above)
2. Press ctrl+c, and then release
3. Move cursor to where you want to place text and press ctrl+v

To move and paste text:
1. highlight text (see above)
2. Press ctrl+v, and then release
3. Move cursor to where you want to place text and press ctrl+v

To start a new page:
1. ctrl+enter

To indent:
1. move cursor to text you want to indent
4. Press ctrl+m
5. to stop indent, move cursor to where you want indentation to stop and press enter

To make a works cited entry:
1. Type out complete entry without tabs
2. Move cursor to beginning of entry (i.e. author's last name) and press ctrl+t
3. Be sure entry is double-spaced.

How to Copy and Paste and Email Essay to me

Follow these instructions EXACTLY as written to copy and paste and email in most Windows based systems. Note: do not send an attachment: I realize the formatting will be lost, but for this electronic copy I'm only interested in the text.

If you don't have a computer or need help completing this, bring in the file on a disk and ask myself or a worker in the Writing Lab (R144) for assistance.

1. Open the file containing your essay.
2. Highlight the text you want to copy with mouse and press Ctrl+c (this means holding down both the Control button [*on the bottom row near the space bar*] and the letter c at the same time) to copy.
3. Click on the "Start" button and open your internet software (AOL, Netscape, Internet Explorer, etc)
4. Follow the instructions for your emailer to write a message (usually by clicking on "Compose," "Write Message," etc. at the top of the screen)
5. In the "To" box, type dbordelon@ocean.edu
6. In the Subject/RE box, type in your full name, and the essay number (ex. Emily Dickinson Essay 1)
7. Move your mouse to the box where you would normally type out a message and click so the cursor is in the box.
8. Press Ctrl+v to paste – your body paragraph/essay should magically appear (ah . . . the wonders of technology).
9. click "Send" (or other appropriate button) to email essay to me.

If this doesn't work, scream out loud, curse computers in general, and stop by my office where I'll show you how to do this – and discuss stress management techniques.

How to Attach a file and email essay to me

To attach a file, follow the instructions below:

10. Save and close the file you want to send.
11. Click on the "Start" button and open your internet software (AOL, Netscape, Internet Explorer, Outlook etc.)
12. Follow the instructions for your emailer to write a message (usually by clicking on "Compose," "Write Message," etc. at the top of the screen)

13. In the “To” box, type dbordelon@ocean.edu
14. In the Subject/RE box, type in your full name, and the essay number (ex. **`Emily Dickinson Essay 1`**)
15. Choice time: 1) click on the button marked “Attachments” or “Attach File,” and follow instructions or scroll through the files in the box on the screen until the file you want appears. Double-click to highlight and choose file. You may have to press enter to close box and finish attaching the file.
    OR
    2) click into area where you normal type in text and then RIGHT click your mouse. From the menu that appears, click on “Attach File.” Follow instructions or scroll through the files in the box on the screen until the file you want appears. Double-click to highlight and choose file. You may have to press enter to close box and finish attaching the file.
16. click "Send" (or other appropriate button) to email essay to me.

How to Save as a Word Document

Follow these instructions EXACTLY as written to save as a Word document using most Windows based word-processors. If you use Word, just save as you normally would. If you have another kind of computer or word-processor, check with me.

1. Open file so essay is on the screen.
2. Insert floppy disk in A: drive
3. Click on the File button at the top of the screen
4. Go to “Save As” and click
5. Go to “Save In” at top of “Save As” dialog box and click the little inverted triangle next to the “Save In” line.
6. Scroll down to “3 ½ Floppy (A:) line and click on it
7. Now go down to the “Save as Type” (or words to that effect) at bottom of dialog box and click the little inverted triangle next to the line that says “Works Document” (it may be different, but hopefully you get the idea)
8. Scroll down to the line that reads “Word 97” or “Word 2000” and click to choose it.
9. After a bit of digestive noises, it should be finished

How to set up MLA format in Microsoft Word

Follow these steps to put a smile on your instructor’s face – and more importantly, to correctly format your essay.

1. Insert a formatted disk into the A: drive
2. Click on the Microsoft Word icon on the computer screen
3. After Microsoft Word loads, click on "Format" at the top of the screen and then on "Paragraph"
4. In the "Paragraph" box, click inverted triangle next to "Line Spacing" and then click on "Double" from the drop down menu
5. Click on "View" at top of screen and then click on "Header and Footer"
6. You should now be in the "Header" box. Hold down the "Ctrl" button (on bottom of keyboard near the space bar), and press down the letter "R" once. The cursor should now be at the right hand side of the Header box
7. Type in your last name (ex. Doe) and press the space-bar once
8. In the blue and gray "Header and Footer" box, click on the white page icon (the one with the single pound sign: ex. #) on the extreme left
9. Click on the "Close" button. You should now see your last name and the numeral 1 in a light gray in the upper right hand corner of your document (ex. Doe 1).
10. Wipe the sweat off your brow
11. Type in you first and last name (ex. Jane Doe) and press the "Enter" key
12. Type your Instructor's name (ex. Dr. Bordelon) and press the "Enter" key
13. Type your course name, number, and section (ex. English 021-06) and press the "Enter" key
14. Click on "F12" function key at the top of the keyboard. Two steps here: **a)** type in your full name and essay # (example: Emily Dickinson Essay #1) **b)** press the "Enter" key
15. Shout "Yahoo!" really loud
16. Click on "Insert" at top of the screen and then on "Date and Time"
17. Click on the date in the month, day, year format (ex. July 15, 1999) and press the "Enter" key

18. Almost there . . . . Hold down the "Ctrl" key (on bottom of keyboard near the space bar) and press the letter "E" once." The cursor should now be at the middle of your screen. Two steps here: **a)** type in you title (Ex: How to Set Up MLA Format in Microsoft Word) and **b)** press the "Enter" key . (Note: do not bold or underline your title and do not put it in quotation marks)
19. Press the "Back Space" key once and then the "Tab" key.
20. That's it – you're ready to start your work!

How to Add a Works Cited Page

Follow the few steps below to attach a Works Cited page to your document.

1. Scroll or page down to the end of your last paragraph
2. Hold down the "Ctrl" key (on bottom of keyboard near the space bar) and press the "Enter" key once
3. You've just created a "hard page break" that will keep your Works Cited page separate from the rest of your essay.
4. Four steps in one: **a)** hold down the "Ctrl" key (on bottom of keyboard near the space bar); **b)** press the letter "E" once (The cursor should now be at the middle of your screen); **c)** type Works Cited (Note: do not bold or underline it); and **d)** press the "Enter" key
5. Press the "Back Space" key once and begin adding your Works Cited entries

Organization and Revision

Thesis Statements and Topic Sentences

Thesis Statements:
Note: You should rephrase the question into a thesis statement (don't repeat question).

Your thesis should contain three things: 1) the subject of your essay; 2) the point or focus; and 3) the divisions/reasons you will use to prove your point.

1. Sammy, in Updike's "A&P," is an "everyday" hero because his character is flawed, his actions don't lead to glory, and most importantly, because his heroic deed is devoid of drama or excitement.
2. Norma Jean's growth into an independent person is evident in her new interests (and attendant energy), her relationship with her mother, and her attitude toward Leroy.

Try the starter thesis statement below to get you started:
[The] ____________ in "________" is illustrated/demonstrated/shown/indicated by ___________, __________, and _________.

Topic Sentences:
Topic sentence should contain two things: 1) reference to your division, and 2) a reference to your thesis.

For a basic format, try the following starter topic sentence: *Insert statement of evidence* illustrates/demonstrates/shows *Insert answer to what the paragraph will illustrate/demonstrate about the thesis.*

Topic sentences for Thesis #1 above

1. Sammy's many flaws root his character in the ordinary
2. Unlike a movie star hero, Sammy doesn't receive a call from the president or a medal for his actions
3. And it is the mundane quality of his heroic deed that best marks him as an everyday hero.

Note the repetition of key words from the divisions.

Example topic sentences

1. Walker shows her approval of Mrs. Johnson's view of heritage by making Dee an unsavory character.
2. The description of Emily's house suggests the death and decay of the upper classes.
3. The physical contact between the narrator and Robert illustrates his emotional awakening.

If all this sounds formulaic, it is. You can do two things. Ignore the formula and wing it. Or work within the formula, yet still use your skills as a writer to capture the reader's attention and leave a vivid impression of your intellect: your call.

Organization Exercise

To improve readability:

1 copy out thesis and division statement. Check and revise as needed.
2 Outline what you have written by copying out the first sentence of each body paragraph.
3 Check order of division statement v. body paragraphs – they should correspond.
4 Can a reader easily tell the subject of each paragraph from this line? If not, revise now. Remember to include a specific focus word (which should reflect one of your divisions) to remind reader of topic of paragraph.
   a) for argumentative essays, each paragraph should answer the question "This reason proves my point because . . . "
5 Does the first line of each paragraph provide a smooth transition from one idea to the next? If not, try repeating a word from the last line of previous paragraph for a smoother transition, or try repeating the main idea of the previous paragraph.

"Show and Tell" Revision ideas

One key is to work one paragraph at a time:

1. Revise topic sentence so it clearly makes a claim that needs to be argued.

2. **SHOW**: come up with examples – try creating a scenario, using a description, or comparing it with something similar (see "real life" mentioned earlier) – that will "show" the reader what you are talking about.
3. **TELL**: Explain how and/or why the example proves the point of the paragraph. Literally, ask yourself "how does this example prove my point?" "Why is this example important" or "What does this example prove" and then write out the answer.

   Two suggestions for words to help explain your points: see list on "Using Sources" (42)

   YOU MUST ADD AT LEAST TWO SENTENCES OF EXPLANATION TO EACH OF YOUR EXAMPLES (this, my friends, is the argument of your essay).

"Could you repeat that?" Repetition/Transitions

Transitions within paragraphs

Let's start with an example

> **Another way O'Brien shows truth is what is remembered and imagined is that imagination can be an extremely powerful aspect of a story. O'Brien insists that the unimaginable aspects of a story is the "truth" and the normal aspects are there to make the story believable. Since the war was so reluctant normal ideas are necessary to a story. "Often the crazy stuff is true and the normal stuff isn't, because the normal stuff is necessary to make you believe the truly incredible craziness" (O'Brien 71). In fundamental nature it would be difficult to believe a war story unless there are practical characteristics that go collectively in the story. In truth nothing really has to be true, however, in essence these actions may have happened one time or another during the way, it may not have been O'Brien's platoon but somewhere during the war these instances happened. "Tim O'Brien takes the act of trying to reveal and understand the uncertainties about the war one step further, by looking at it through the imagination" (Kaplan 383). According to O'Brien, these aspects are very well needed to make people feel the real drama of the war.**

While the point of this paragraph is kinda/sorta clear, can you follow the writer's argument? I couldn't. The reason? Too many jumps in topic and not enough repetition.

Remember that when moving from sentence to sentence, readers must be able to follow your logic. This is accomplished by using transitions. The "This" in the previous sentence illustrates one way of knitting together your thinking/writing – and is an important word to keep in mind. By referring back to "follow your logic," the "This" acts as a bridge, a connection between the two points you're making in your sentences. Another way to make a connection is to use words like "another" (for a list of such words, see below). Connections can also be made by repetition, as in this sentence where I repeat the word "connection" from the previous sentence. Using repetition and transition words keep readers focused on the main topic of your paragraph/idea, which in turn makes it easier for readers to follow your logic.

By now you should be wondering, "well, how do I come up with effective transitions?" Easy. Working one paragraph at a time, develop/brainstorm a list of synonyms or words/phrases associated with the focus of that paragraph (Example? In a paragraph on "coping" you might include words like settle, satisfied, adapt, make adjustments, psychological, change etc.). Keep this list handy as you revise/proofread, and be sure to insert these words throughout the paragraph.

List of Transition Words (from Rules of Thumb):

Adding a point: furthermore, besides, finally, in addition to
Emphasis: above all, indeed, in fact, in other words, most important
Time: then, afterwards, eventually, next, immediately, meanwhile, previously, already, often, since then, now, later, usually,
Cause and Effect: as a result, therefore, thus
Examples: for example, for instance
Contrast: but, however, in contrast, instead, nevertheless, on the other hand, though, still, unfortunately
Similarity: like, also, likewise, similarly, as

Transitions between paragraphs

Between paragraphs, the best technique is to repeat a word or idea from the previous paragraph. As usual, this is best illustrated with an example. Take a look at the following:

> **(1) It's these kinds of behaviors that make a person not like a person.**
> **(2) In addition to his character flaws, the result of Sammy's "heroic" deed make him a realistic hero.**

Without even reading the paragraph 2, you can tell the subject of it was _________. That's the advantage of repetition between paragraphs: you keep reminding the reader of your focus which means you keep reminding the reader of your argument, which means you keep your reader happy.

Using Sources (Literature)

"Uh, . . . Dr. Bordelon . . . Where do I find Sources?"

While I'll be supplying most of the sources, part of the instruction in this course involves learning how to use the library and find research

Books
These should be your first choice:
Twentieth Century Literary Criticism (TCLC on spine of volume)
A great source for writers from the twentieth century. You'll find here excerpts from articles by a variety of critics on a variety of writers. Use the index in the last volume to find references to the writer you are looking for.

See #4 in the Example Works Cited Entries for how to cite a source from this volume.

Contemporary Literary Criticism (CLC on spine of volume)
Similar to TCLC above, with an emphasis, as the title suggests, on contemporary writers.

See #4 in the Example Works Cited Entries for how to cite a source from this volume.

Short Story Criticism
An excellent resource for comprehensive coverage of short stories. Instead of a number of excerpts, you'll find longer articles written by an authority on that particular story/writer.

Cite as an essay in an anthology.

List of Titles on Reserve at OCC library: just ask for titles at Circulation Desk (These are for at library use only)

Raymond Carver
Binder on Raymond Carver
Conversations With Raymond Carver
Understanding Raymond Carver Arthur Saltzman
The Stories of Raymond Carver Kirk Nesset
Reading Raymond Carver Randolph Paul Runyon

Tim O'Brien
Tim O'Brien Toby Herzog
Understanding Tim O'Brien Steven Kaplan

Online Sources
General web sites (the kind you get when you conduct an online search via Yahoo, AOL, AltaVista, etc.) are notoriously unauthoritative. However, there are databases which the college subscribes to (and pays big bucks for) that collect articles originally written in paper form and repackaged for the net.

To access these databases, log onto the course site and click on Library Links from the Course Menu. See, as well, the list of sources included on the Secondary Sources page on the course web site.

Citing Sources

"When do I cite a source?"

Whenever you include a word, phrase, or idea from a source, it needs to be cited. That source can include a web page, classroom lecture, an interview with your Uncle Pete, quote or summary from a book, magazine, etc. And note that I wrote "a" word -- singular. Even a single word from someone else, when included in your own essay, needs to be set off with quotation marks and then cited.

"How do I cite using MLA?"

The number two is important to remember when using MLA citation because it consists of two parts: an in-text citation (which includes the author and page number) and works cited entry, as shown in the examples below:

1) Sample In-Text Citation (the part that goes in your essay)

Work for a living? Feeling a bit poor lately? The link between the two is not difficult to explain when you examine recent pay raises. In 1997, the average worker received a raise of 3 percent. Her CEO? Many earned a 21 percent raise (Cooper 339).

Note that the author's name and page number is enclosed in parenthesis (no p. or page is needed) and that the period goes to the right.

2) Sample Works Cited Entry (the part that goes on a separate page at the end) for In-text Citation above

Cooper, Mary H. "Income Inequality." CQ Researcher 17 April 1997: 337-360.

Together, these two parts let the reader know who wrote your article, where they can find it, and approximately how long the article is.

This two part citation method works like a code. In general, the reader looks for the author's name and page number in the in-text citation, and then goes to the works cited entry for additional information. Your job is to supply the correct parts of the code in the correct order. You have to be sure that the name/word you include in your in-text citation will match the first word of one of your works cited entries. Thus, the word "Cooper" in the in-text example above (check in parenthesis) matches the word "Cooper" in the sample works cited entry. Get it? Readers would see the citation (Cooper 339) and instantly know that the information before the citation is from a writer named "Cooper." If they wanted to check your source, they would turn to the Works Cited page and scan the first word of the alphabetically arranged list of Works Cited entries until the word "Cooper" appeared.

You must correctly document your sources to receive a passing grade. I'm more than willing to help you with this: just check with me.

How to Create a Work Cited Entry

Follow these questions and steps to quickly set up your entries.

1. Is it a print or online source?
   - If print, determine the general source. Common print sources include
     1. Anthology: Collection of essays in a book – need editor's name, author's name, title of book and title of essay.
     2. Book
     3. Weekly Magazine
     4. Monthly Magazine
     5. Journal
     6. Government Document
   - If online, determine the general source. Common online sources include
     1. Database: collection of essays from many different sources. OCC's databases include Opposing Viewpoints, Proquest, Sirs, EbscoHost, CQResearcher, etc. See the "Library Link on the course site for additional databases.
     2. Essay from online site of a print source. New York Times, Newsweek, Washington Post are all print sources that post much of their material online.
     3. Essay/information from the general web
2. Go to appropriate sample entry: see list on page 5-6 of I&C for specific sources
3. Follow pattern set in sample entry. In general, all works cited entries follow a general format; your job is to pay attention to the details (placement of periods, commas, etc.) and to follow the specific examples exactly as they are written.
4. Alphabetize all entries on a separate page and attach to your essay. See page 76 for sample Works Cited page

Remember, most entries use the following general formats:

Periodicals (magazine's, newspapers)

Author's last name, Author's first name. "Title of Article." Title of Periodical

Date: consecutive page numbers.

If article has no author, start off with title, and use first main word of title for the parenthetical citation: ex. for works cited entry "Mint Makes Your Mouth Taste Fresh." Ex. for parenthetical citation ("Mint" 32).

Consecutive page numbers means the pages the article starts and finishes on: ex. 23-28.

Books

Author's last name, Author's first name. Title of Book. City of publication:

Publisher, Year of publication.

How To Incorporate Sources Into Your Prose In a Few Easy Steps

Follow these step by step directions and soon you'll be citing sources like the pros!

1. Use the sample in-text citations from "Citing Sources" (see below) as a model
2. Use author's or speaker's name to start sentence (or use transitional phrase)
3. Choose verb from list which best explains what the person is saying
4. Write out introductory phrase: use colon or comma to end it
5. Insert quotation/summary/paraphrase (be sure to include quotation marks if appropriate)
6. Insert page number in parenthesis – if necessary add (qtd. in Miller 39) and then add punctuation

7. Comment on quote using verb "List of Verbs for Citing Sources" below. Remember that the quote itself does not prove anything – it's more important how it fits into your argument, and the only way the reader can tell how it does so is for you to explain it.

Verb List for Citing Sources

Use a verb from the following list when introducing outside sources and then commenting on them. It can also come in handy when providing a context for quotes from the work your writing about.

add	believe	criticize	explain	maintain	point out	show
agree	charge	declare	feels	mention	reinforce	stress
analyze	claim	describe	illustrate	note	report	suggest
answer	comment	define	imply	observe	reply	support
argue	conclude	discover	indicate	object	respond	think
	consider	emphasize	list	offer	reveal	write

Again, review several of the examples below before starting to give you an idea of what's expected when incorporating sources into your writing.

Sample Works Cited Entries and In-Text Citations

For a web site containing examples of how to cite most of the sources at OCC's library, check "The Source for Citing Sources," accessed through the Links section of our course site. You can also use the following address:

http://lib.ocean.edu/the_source/the_source.htm

Print Sources

(Primary Source) Novel Or Short Story Itself

Works Cited Entry: **(Be sure to double space on your Works Cited page)**

Novel

Woolf, Virginia. *Mrs. Dalloway*. New York: Harcourt, 1925.

Sample entry from your literature textbook:

Tan, Amy. "A Pair of Tickets." *Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, and Drama*. Ed. X. J. Kennedy and Dana Gioia. New York: Longman, 1999. 119-134.

Explanation of order

Author's last name, First name. "Title of Article." *Title of Book*. Eds. (abreviation for edtiors – use Ed. if one editor. If more than four editors write first editor and then *et al.* -- for "and others") First Name and last name of editor/s. City of publication: Publisher, Year of copyright. Page numbers covered by article (i.e. from first page to last page of article).

To Indent works cited entries

1. Type out complete entry (don't worry about tabs yet!!)
2. Move cursor to beginning of entry (i.e. author's last name) and press ctrl+t

Sample in-text citation:

Direct quote from novel included in essay:

The first page of the novel demonstrates this idea of rapid shifts in time. The reader moves from the present of Clarissa buying flowers, to the past of the

house at Bourton. From a society woman of fifty two to "a girl of eighteen" (3). The fluid change, sparked by the sound of the "hinges," is . . . .

Secondary Source From Anthology Of Criticism (the type of source used most often)

***Works Cited Entry:* (Be sure to double space on your Works Cited page)**

Oates, Joyce Carol. "The Visionary Art of Flannery O'Connor." *Flannery O'Connor*. Ed. Harold Bloom. New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1986. 43-53.

NOTE: When citing from an anthology (collection of different essays published as a book), be sure to cite the author of the specific essay you citing, not just the editor.

Explanation of order

Author's last name, First name. "Title of Article." *Title of Book*. Eds. (abreviation for edtiors – use Ed. if one editor. If more than four editors write first editor and then *et al.* -- for "and others") First Name and last name of editor/s. City of publication: Publisher, Year of copyright. Page numbers covered by article (i.e. from first page to last page of article).

To Indent works cited entries

1) Type out complete entry (don't worry about tabs yet!!)
2) Move cursor to beginning of entry (i.e. author's last name) and press ctrl+t

Sample in-text citation:

The power of O'Connor's "The Revelation" is derived from its moral tenacity. As the writer Joyce Carol Oates observes, the story "questions the very foundations of our assumptions of the ethical life" (52). Since Mrs. Turpin's "foundation" was based upon a shallow and limited view of religion, she was ripe for a fall.

Secondary Source From Book

***Works Cited Entry:* (Be sure to double space on your Works Cited page)**

Kershener, R. B. *The Twentieth-Century Novel: An Introduction*. New York: Bedford Books, 1997.

Explanation of order

Author's last name, First name. "Title of Article." *Title of Book*. City of publication: Publisher, Year of copyright.

To Indent works cited entries

1) Type out complete entry (don't worry about tabs yet!!)
2) Move cursor to beginning of entry (i.e. author's last name) and press ctrl+t

Sample in-text citation:

Summary from source included in essay:

Although some critics argue that surrealism began in 1924 after the publication of the Surrealist Manifesto by Andre Breton (Kershner 52),

Kafka's work, published a decade earlier, shares many qualities of surrealist art, and should be considered a precursor to the later movement.

Secondary Source From TCLC Or CLC

***Works Cited Entry:* (Be sure to double space on your Works Cited page)**

Boxer, David and Cassandra Phillips. From "'Will You Please Be Quiet, Please?': Voyeurism, Dissociation, and the Art of Raymond Carver." *Iowa Review* 10 (1979): 75-90. Rprt. In "Raymond Carver." *Contemporary Literary Criticism*. Eds. Sharon R. Gunton and Jean C. Stue. Vol. 22. Detroit: Gale Research, 1982. 98-101.

Explanation of order

Author. "Title of Article." *Title of Journal*. Volume Number (Date): pages covered by article. Rprt. (which stands for reprinted) in. *Title of Anthology*. Eds. (abreviation for edtiors – use Ed. if one editor. If more than four editors write first editor and then *et al*. -- for "and others") First Name and last name of editor/s. Vol. number of book. City of publication: Publisher, Year of copyright. Page numbers covered by article (i.e. from first page to last page of article).

To Indent Works Cited Entry

1) Type out complete entry (don't worry about tabs yet!!)
2) Move cursor to beginning of entry (i.e. author's last name) and press ctrl+t

Sample in-text Citation:

***Direct quote from source included in essay*:**

The critics David Boxer and Cassandra Phillips also note Carver's seeming lack of style. They write that "[. . .] what seems to be casual talk, virtually empty of communication, is really very deliberately and finely wrought" (99). This emphasis on the craft of his fiction – it is "deliberately and finely wrought" – underscores the nature of Carver's oxymoronic talent: he made conversation seem so natural that it seems to merely record what is being said.

Secondary Source From Norton Critical Edition

***Works Cited Entry:* (Be sure to double space on your Works Cited page)**

Dickens, Charles. "The Amusements of the People." From *Household Words* 30 March 1850. Rprt. in *Hard Times*. Eds. George Ford and Sylvere Monod. New York: Norton, 1990. 305-307.

Author. "Title of Article." From *Title of Original source*. Other publishing information from original source. Rprt. (which stands for reprinted) in. *Title of Anthology*. Eds. (abreviation for edtiors – use Ed. if one editor. If more than four editors write first editor and then *et al*. -- for "and others") First Name and last name of editor/s. City of

publication: Publisher, Year of copyright. Page numbers covered by article (i.e. from first page to last page of article).

Sample in-text citation:
Direct quote from source included in essay:

As Dickens wrote in an essay published in the same decade as Hard Times, "It is probable that nothing will ever root out from among the common people an innate love they have for dramatic entertainment in some form or other" (305-306). That Lousia and Tom, members of the upper-class, would also find amusement in the circus shows that the differences between classes – between people – is not as well defined as we would think.

Works Cited Entry: **(Be sure to double space on your Works Cited page)**

Leavis, F. R. "Hard Times: An Analytic Novel." From *The Great Tradition*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1948. 227-48. Rprt. in *Hard Times*. Ed. George Ford and Sylvere Monod. New York: Norton, 1990. 340-360.

Sample in-text citation:
Direct quote from source included in essay:

F. R. Leavis argues that the circus performers are symbols of "human spontaneity" (344). As such, they operate according to emotions rather than from the slow and measured intellect of Gradgrind.

Online Sources

Magazine: EBSCOhost - Scholarly Journal (published quarterly)

Works Cited Entry

Mitchell, Domhnall. “The Grammar of Ornament: Emily Dickinson's Manuscripts and Their Meanings.” *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 55 (March 2001): 179-204. *Academic Search Premier*. EBSCO. Ocean County College. 23 August 2001.

Explanation of order

Author. “Title of Article.” *Title of Journal*. Volume Number (Date): pages covered by article. Name of electronic database. Publisher of database. Name of college you accessed information from. Date of access.

Sample in-text citation:
Direct quote:

Mitchell Domhnal notes that “some critics allege that to read Dickinson in any standard typographic edition is effectively to read her in translation.” This suggests that the usual method of reading a poem in a textbook isn’t the best way to read Dickinson.

Note: because this was an online source, there is no page number with the in-text citation.

Gale Literature Resource

Sample Works Cited Entry

Gunter, Leypoldt. "Reconsidering Carver's 'Development': The Revisions of 'So Much Water So Close to Home.'" *Contemporary Literature* 2 (Summer 2002): 317-41. *Literature Resource Center*. Gale. Ocean County College. 17 January 2003.

Explanation of order

Author. "Title of Article." *Title of Journal*. Volume Number (Date): pages covered by article. Name of electronic database. Publisher of database. Name of college you accessed information from. Date of access.

Sample in-text citation:

Leypoldt Gunter argues that there are "two types of Carver stor[ies]," realistic and experimental (320).

Note: Although this is an online source, I was able to read a PDF version of the file, which amounts to a photocopy of the page – complete with page numbers. Whenever you can, print the PDF version.

Gale Literature Resource

Sample Works Cited Entry

Kaplan, Steven. "The Undying Certainty of the Narrator in Tim O'Brien's *The Things they Carried." Critique* 35 (Fall 1993): 43-52. *Literaure Resource Center*. Gale. Ocean County College. 10 August 2005.

Explanation of order

Author. "Title of Article." Title of Journal. Volume Number (Date): pages covered by article. Name of electronic database. Publisher of database. Name of college you accessed information from. Date of access.

Sample in-text citation:

Another connection between the Vietnam War and current events is government lies. As Steven Kaplan notes "Before the United States became militarily involved in defending the sovereignty of South Vietnam, it had to, as one historian recently put it, "invent" [. . .] the political issues at stake there." After weapons of mass destruction were not found in Iraq, our current administration had to "invent" a new rationale for attacking Iraq. And the rationale *de jour*, promoting democracy to protect American interests, is eeriely similar to the failed objective in Southeast Asia.

Note: because this was an online source, there is no page number with the in-text citation.

Internet Sources

I've included this last for a reason. The internet is a notoriously weak place for college-level research. The reason is simple: while you can find a wealth of information, it is difficult to determine it's value or authenticity. A site that looks very professional and authoritative, could be written by a high school student – or a deranged mental patient bent on overthrowing the world by disseminating false information about fluoride in the tap water and aliens in your Cheerios.

Okay, that's a bit of an overstatement, but it is quite easy to find heavily biased and simply incorrect information on the web. In college-level writing, you are expected to use sources that have undergone a fact-checking process to ensure the validity of the information. Additionally, scholarly articles usually are "peer-reviewed" – read before publication by a few experts in that field of study, and thus present the more authoritative view of specialists who are active and knowledgeable about the topic – a kind of scholarly Good Housekeeping seal.

If you want to use information taken from a site, remember that you must submit the site to me at least one week before it is used. See http://www.slu.edu/departments/english/research/ for some guidelines on evaluating a site.

In general, use the following placement order when constructing a works cited entry:

1. Name of person who created it, in reverse order and followed by a period(ex. Bordelon, David.) – NOTE: if name can't be found (but it usually can, you just have to hunt around a bit), start with #2.
2. Title of Site, underlined and followed by a period (ex. The Short Story.)
3. If necessary, name of link or page within the larger site, underlined and followed by a period (ex. Assignments. "Introduction.")
4. Any institutions or organizations which sponsor or are associated with the site followed by a period (ex. Ocean County College.)
5. The date you accessed the site – no period this time, but note day month year order (31 August 31, 1999)
6. The URL address bracketed by those funny sideways caret markers, and end with a period (<http://classroom.blackboard.net/courses/ENG257/index.html>.)

Material from a General Website

Harlow, Harry. "The Nature of Love." *Classics in the History of Psychology*. York

University. 27 March 2004. <http://psychclassics.yorku. ca/harlow.htm>.

Explanation of order

Author's last name, First name. "Title of Page." Title of Site. Name of Organization or College. Date of access. <URL address>.

If you cannot find an author's name, reconsider using the source. If you do use source, start with title of page and continue as indicated above.

12B. Sample in-text citation:

Summary

At least one study suggests that tactical stimulation is just as important as food for nurture (Harlow).

Note: since essay is taken from online source, no page number is cited in the in-text citation.

Material from Course Site (different from a link on a course site which takes you to a database)

Works Cited Entry: **(Be sure to double space on your Works Cited page)**

Bordelon, David. "Course Introduction." *The Short Story. Assignments.*

"Introduction" Ocean County College. 31 August, 1999

<http://classroom.blackboard.net/courses/ENG257/index.html>.

Sample in-text citation:
Direct quote from source included in essay:

The brilliant literary scholar David Bordelon argues that literature is the stuff of life:

> After all, literature in general . . . is about love lost or gained, the curious relationship between language and reality, a father shooting his son's murderer, a man learning to "see" with the help of a blind man; in short, it is about the flotsam and jetsam, vagaries and varieties of daily life. It seems only fair to hold reality up to fiction and see how it compares.

This view of literature means that instead of being boring words on a bland white page, literature pulses with the blood of life: if you're splattered with red droplets after finishing a story, you know you've read it properly.

Note: because this was an online source, there is no page number with the in-text citation.

Online Magazine/Newspaper Site

Lopez, Kathryn Jean. "Not Your Father's Labor Union." *National Review Online* 5 August 2004. 8 August 2004.<http://www.nationalreview.com/interrogatory/chavez200408050802.asp>.

Format

Last name, First name. "Title of Article." *Title of Magazine* or *Newspaper* Date article was published/posted. Date article was accessed by you. <URL>.

13B Sample in-text citation:

Linda Chavez, at the end of her union bashing screed, states "I know unions are corrupt" (qtd. in Lopez). What's missing in this essay on the influence of union money in political campaigns is any mention of corporate influence on the political process. In the world that Lopez and Chavez inhabit, big, bad unions are the evil forces – are "corrupt" – and corporation are big, benevolent, and beloved by mainstream of America. But if it wasn't for labor unions, and the combined money they can bring to the political arena, would any politicians pay (no pun intended) attention to labor concerns? That's a question that Lopez and her fellow writers at *The National Review* are not prepared to answer -- though they're more than ready to scare workers away from unions.

Note: since essay is taken from online source, no page number is cited in the in-text citation.

Sample Works Cited Page Including Most of the Entries Cited Above

Note the following:

- the list is alphabetized
- the list is not numbered
- the list is double-spaced throughout
- you must include your last name and page number

Melville 15

Works Cited

Bordelon, David. “Course Introduction.” *The Short Story. Assignments*. “Introduction” Ocean County College. 31 August, 1999 <http://classroom.blackboard.net/courses/ENG257/index.html>.

Boxer, David and Cassandra Phillips. From "’Will You Please Be Quiet, Please?’: Voyeurism, Dissociation, and the Art of Raymond Carver." *Iowa Review*. 10 (1979): 75-90. Rprt. In “Raymond Carver.” *Contemporary Literary Criticism*. Ed. Sharon R. Gunton and Jean C. Stue. Vol. 22. Detroit: Gale Research, 1982. 98-101.

Dickens, Charles. "The Amusements of the People." From *Household Words* 30 March 1850. Rprt. in *Hard Times*. Ed. George Ford and Sylvere Monod. New York: Norton, 1990. 305-307.

Gunter, Leypoldt. “Reconsidering Carver’s ‘Development’: The Revisions of ‘So Much Water So Close to Home.’” *Contemporary Literature*. 2 (Summer 2002): 317-41. *Humanities Full Text*. Gale. Ocean County College 17 January 2003.

Kershener, R. B. *The Twentieth-Century Novel: An Introduction*. New York: Bedford Books, 1997.

Leavis, F. R. "Hard Times: An Analytic Novel." From *The Great Tradition*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1948. 227-48. Rprt. in *Hard Times*. Ed. George Ford and Sylvere Monod. New York: Norton, 1990. 340-360.

Mitchell, Domhnall. “The Grammar of Ornament: Emily Dickinson's Manuscripts and Their Meanings.” *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 55 (March 2001): 179-204. *Academic Search Premier*. EBSCO. Ocean County College. 23 August 2001.

Oates, Joyce Carol. “The Visionary Art of Flannery O’Connor.” *Flannery O’Connor*. Ed. Harold Bloom. New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1986. 43-53.

Tan, Amy. “A Pair of Tickets.” *Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, and Drama*. Ed. X. J. Kennedy and Dana Gioia. New York: Longman, 1999. 119-134.

Woolf, Virginia. *Mrs. Dalloway*. New York: Harcourt, 1925.

Including Research Sample Paragraph

Repetition is one way O'Brien tries to show his definition of truth. Truth, of course, is determined by our own perspectives: we seldom fully "see" what happens. As O'Brien says in the chapter “How to Tell a True War Story,” “When a guy dies, like Curt Lemon, you look away and then look back for a moment and then look away again. The pictures get jumbled; you tend to miss a lot. And then afterward, when you go to tell about it, there is always that surreal seemingness, which makes the story seem untrue, but which in fact represents the hard and exact truth as it *seemed*” (emphasis in original 78). As in the first chapter, where the narrator mentions several times that Lavender was killed, Lemon’s death is examined several different times from subtly different angles, forcing readers to think “okay, that *has* to be true.”

O’Brien is toying with our all too human desire for reality. And this desire is often tied to our susceptibility to equate repetition with truth: if you say something often enough, it becomes accepted as "fact." Apparently, when a lie is repeated enough times, it accrues the weight of truth. In a similar fashion, the narrator hopes that the recurring image of Lemon stepping from shade to disappearing in a burst of light will become, by its mere repetition, a version of the truth, and he will succeed in conveying his impression, his "feelings" about the incident.

Notes from sources to include in paragraph above (take your pick: if necessary, begin a new paragraph):
Author: Steven Kaplan / Title: Understanding Tim O'Brien City: Columbia, South Carolina / Publisher: University of South Carolina Press / Year: 1995

For O'Brien "In fiction, the limited facts of memory and reality are reconstructed, and a boundary is crossed into a realm of infinite possibilities" (Kaplan 9)

"A main theme of his writings is that people create and live their lives with the help of memory and imagination" (Kaplan 9)

"The repetition of minute facts and seemingly insignificant expressions gradually penetrates a reader's consciousness as the novel [*Going After Cacciato*] unfolds, so that they constantly gain in importance and vividness" (Kaplan 17)

"One explanation for O'Brien's habit of varying and echoing and repeating phrases and thoughts and scenes and stories in his writings is that this stylistic device mirrors his notion of fiction as a means for conveying the fluidity of all experience. According to O'Brien's approach to fiction, one can use the same phrase or tell the same story again and again, and yet each time one does so, the phrase or the story somehow takes on a new character. Fiction and language for him do not mirror life: they transform life" (Kaplan 18)

Author: Toby Herzog / Title: Tim O'Brien. / City:New York / Publisher: Twayne Publishers / Year: 1997

"The question emerges whether author O'Brien efforts at confusing the reader by including so many of these real facts from his life are more literary tricks? It is the technique part of the overall message of the book about truth, literary lies, angles of perspective, storytelling, and the relationship between memory and imagination? The answer seems to be the latter; the method is the message illustrating the elusiveness of truth. As he does throughout this interconnected novel, frequently telling the same story from different perspectives and with different information, O'Brien seems to be exploring his own life from different angles that combine facts and invented details. The results are a heightened dramatic intensity to incidents, increased emotional responses from readers, and perhaps from O'Brien's point of view additional opportunities to explore possibilities for himself and his characters" (Herzog 115)

Tim O'Brien. Interview. 15 March 1991. With Ronald Baughman. Rprt. In Dictionary of Literary Biography Documentary Series. Vol. 9. American Writers of the Vietnam War. Ed. Ronald Baughman. Detroit: Gale Research, 1991. 204-214.

"*The Things They Carried* depends upon he tripartite structure . . . with Timmy, the little boy; Tim the sergeant in the Vietnam War; and Tim, the writer" (O'Brien 15 March 205).

"One doesn't lie for the sake of lying; one does not invent merely for the sake of inventing. One does it for a particular purpose and that purpose always is to arrive at some kind of spiritual truth that one can't discover simply by recording the world-as-it-is. We're inventing and using imagination for sublime reasons -- to get at the essence of things, not merely the surface" (O'Brien 15 March 205)

Amazon.com: You're the Penn and Teller of the literary world, eh?

O'Brien: Yes. Penn and Teller, saying "This is what we do." But to me these are interesting philosophical questions-- What is the difference between a story that feels true and seems true, that touches peoples' emotions in the way that true things do, and a piece that also touches emotions and yet isn't true? I have no answers to any of these things, really, I just explore them in my work and in my lectures and so on. Why is it, for example, that people get upset when you say, "Well, what I just told you wasn't true, even though it felt true and sounded true"? I don't know the answer. People say, "God! I thought it was true, and I don't like it as much now that I know it's not." And I say, "Well, does that mean that you don't like Huckleberry Finn any more because it's not true in the literal sense?" There are no big T's out there, it's a bunch of small t's for truth.

Revision and Editing Checklists

Editing Checklist: Essay #1

THIS MUST BE HANDED IN WITH FINAL DRAFT

After you've made the major changes in your paper (revising), follow each of the steps in this list and check off the appropriate column. Be honest – if you didn't follow the suggestions, let me know. These should take at least a couple of hours to complete, so plan accordingly. It would help if a classmate could use this guide and work through your paper as well (it's difficult to catched all off you're own proofreadin errors [see what I mean]).

Be sure to finish revising your paper at least a day before the final draft is due so you can put this final polish on it. If you have trouble proofreading, make an appointment with an instructor in the Writing Skills Workshop (RUSSELL BUILDING 124 – PHONE 732-255-0400 x2262).

<u>Format</u>
Yes No
__ __ Have I physically compared the format of my essay with the sample essay (see last pages of packet) and made any necessary changes? (Pick up your essay – put it next to the sample essay – is your name, course number, etc. in the right place? What about your title?)
__ __ Does my title grab the reader? If not, come up with at least five and choose the best.
__ __ Have I physically compared my works cited page with the one on the sample essay?
__ __ Have I emailed my friendly professor the final draft of my essay?

<u>Sentence</u>
__ __ Have I slowly read each sentence out loud to ensure that there are no confusing passages or missed words?
__ __ Have I checked each sentence for my personal grammatical "demons" such as verb errors, subject-verb agreement errors, run-ons or fragments?

<u>Words</u>
__ __ Does my essay meet the minimum word count? (Failure to do so will result in a F)
__ __ Have I changed several words to make them more specific?
__ __ Have I eliminated all unnecessary words from each sentence?

<u>Using Sources</u>
__ __ Is each direct quote introduced by a phrase which 1) identifies who wrote/said it, 2) provides a context for the source, and 3) concludes with the proper MLA parenthetical documentation? Ex. But Jim Powell argues with this, and concludes that ". . . ." (34).
__ __ Have I included at least one secondary source?
__ __ Have I placed the period to the right of the parenthesis?
__ __ Have I checked the placement of dates, periods, commas, and colons for each of my works cited entries?
__ __ Is my works cited page alphabetized?

<u>Final Check</u>
__ __ Have I run my essay one final time through the spell check?
__ __ Am I having fun yet?

Revision Checklist: Essay #2

Let me be blunt: good writing takes time. Luckily, you don't have to camp out in front of a computer for days. The best way to revise is to do it in parts. Try revising a paragraph at a time, or working for an hour or two a day for several weeks.

Organization
Yes No
__ __ Have I checked with friendly Dr. Bordelon for some more pointers AFTER our first conference on my paper?
__ __ Have I looked over the "Organization" section of "So You Wanna Write a Good Literary Essay"? (57)
__ __ Have I revised my thesis to make it clearer? Does it clearly list the divisions of my essay (see "Division Statement" in Glossary and "Thesis Statement" (63)?
__ __ Have I completed the organization exercise in *Read* (57)?
__ __ Does my first sentence catch the reader's attention – or is my whole introduction as boring as margarine on white toast? (see "So You Wanna" for tips)
__ __ Does my conclusion leave the reader satisfied or do I blandly repeat my thesis? (see "So You Wanna" for tips)

Paragraphs
__ __ Have I revised the topic sentence of each paragraph to clarify my argument? (Remember that each paragraph should make a specific point that supports my thesis. See sample essays and Glossary and me for examples)
__ __ In each paragraph, are there several examples from the story or novel itself to support the assertions I make? Are these examples then explained? (see Body Paragraphs In Glossary for specific information and "Revision" in "So You Wanna")
__ __ Are each of quotes from the text introduced with the character's name? Do I provide a context for each (see Glossary and "So You Wanna'")
__ __ Have I fully explained the thinking behind each of my quotes? Do I write out how and why the quote proves my point, or am I hoping the brilliant Dr. Bordelon (who seems to know everything else) is a mind-reader and can understand what I meant without my saying it? (Hint – I'm not)
__ __ Have I broken down a complex idea into two (or more) paragraphs (see sample essay for ideas)
__ __ Have I checked to make sure the first line of each body paragraph refers back to the previous paragraph/idea (smooth transition)?

Incorporating Research
__ __ Have I avoided general information about the author's life (unless related to a particular passage in the text)?
__ __ Have I checked with Dr. Bordelon if I'm having trouble finding secondary sources or incorporating them into my own argument?
__ __ Have I used an introductory phrase with each direct quote?
__ __ After each secondary source, do I carefully explain to the ignorant reader (that's me) how/why this source proves my point?
__ __ (The question above is so important I'm asking it twice) Have I added explanations to my secondary sources which link them to my own argument?

Editing Checklist: Essay #2

THIS MUST BE HANDED IN WITH FINAL DRAFT

After you've made the major changes in your paper (revising), follow each of the steps in this list and check off the appropriate column. Be honest – if you didn't follow the suggestions, let me know. These should take at least a couple of hours to complete, so plan accordingly. It would help if a classmate could use this guide and work through your paper as well (it's difficult to catched all off you're own proofreadin errors [see what I mean]).

Be sure to finish revising your paper at least a day before the final draft is due so you can put this final polish on it. If you have trouble proofreading your own work, check with a tutor in the Writing Skills Workshop, R123.

<u>Format</u>
Yes No
__ __ Have I physically compared the format of my essay with the sample essay (see last pages of handout) and made any necessary changes? (Pick up your essay – put it next to the sample essay – is your name, my name, etc. in the right place? What about your title?)
__ __ Does my title grab the reader? If not, come up with at least five and choose the best.
__ __ Have I physically compared my works cited page with the one on the sample essay?
__ __ Have I emailed my friendly professor the final draft of my essay?

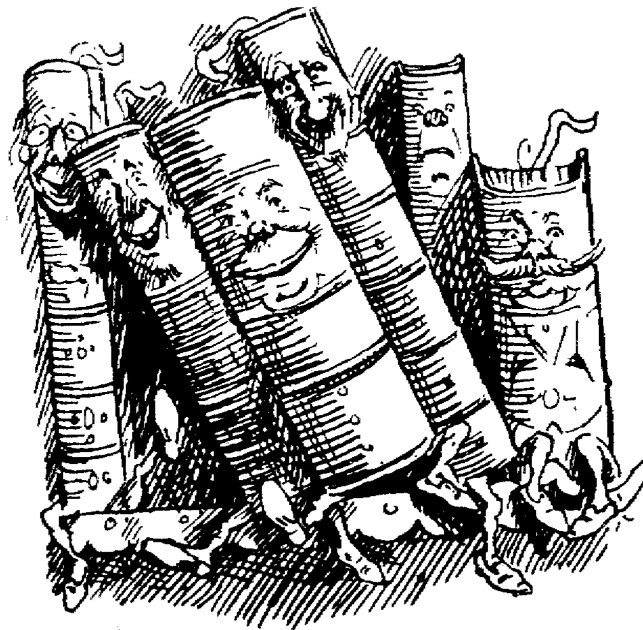
<u>Sentence</u>
__ __ Have I slowly read each sentence out loud to ensure that there are no confusing passages or missed words?
__ __ Have I checked each sentence for my personal grammatical "demons" such as verb errors, subject-verb agreement errors, run-ons or fragments?

<u>Words</u>
__ __ Have I changed several words to make them more specific?
__ __ Have I eliminated all unnecessary words from each sentence?

<u>Using Sources</u>
__ __ Have I used a source from the internet without letting Dr. Bordelon check it? (Remember, this will result in an automatic D or lower grade)
__ __ Do I have at least three approved secondary sources? (failure to do so will result in an automatic D)
__ __ Have I made sure that ANY words or phrases which are taken word for word from an outside source are clearly separated from my writing with quotation marks? Ex. Bill Powell argues that "any time we strike back" we should strike back hard (34).
__ __ Is each direct quote introduced by a phrase which 1) identifies who wrote/said it, 2) provides a context for the source, and 3) concludes with the proper MLA parenthetical documentation? Ex. But Jim Powell argues with this, and concludes that ". . . ." (34).
__ __ Does each of my parenthetical citations contain only the page number and, if needed, author's name or qtd. in? Ex. (34), (Langer 34), (qtd. in Langer 34).
__ __ Have I checked the placement of dates, periods, commas, and colons for each of my works cited entries?
__ __ Is my works cited page alphabetized?

<u>Final Check</u>
__ __ Have I run my essay one final time through the spell check?
__ __ Have managed to maintain a tenuous grip on my sanity?

A Few Poems and Sample Essays for Your Reading Pleasure



Thomas Lux

A LITTLE TOOTH 1997

Your baby grows a tooth, then two,
and four, and five, then she wants some meat
directly from the bone. It's all

over: she'll learn some words, she'll fall
in love with cretins, dolts, a sweet
talker on his way to jail. And you,

your wife, get old, flyblown, and rue
nothing. You did, you loved, your feet
are sore. It's dusk. Your daughter's tall.

Billy Collins

INTRODUCTION TO POETRY 1988

I ask them to take a poem
and hold it up to the light
like a color slide

or press an ear against its hive.

I say drop a mouse into a poem
and watch him probe his way out,

or walk inside the poem's room
and feel the walls for a light switch.

I want then to waterski
across the surface of a poem
waving at the author's name on the shore.

But all they want to do
is tie the poem to a chair with a rope
and torture a confession out of it.

They begin beating it with a hose
to find out what it really means.

Billy Collins

EMBRACE 1988

You know the parlor trick.
Wrap your arms around your own body
and from the back it looks like
someone is embracing you,
her hands grasping your shirt,
her fingernails teasing your neck.

From the front it is another story.
You never looked so alone,
your crossed elbows and screwy grin.
You could be waiting for a tailor
to fit your for a straitjacket,
one that would hold you really tight.

Kim Addonizio

FIRST POEM FOR YOU 1994

I like to touch your tattoos in complete
darkness, when I can't see them. I'm sure of
where they are, know by heart the neat
lines of lightning pulsing just above
your nipple, can find, as if by instinct, the blue
swirls of water on your shoulder where a serpent
twists, facing a dragon. When I pull you
to me, taking you until we're spent
and quiet on the sheets, I love to kiss
the pictures in your skin. They'll last until
you're seared to ashes; whatever persists
or turns to pain between us, they will still
be there. Such permanence is terrifying.
So I touch them in the dark; but touch them, trying.

Virginia Hamilton Adair

PEELING AN ORANGE 1996

Between you and a bowl of oranges I lie nude
reading *The World's Illusion* through my tears.
You reach across me hungry for global fruit,
your bare arm hard, furry and warm on my belly.
Your fingers pry the skin of a navel orange
releasing tiny explosions of spicy oil.
You place peeled disks of gold in a bizarre pattern
on my white body. Rearranging, you bend and bite
the disks to release further their eager scent.
I say "Stop, you're tickling," my eyes still on the page.
Aromas of groves arise. Through green leaves
glow the lofty snows. Through red lips
your white teeth close on a translucent segment.
Your face over my face eclipses *The World's Illusion*.
Pulp and juice pass into my mouth from your mouth.
We laugh against each other's lips. I hold my book
behind your head, still reading, still weeping a little.
You say "Read on, I'm just an illusion," rolling
over upon me soothingly, gently moving,
smiling greenly through long lashes. And soon
I say "Don't stop. Don't disillusion me."

Snows melt. The mountain silvers into many a stream.
The oranges are golden worlds in a dark dream.

David B. Axelrod

ONCE IN A WHILE A PROTEST POEM 1976

Over and over again the papers print
the dried-out tit of an African woman
holding her starving child. Over
and over, cropping it each time to one
prominent, withered tit, the feeble
infant face. Over and over to toughen
us, teach us to ignore the foam turned
dusty powder on the infant's lips,
the mother's sunken face (is cropped)
and filthy dress. The tit remains;
the tit held out for everyone to see,
reminding us only that we are not so hungry
ogling the tit, admiring it and in our
living rooms, making it a symbol of starving
millions; our sympathy as real as silicone.

Adam Zagajewski (Translated from the Polish, by Clare Cavanagh)

TRY TO PRAISE THE MUTILATED WORLD 2001

Try to praise the mutilated world.
Remember June's long days,
and wild strawberries, drops of wine, the dew.
The nettles that methodically overgrow
the abandoned homesteads of exiles.
You must praise the mutilated world.
You watched the stylish yachts and ships;
one of them had a long ink ahead of it,
while salty oblivion awaited others.
You've seen the refugees heading nowhere,
you've heard the executioners sing joyfully
You should praise the mutilated world.
Remember the moments when we were together
in a white room and the curtain fluttered.
Return in thought to the concert where music flared.
You gathered acorns in the park in autumn
and leaves eddied over the earth's scars.
Praise the mutilated world
and the gray feather a thrush lost,
and the gentle light that strays and vanishes
and returns.

From The New Yorker – *September 24, 2001.*

Lawrence Ferlinghetti

TO THE ORACLE AT DELPHI

Great Oracle, why are you staring at me,
do I baffle you, do I make you despair?
I, Americus, the American,
wrought from the dark in my mother long ago,
from the dark of ancient Europa—
Why are you staring at me now
in the dusk of our civilization—
Why are you staring at me
as if I were America itself
the new Empire
far greater than any in ancient days
with its electronic highways
carrying its corporate monoculture
around the world
And English the Latin of our day—
Great Oracle, sleeping through the centuries,
Awaken now at last
And tell us how to save us from ourselves
and how to survive our own rulers
who would make a plutocracy of our democracy
in the Great Divide
between the rich and the poor
in whom Walt Whitman heard America singing

O long-silent Sybil,
You of the winged dreams,
Speak out from your temple of light
as the serious constellations
with Greek names
still stare down on us
as a lighthouse moves its megaphone
over the sea
Speak out and shine upon us
the sea-light of Greece
the diamond light of Greece

Far-seeing Sybil, forever hidden,
Come out of your cave at last
And speak to us in the poet's voice
the voice of the fourth person singular
the voice of the inscrutable future
the voice of the people mixed
with a wild soft laughter—
And give us new dreams to dream,
Give us new myths to live by!

Spoken to the Oracle by the author at UNESCO's World Poetry Day, March 21, at Delphi
From The Nation *October 8, 2001*

Sharon Olds

I GO BACK TO MAY 1937 1987

I see them standing at the formal gates of their colleges,
I see my father strolling out
under the ochre sandstone arch, the
red tiles glinting like bent
plates of blood behind his head, I
see my mother with a few light books at her hip
standing at the pillar made of tiny bricks with the
wrought-iron gate still open behind her, its
sword-tips black in the May air,
they are about to graduate, they are about to get married,
they are kids, they are dumb, all they know is they are
innocent, they would never hurt anybody.
I want to go up to them and say Stop,
don't do it -- she's the wrong woman,
he's the wrong man, you are going to do things
you cannot imagine you would ever do,
you are going to do bad things to children,
you are going to suffer in ways you never heard of,
you are going to want to die. I want to go
up to them there in the late May sunlight and say it,
her hungry pretty blank face turning to me,
her pitiful beautiful untouched body,
his arrogant handsome blind face turning to me,
his pitiful beautiful untouched body,
but I don't do it. I want to live. I
take them up like the male and female
paper dolls and bang them together
at the hips like chips of flint as if to
strike sparks from them, I say
Do what you are going to do, and I will tell about it.

May Swenson

FOUR WORD LINES 1967

Your eyes are just
like bees, and I
feel like a flower.
Their brown power makes
a breeze go over
my skin. When your
lashes ride down and
rise like brown bees'
legs, your pronged gaze
makes my eyes gauze.
I wish we were
in some shade and
no swarm of other
eyes to know that
I'm a flower breathing
bare, laid open to
your bees' warm stare.
I'd let you wade
in me and seize
with your eager brown
bees' power a sweet
glistening at my core.

Thomas Carper

FACTS 1991

It is important that a son should know
His role, and should be told the woman's role,
And know it is effeminate to show
Emotion, or the least lapse of control
That might mean caring for another man--
Even a father. "Never say, 'I love
You,' " I was told. If ever tears began
After an argument, he would reprove
Me mockingly: "Only fags cry." The first
Time that he said this to me, I misheard
The slangy phrase, but knew my tears were worst
Of possible betrayals. Yet that word
Stays with me, and when my father shall die,
No man will weep because only facts cry.

Ruth Whitman

CASTOFF SKIN 1973

She lay in her girlish sleep at ninety-six,
small as a twig.
Pretty good figure

for an old lady, she said to me once.
Then she crawled away, leaving
a tiny stretched transparence

behind her. When I kissed her paper cheek
I thought of the snake,
of his quick motion.

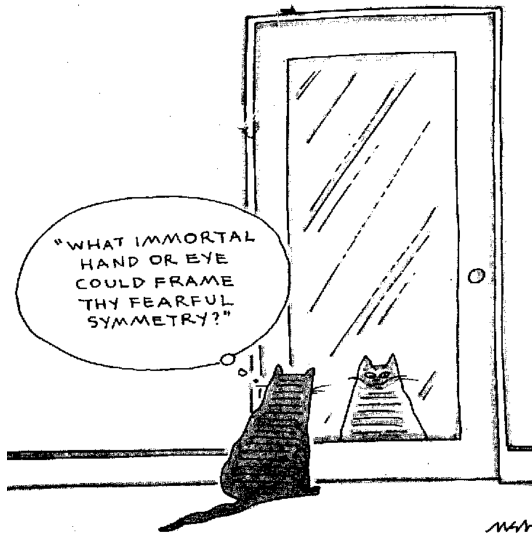
William Blake

THE LAMB 1789

Little Lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?
Gave thee life, and bid thee feed
By the stream and o'er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing, woolly, bright;

Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice?
Little Lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?

Little Lamb, I'll tell thee,
Little Lamb, I'll tell thee:
He is called by thy name,
For he calls himself a Lamb.
He is meek, and he is mild;
He became a little child.
I a child, and thou a lamb.
We are called by his name.
Little Lamb, God bless thee!
Little Lamb, God bless thee!



Wistlaw Szymborska

THE END AND THE BEGINNING

After every war
someone has to tidy up.
Things won't pick
themselves up, after all.

Someone has to shove
the rubble to the roadsides
so the carts loaded with corpses
can get by.

Someone has to trudge
through sludge and ashes,
through the sofa springs,
the shards of glass,
the bloody rags.

Someone has to lug the post
to prop the wall,
someone has to glaze the window,
set the door in its frame.

No sound bites, no photo opportunities,
and it takes years.
All the cameras have gone
to other wars.

The bridges need to be rebuilt,
the railroad stations, too.
Shirtsleeves will be rolled
to shreds.

Someone, broom in hand,
still remembers how it was.
Someone else listens, nodding
his unshattered head.

But others are bound to be bustling nearby
who'll find all that
a little boring.

From time to time someone still must
dig up a rusted argument
from underneath a bush
and haul it off to the dump.

Those who knew
what this was all about
must make way for those
who know little.
And less than that.
And at last nothing less than nothing.

Someone has to lie there
in the grass that covers up
the causes and effects
with a cornstalk in his teeth,
gawking at clouds.

Charles Simic

LATE SEPTEMBER

The mail truck goes down the coast
Carrying a single letter.
At the end of a long pier

The bored seagull lifts a leg now and then
And forgets to put it down.
There is a menace in the air
Of tragedies in the making.

Last night you thought you heard television
In the house next door.
You were sure it was some new
Horror they were reporting,
So you went out to find out.
Barefoot, wearing just shorts.
It was only the sea sounding weary
After so many lifetimes
Of pretending to be rushing off somewhere
And never getting anywhere.

This morning, it felt like Sunday.
The heavens did their part
By casting no shadow along the boardwalk
Or the row of vacant cottages,
Among them a small church
With a dozen gray tombstones huddled close
As if they, too, had the shivers.

From *The Voice at 3:00 a.m.: Selected Late and New Poems* by Charles Simic. Copyright © 2002 by Charles Simic

General Interest Essays and Stories

"The Hollow Man"

I am going to level with you: I hate the war. I have hated the war since the day I walked off the battlefield. I hate it now even as it works its way up my throat and slips across my tongue — to you.

I hate the war so much I can no longer think of it in any terms other than personal. I no longer give a damn about its political legacy, about its cultural vicissitudes, its historical aftershocks, its literary revisionism, its misapplied lessons, its frauds and fakes and Johnny-come-latelies. My hate, my unbridled passion, sweeps all that away. For me Vietnam now is the first person singular.

I am, I always will be, what I was — a boy pulled from his time, a man who left something essential behind him. You ask, where am I now? I answer, still in the killing zone.

I am fire and I am smoke. I am a dark red spot on a dusty road. I am corpses stacked like cordwood on the fender of a tank. I am a little girl crying before my burning house.

Most of all, I am afraid. I am crouched atop this ridge at the head of a column and something is moving in front of me — there, across the divide. A tree is moving, turning, now half tree and half man, a tree-man holding a rifle, a rifle pointed at me. I am reaching for my weapon, I am pulling back the slide to put a round in the chamber. I must kill this man before he kills me. I must take his life away from him. My hand shakes. I will ask God to steady my hand. I will ask God to help me kill this man killing me.

And now I am rifling his body, picking in his pockets, puffing his wallet from his pants. Here is Dong. And here is Dong's wife. And here is Dong's child. Mine was the bullet that left them alone.

I, too, of course, am dead. The bullet that killed Dong killed me. One shot, two souls. I now am a hollow man, empty and alone. My psyche has a cicatrix.

I am at home now, sitting in church. The bishop is in fine voice this Christmas Eve, telling the congregation that God is on our side, that the war is just, the enemy evil. I am getting up now, in full view of all these people and my parents, getting right up without so much as an excuse me and walking out into the cold air and swearing never to go back, never again. I hope Dong can see all this. Semper fidelis, Dong.

I am chasing a career, sitting at the rewrite desk of my newspaper, and a colleague is complaining about all these mewling, crying Vietnam veterans demanding everyone's attention, these scruffy men marching in the street. And I say, tell me, my friend, what bad battles left you so bitter? And he says, actually, you see, actually he did not wear a uniform. He could have served, you see, but he really didn't believe in the war, you see, and damn if he was going to be cannon fodder for someone else's cause. And I say, yes, I see. I really do see.

And now I have written a book about the war, a five-years- in-the-making book, a book meant to exorcise all the ghosts, exorcise me, the ghost I've become. I am sitting in a San Francisco radio station and the host of the program is saying to me, Mike, may I call you Mike? Yes? Good. Mike, I bet this book was great therapy, wasn't it. Don't you feel, well, healed? And I am stumped, right there in front of hundreds of thousands of listeners. I want to say, Well, Mr. Host, I am healed. As a matter of fact we're all healed, every man jack one of us, even my friend Squeaky, who lost an eye, and my friend Belknap, who had his hip and hand blown off, and my friend Charles, who has a metal plate in his skull. We're all feeling a whole lot better. Healed? You want me healed? Should I invoke Eliot? Time is no healer because the patient is no longer here.

The truth is I'm not really playing it straight with you here. I gave Dong a name he didn't have and put him in a place where he wasn't. I found the body and saw the pictures and that was truth enough for me. As for the rest, most of it happened, not exactly as I have delivered it here, but then, when it comes to the war, I don't know anymore where my memory ends and where my dreams take over. With the war there is no telling what is true. The truth always turns on the meaning of life and I have been talking about death.

So I have no truth. My grandfather was gassed in the trenches of the Argonne, my father narrowly escaped the beaches of Normandy. War makes men like me, hollow men, men weighed down by memory, out of time and out of place, men who spend their lives trying to recover what has been lost, men haunted by the awful mystery that spared them, that left them alone, walking in the empty spaces.

Norman, Michael. "The Hollow Man." *The New York Times Magazine*. 25 January 2000: 54.

"Why Men Love War"

by William Broyles Jr.
Esquire, November 1984

I last saw Hiers in a rice paddy in Vietnam. He was nineteen then—my wonderfully skilled and maddeningly insubordinate radio operator. For months we were seldom more than three feet apart. Then one day he went home, and fifteen years passed before we met by accident last winter at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington. A few months later I visited Hiers and his wife. Susan, in Vermont, where they run a bed-and -breakfast place. The first morning we were up at dawn trying to save five newborn rabbits. Hiers built a nest of rabbit fur and straw in his barn and positioned a lamp to provide warmth against the bitter cold.

"What people can't understand," Hiers said, gently picking up each tiny rabbit and placing it in the nest, "is how much fun Vietnam was. I loved it. I loved it, and I can't tell anybody."

Hiers loved war. And as I drove back from Vermont in a blizzard, my children asleep in the back of the car, I had to admit that for all these years I also had loved it, and more than I knew. I hated war, too. Ask me, ask any man who has been to war about his experience, and chances are we'll say we don't want to talk about it--implying that we hated it so much, it was so terrible, that we would rather leave it buried. And it is no mystery why men hate war. War is ugly, horrible, evil, and it is reasonable for men to hate all that. But I believe that most men who have been to war would have to admit, if they are honest, that somewhere inside themselves they loved it too, loved it as much as anything that has happened to them before or since. And how do you explain that to your wife, your children, your parents, or your friends?

That's why men in their sixties and seventies sit in their dens and recreation rooms around America and know that nothing in their life will equal the day they parachuted into St. Lo or charged the bunker on Okinawa. That's why veterans' reunions are invariably filled with boozy awkwardness, forced camaraderie ending in sadness and tears: you are together again, these are the men who were your brothers, but it's not the same, can never be the same. That's why when we returned from Vietnam we moped

around, listless, not interested in anything or anyone. Something had gone out of our lives forever, and our behavior on returning was inexplicable except as the behavior of men who had lost a great perhaps the great-love of their lives, and had no way to tell anyone about it.

In part we couldn't describe our feelings because the language failed us: the civilian-issue adjectives and nouns, verbs and adverbs, seemed made for a different universe. There were no metaphors that connected the war to everyday life. But we were also mute, I suspect, out of shame. Nothing in the way we are raised admits the possibility of loving war. It is at best a necessary evil, a patriotic duty to be discharged and then put behind us. To love war is to mock the very values we supposedly fight for. It is to be insensitive, reactionary, a brute.

But it may be more dangerous, both for men and nations, to suppress the reasons men love war than to admit them. In Apocalypse NowRobert Duvall, playing a brigade commander, surveys a particularly horrific combat scene and says, with great sadness, "You know, someday this war's gonna be over. " He is clearly meant to be a psychopath, decorating enemy bodies with playing cards, riding to war with Wagner blaring. We laugh at him--Hey! nobody's like that! And last year in Grenada American boys charged into battle playing Wagner, a new generation aping the movies of Vietnam the way we aped the movies of World War 11, learning nothing, remembering nothing.

Alfred Kazin wrote that war is the enduring condition of twentieth-century man. He was only partly right. War is the enduring condition of man, period. Men have gone to war over everything from Helen of Troy to Jenkins's ear. Two million Frenchmen and Englishmen died in muddy trenches in World War I because a student shot an archduke. The truth is, the reasons don't matter. There is a reason for every war and a war for every reason.

For centuries men have hoped that with history would come progress, and with progress, peace. But progress has simply given man the means to make war even more horrible; no wars in our savage past can begin to match the brutality of the wars spawned in this century, in the beautifully ordered, civilized landscape of Europe, where everyone is literate and classical music plays in every village cafe. War is not all aberration; it is part of the family. the crazy uncle we try--in vain--to keep locked in the basement.

Consider my own example. I am not a violent person. I have not been in a fight since grade school. Aside from being a fairly happy-go-lucky carnivore, I have no lust for blood, nor do I enjoy killing animals, fish, or even insects. My days are passed in reasonable contentment, filled with the details of work and everyday life. I am also a father now, and a male who has helped create life is war's natural enemy. I have seen what war does to children, makes them killers or victims, robs them of their parents, their homes, and their innocence--steals their childhood and leaves them marked in body, mind, and spirit.

I spent most of my combat tour in Vietnam trudging through its jungles and rice paddies without incident, but I have seen enough of war to know that I never want to fight again, and that I would do everything in my power to keep my son from fighting. Then why, at the oddest times--when I am in a meeting or running errands, or on beautiful summer evenings, with the light fading and children playing around me--do my thoughts turn back fifteen years to a war I didn't believe in and never wanted to fight? Why do I miss it?

I miss it because I loved it, loved it in strange and troubling ways. When I talk about loving war I don't mean the romantic notion of war that once mesmerized generations raised on Walter Scott. What little was left of that was ground into the mud at Verdun and Passchendaele: honor and glory do not survive the machine gun. And it's not the mindless bliss of martyrdom that sends Iranian teenagers armed with sticks against Iraqi tanks. Nor do I mean the sort of hysteria that can grip a whole country, the way during the Falklands war the English press inflamed the lust that lurks beneath the cool exterior of Britain. That is vicarious war, the thrill of participation without risk, the lust of the audience for blood. It is easily fanned, that lust; even the invasion of a tiny island like Grenada can do it. Like all lust, for as long as it lasts it dominates everything else; a nation's other problems are seared away, a phenomenon exploited by kings, dictators, and presidents since civilization began.

And I don't mean war as an addiction, the constant rush that war junkies get, the crazies mailing ears home to their girlfriends, the zoomies who couldn't get an erection unless they were cutting in the afterburners on their F-4s. And, finally, I'm not talking about how some men my age feel today, men who didn't go to war but now have a sort of nostalgic longing for something they missed, some classic male experience, the way some women who didn't have children worry they missed something basic about being a woman, something they didn't value when they could have done it.

I'm talking about why thoughtful, loving men can love war even while knowing and hating it. Like any love, the love of war is built on a complex of often contradictory reasons. Some of them are fairly painless to discuss; others go almost too deep, stir the caldron too much. I'll give the more respectable reasons first.

Part of the love of war stems from its being an experience of great intensity; its lure is the fundamental human passion to witness, to see things, what the Bible calls the lust of the eye and the Marines in Vietnam called eye fucking. War stops time, intensifies experience to the point of a terrible ecstasy. It is the dark opposite of that moment of passion caught in "Ode on a Grecian Urn": "For ever warm and still to be enjoy'd/ For ever panting, and forever young. " War offers endless exotic experiences, enough "I couldn't fucking believe it! "'s to last a lifetime.

Most people fear freedom; war removes that fear. And like a stem father, it provides with its order and discipline both security and an irresistible urge to rebel against it, a constant yearning to fly over the cuckoo's nest. The midnight requisition is an honored example. I remember one elaborately planned and meticulously executed raid on our principal enemy--the U.S. Army, not the North Vietnamese--to get lightweight blankets and cleaning fluid for our rifles repeated later in my tour, as a mark of my changed status, to obtain a refrigerator and an air conditioner for our office. To escape the Vietnamese police we tied sheets together and let ourselves down from the top floor of whorehouses, and on one memorable occasion a friend who is now a respectable member of our diplomatic corps hid himself inside a rolled-up Oriental rug while the rest of us careered off in the truck. leaving him to make his way back stark naked to our base six miles away. War, since it steals our youth, offers a sanction to play boys' games.

War replaces the difficult gray areas daily life with an eerie, serene clarity. In war you usually know who is your enemy and who is your friend, and are given means of dealing with both. (That was, incidentally, one of the great problems with Vietnam: it was hard to tell friend from foe--it was too much like ordinary Life.)

War is an escape from the everyday into a special world where the bonds that hold us to our duties in daily life--the bonds of family, community, work, disappear. In war, all bets are off. It's the frontier beyond the last settlement, it's Las Vegas. The men

who do well in peace do not necessarily do well at war, while those who were misfits and failures may find themselves touched with fire. U. S. Grant, selling firewood on the streets of St. Louis and then four years later commanding the Union armies, is the best example, although I knew many Marines who were great warriors but whose ability to adapt to civilian life was minimal.

I remember Kirby, a skinny kid with JUST YOU AND ME LORD tattooed on his shoulder. Kirby had extended his tour in Vietnam twice. He had long since ended his attachment to any known organization and lived alone out in the most dangerous areas, where he wandered about night and day, dressed only in his battered fatigue trousers with a .45 automatic tucked into the waistband, his skinny shoulders and arms as dark as a Montagnard's.

One day while out on patrol we found him on the floor of a hut, being tended by a girl in black pajamas, a bullet wound in his arm.

He asked me for a cigarette, then eyed me, deciding if I was worth telling his story to. "I stopped in for a mango, broad daylight, and there bigger'n hell were three NVA officers, real pretty tan uniforms. They got this map spread out oil a table, just eyeballin' it, makin' themselves right at home. They looked at me. I looked at them. Then they went for their nine millimeters and I went for my .45. "

"Yeah?"I answered. "So what happened

"I wasted 'em," he said, then puffed on his cigarette. Just another day at work, killing three men on the way to eat a mango.

How are you ever going to go back to the world?" I asked him. (He didn't. A few months later a ten-year-old Vietcong girl blew him up with a command-detonated booby trap.

War is a brutal, deadly game, but a game, the best there is. And men love games. You can come back from war broken in mind or body, or not come back at all. But if you come back whole you bring with you the knowledge that you have explored regions of your soul that in most men will always remain uncharted. Nothing I had ever studied was as complex or as creative as the small-unit tactics of Vietnam. No sport I had ever played brought me to such deep awareness of my physical and emotional limits.

One night not long after I had arrived in Vietnam, one of my platoon's observation on posts heard enemy movement. I immediately lost all saliva in my mouth. I could not talk; not a sound would pass my lips. My brain erased as if the plug had been pulled--I felt only a dull hum throughout my body, a low-grade current coursing through me like electricity through a power line. After a minute I could at least grunt, which I did as Hiers gave orders to the squad leaders, called in artillery and air support, and threw back the probe. I was terrified. I was ashamed, and I couldn't wait for it to happen again.

The enduring emotion of war, when everything else has faded, is comradeship. A comrade in war is a man you can trust with anything, because you trust him with your life. "It is," Philip Caputo wrote in *A Rumor of War* "unlike marriage, a bond I that cannot be broken by a word, by boredom or divorce, or by anything other than death." Despite its extreme right-wing image, war is the only utopian experience most of us ever have. Individual possessions and advantage count for nothing: the group is everything What you have is shared with your friends. It isn't a particularly selective process, but a love that needs no reasons, that transcends race and personality and education--all those things that would make a difference in peace. It is, simply, brotherly love.

What made this love so intense was that it had no limits, not even death. John Wheeler in Touched with Fire quotes the Congressional Medal of Honor citation of Hector Santiago-Colon: "Due to the heavy volume of enemy fire and exploding grenades around them, a North Vietnamese soldier was able to crawl, undetected, to their position. Suddenly, the enemy soldier lobbed a hand grenade into Sp4c. Santiago-Colon's foxhole. Realizing that there was no time to throw the grenade out of his position, Sp4c., Santiago-Colon retrieved the grenade, tucked it into his stomach, and turning away from his comrades, and absorbed the full impact of the blast. " This is classic heroism, the final evidence of how much comrades can depend on each other. What went through Santiago- Colon's mini for that split second when he could just a easily have dived to safety? It had to be this: my comrades are more important than my most valuable possession--my own life.

Isolation is the greatest fear in war. The military historian S.L.A. Marshall con ducted intensive studies of combat incidents during World War 11 and Korea and discovered that, at most, only 25 percent of the men who were under fire actually fired their own weapons. The rest cowered behind cover, terrified and helpless--all systems off. Invariably, those men had felt alone, and to feel alone in combat is to cease to function; it is the terrifying prelude to the final loneliness of death. The only men who kept their heads felt connected to other men, a part of something as if comradeship were some sort of collective life-force, the power to face death and stay conscious. But when those men cam home from war, that fear of isolation stayed with many of them, a tiny mustard seed fallen on fertile soil.

When I came back from Vietnam I tried to keep up with my buddies. We wrote letters, made plans to meet, but something always came up and we never seemed to get together. For a few year we exchanged Christmas cards, then nothing . The special world that had sustain our intense comradeship was gone. Everyday life--our work, family, friends--reclaimed us, and we grew up.

But there was something not right about that. In Vietnam I had been closer to Hiers, for example, than to anyone before or since. We were connected by the radio, our lives depended on it, and on eachother. We ate, slept, laughed, and we terrified together. When I first arrived in Vietnam I tried to get Hiers to salute me, but he simply wouldn't do it, mustering at most a "Howdy, Lieutenant, how's it hanging" as we passed. For every time that I didn't salute I told him he would have to fill a hundred sandbags.

We'd reached several thousand sandbags when Hiers took me aside and said "Look, Lieutenant, I'll be happy to salute you, really. But if I get in the habit back here in the rear I may salute you when we're out in the bush. And those gooks are just waiting for us to salute, tell 'em who the lieutenant is. You'd be the first one blown away." We forgot the sandbags and the salutes. Months later, when Hiers left the platoon to go home, he turned to me as I stood on our hilltop position, and gave me the smartest salute I'd ever seen. I shot him the finger, and that was the last I saw of him for fifteen years. When we met by accident at the Vietnam memorial it was like a sign; enough time had passed-we were old enough to say goodbye to who we had been and become friends as who we had become.

For us and for thousands of veterans the memorial was special ground. War is theater, and Vietnam had been fought without a third act. It was a set that hadn't been struck; its characters were lost there, with no way to get off and no more lines to say. And so when we came to the Vietnam memorial in Washington we wrote our own endings as we stared at the names on the wall, reached out and touched them, washed them with our tears, said goodbye. We are older now, some of us grandfathers, some quite successful, but the memorial touched some part of us that is still out there, under fire, alone. When we came to that wait and met the memories of our buddies and gave them their due, pulled them tip from their buried places and laid our love to rest,

we were home at last.

For all these reasons, men love war. But these are the easy reasons, the first circle the ones we can talk about without risk of disapproval, without plunging too far into the truth or ourselves. But there are other, more troubling reasons why men love war. The love of war stems from the union, deep in the core of our being between sex and destruction, beauty and horror, love and death. War may be the only way in which most men touch the mythic domains in our soul. It is, for men, at some terrible level, the closest thing to what childbirth is for women: the initiation into the power of life and death. It is like lifting off the corner of the universe and looking at what's underneath. To see war is to see into the dark heart of things, that no-man's-land between life and death, or even beyond.

And that explains a central fact about the stories men tell about war. Every good war story is, in at least some of its crucial elements, false. The better the war story, the less of it is likely to be true. Robert Graves wrote that his main legacy from World War I was "a difficulty in telling the truth. " I have never once heard a grunt tell a reporter a war story that wasn't a lie, just as some of the stories that I tell about the war are lies. Not that even the lies aren't true, on a certain level. They have a moral, even a mythic, truth, rather than a literal one. They reach out and remind the tellers and listeners of their place in the world. They are the primitive stories told around the fire in smoky teepees after the pipe has been passed. They are all, at bottom, the same.

Some of the best war stories out Of Vietnam are in Michael Herr's *Dispatches* One of Herr's most quoted stories goes like this: "But what a story he told me, as one pointed and resonant as any war story I ever heard. It took me a year to understand it: "'Patrol went up the mountain. One man came back. He died before he could tell its What happened.'

" I waited for the rest, but it seemed not to be that kind of story; when I asked him what had happened he just looked like he felt sorry for me, fucked if he'd waste time telling stories to anyone as dumb as I was."

It is a great story, a combat haiku, all negative space and darkness humming with portent. It seems rich, unique to Vietnam. But listen, now, to this:

"We all went up to Gettysburg, the summer of '63: and some of us came back from there: and that's all except the details. " That is the account of Gettysburg by one Praxiteles Swan, onetime captain of the Confederate States Army. The language is different, but it is the same story. And it is a story that I would imagine has been told for as long as men have gone to war. Its purpose is not to enlighten but to exclude; its message is riot its content but putting the listener in his place. I suffered, I was there. You were not. Only those facts matter. Everything else is beyond words to tell. As was said after the worst tragedies in Vietnam: "Don't mean nothin'." Which meant, "It means everything it means too much." Language overload.

War stories inhabit the realm of myth because every war story is about death. And one of the most troubling reasons men love war is the love of destruction, the thrill of killing. In his superb book on World War II, The Warriors,J. Glenn Gray wrote that "thousands of youths who never suspect the presence of such an impulse in themselves have learned in military life the mad excitement of destroying." It's what Hemingway meant when he wrote, "Admit that you have liked to kill as all who are soldiers by choice have enjoyed it some time whether they lie about it or not."

My platoon and I went through Vietnam burning hooches (note how language liberated US--we didn't burn houses and shoot people: we burned hooches and shot gooks), killing dogs and pigs and chickens, destroying, because, as my friend Hiers put it, "We thought it was fun at the time." As anyone who has fired a bazooka or an M-60 machine gun knows, there is something to that power in your finger, the soft, seductive touch of the trigger. It's like the magic sword, a grunt's Excalibur: all you do is move that finger so imperceptibly just a wish flashing across your mind like a shadow, not even a full brain synapse, and I poof in a blast of sound and energy and light a truck or a house or even people disappear, everything flying and settling back into dust.

There is a connection between this thrill and the games we played as children, the endless games of cowboys and Indians and war, the games that ended with "Bang bang you're dead," and everyone who was "dead" got up and began another game. That's war as fantasy, and it's the same emotion that touches us in war movies and books, where death is something without consequence, and not something that ends with terrible finality as blood from our fatally fragile bodies flows out onto the mud. Boys aren't the only ones prone to this fantasy; it possesses the old men who have never been to war and who preside over our burials with the same tears they shed when soldiers die in the movies--tears of fantasy, cheap tears. The love of destruction and killing in war stems from that fantasy of war as a game, but it is the more seductive for being indulged at terrible risk. It is the game survivors play, after they have seen death up close and learned in their hearts how common, how ordinary, and how inescapable it is.

I don't know if I killed anyone in Vietnam but I tried as hard as I could. I fired at muzzle flashes in tile night, threw grenades during ambushes, ordered artillery and bombing where I thought tile enemy was. Whenever another platoon got a higher body count, I was disappointed: it was like suiting up for the football game and then not getting to play. After one ambush my men brought back the body of a North Vietnamese soldier. I later found the dead man propped against some C-ration boxes; he had on sunglasses, and a Playboy magazine lay open in his lap; a cigarette dangled jauntily from his mouth, and on his head was perched a large and perfectly formed piece of shit.

I pretended to be Outraged, since desecrating bodies was frowned on as un-American and counterproductive. But it wasn't outrage I felt. I kept my officer's face on, but inside I was... laughing. I laughed--I believe now--in part because of some subconscious appreciation of this obscene linkage of sex and excrement and 'death; and in part because of the exultant realization that he--whoever he had been--was dead and I--special, unique I me--was alive. He was my brother, but I knew him not. The line between life and death is gossamer thin; there is joy. true joy, in being alive when so many around you are not. And from the joy of being alive in death's presence to the joy of causing death is, unfortunately, not that great a step.

A lieutenant colonel I knew, a true intellectual, was put in charge of civil affairs, the work we did helping the Vietnamese grow rice and otherwise improve their lives. He was a sensitive man who kept a journal and seemed far better equipped for winning hearts and minds than for combat command. But he got one, and I remember flying out to visit his fire base the night after it had been attacked by an NVA sapper unit. Most of the combat troops I had been out on an operation, so this colonel mustered a motley crew of clerks and cooks and drove the sappers off, chasing them across tile rice paddies and killing dozens of these elite enemy troops by the light of flares. That morning, as they were surveying what they had done and loading the dead NVA--all naked and covered with grease and mud so they could penetrate the barbed wire--on mechanical mules like so much garbage, there was a look of beatific contentment on tile colonel's face that I had

not seen except in charismatic churches. It was the look of a person transported into ecstasy.

And I--what did I do, confronted with this beastly scene? I smiled back. 'as filled with bliss as he was. That was another of the times I stood on the edge of my humanity, looked into the pit, and loved what I saw there. I had surrendered to an aesthetic that was divorced from that crucial quality of empathy that lets us feel the sufferings of others. And I saw a terrible beauty there. War is not simply the spirit of ugliness, although it is certainly that, the devil's work. But to give the devil his due, it is also an affair of great and seductive beauty.

Art and war were for ages as linked as art and religion. Medieval and Renaissance artists gave us cathedrals, but they also gave us armor sculptures of war, swords and muskets and cannons of great beauty, art offered to the god of war as reverently as the carved altars were offered to the god of love. War was a public ritual of the highest order, as the beautifully decorated cannons in the Invalids in Paris and the chariots with their depict ions of the gods in the Metropolitan Museum of Art so eloquently attest Men love their weapons, not simply for helping to keep them alive, but for a deeper reason. They love their rifles and their knives for the same reason that the medieval warriors loved their armor and their swords: they are instruments of beauty.

War is beautiful. There is something about a firefight at night, something about the mechanical elegance of an M -60 machine gun. They are everything they should be, perfect examples of their form. When you are firing out at night, the red racers go out into tile blackness is if you were drawing with a light pen. Then little dots of light start winking back, and green tracers from the AK-47s begin to weave ill with the red to form brilliant patterns that seem, given their great speeds, oddly timeless, as if they had been etched on the night. And then perhaps the gunships called Spooky come in and fire their incredible guns like huge hoses washing down from the sky, like something God would do when He was really ticked off. And then the flares pop, casting eerie shadows as they float down on their little parachutes, swinging in the breeze, and anyone who moves, in their light seems a ghost escaped from hell.

Daytime offers nothing so spectacular, but it also has its charms. Many men loved napalm, loved its silent power, the way it could make tree lines or houses explode as if by spontaneous combustion. But I always thought napalm was greatly overrated, unless you enjoy watching tires burn. I preferred white phosphorus, which exploded with a fulsome elegance, wreathing its target in intense and billowing white smoke, throwing out glowing red comets trailing brilliant white plumes I loved it more--not less --because of its function: to destroy, to kill. The seduction of War is in its offering such intense beauty--divorced from I all civilized values, but beauty still.

Most men who have been to war, and most women who have been around it, remember that never in their lives did they have so heightened a sexuality. War is, in short. a turn-on. War cloaks men in a coat that conceals the limits and inadequacies of their separate natures. It gives them all aura, a collective power, an almost animal force. They aren't just Billy or Johnny or Bobby, they are soldiers! But there's a price for all that: the agonizing loneliness of war, the way a soldier is cut off from everything that defines him as an individual--he is the true rootless man.

The uniform did that, too, and all that heightened sexuality is not much solace late it night when the emptiness comes.

There were many men for whom this condition led to great decisions. I knew a Marine in Vietnam who was a great rarity, an Ivy League graduate. He also had an Ivy League wife, but lie managed to fall in love with a Vietnamese bar girl who could barely speak English. She was not particularly attractive, a peasant girl trying to support her family He spent all his time with her, he fell in love with her--awkwardly informally, but totally. At the end of his twelve months in Vietnam he went home, divorced his beautiful, intelligent, and socially correct wife and then went back to Vietnam and proposed to the bar girl, who accepted. It was a marriage across a vast divide of language, culture, race, and class that could only have been made in war. I am not sure that it lasted, but it would not surprise me if despite great difficulties, it did.

Of course. for every such story there are hundreds. thousands, of stories of passing contacts, a man and a woman holding each other tight for one moment, finding in sex some escape from the terrible reality of tile war. The intensity that war brings to sex, the "let us love now because there may be no tomorrow," is based on death. No matter what our weapons on the battlefield, love is finally our only weapon against death. Sex is the weapon of life, the shooting sperm sent like an army of guerrillas to penetrate the egg's defenses is the only victory that really matters. War thrusts you into the well of loneliness, death breathing in your ear. Sex is a grappling hook that pulls you out, ends your isolation, makes you one with life again.

Not that such thoughts were anywhere near conscious. I remember going off to war with a copy of *War and Peace* and *The Charterhouse of Parma* stuffed into my pack. They were soon replaced with *The Story of 0*. War heightens all appetites. I cannot describe the ache for candy, for taste: I wanted a Mars bar more than I wanted anything in my life And that hunger paled beside the force that pushed it, et toward women, any women: women we would not even have looked at in peace floated into our fantasies and lodged there. Too often we made our fantasies real, always to be disappointed, our hunger only greater. The ugliest prostitutes specialized in group affairs, passed among several men or even whole squads, in communion almost, a sharing more than sexual. In sex even more than in killing I could see the beast, crouched drooling on its haunches, could see it mocking me for my frailties, knowing I hated myself for them but that I could not get enough, that I would keep coming back again and again.

After I ended my tour in combat I came back to work at division headquarters and volunteered one night a week teaching English to Vietnamese adults. One of my students was a beautiful girl whose parents had been killed in Hue during the Tet Offensive of 1968. She had fallen in love with an American civilian who worked at the consulate in Da Nang. He had left for his next duty station and promised he would send for her. She never heard from him again. She had a seductive sadness about her. I found myself seeing her after class, then I was sneaking into the motor pool and commandeering a deuce-and-a-half truck and driving into Da Nang at night to visit her. She lived in a small house near the consulate with her grandparents and brothers and sisters. It had one room divided by a curtain. When I arrived, the rest of the family would retire behind the curtain. Amid their hushed voices and the smells of cooking oil and rotted fish we would talk and fumble toward each other, my need greater than hers.

I wanted her desperately. But her tenderness and vulnerability, the torn flower of her beauty, frustrated my death-obsessed lust. I didn't see her as one Vietnamese, I saw her as all Vietnamese. She was the suffering soul of war, and I was the soldier who had wounded it but would make it whole. My loneliness was pulling me into the same strong current that had swallowed my friend who married the bar girl. I could see it happening, but I seemed powerless to stop it. I wrote her long poems, made inquiries about staying on in Da Nang, built a fantasy future for the two of us. I wasn't going to betray her the way the

other American had, the way all Americans had, the way all men betrayed the women who helped them through the war. I wasn't like that. But then I received orders sending me home two weeks early. I drove into Da Nang to talk to her, and to make definite plans. Halfway there, I turned back.

At the airport I threw the poems into a trash can. When the wheels of the plane lifted off the soil of Vietnam, I cheered like everyone else. And as I pressed my face against the window and watched Vietnam shrink to a distant green blur and finally disappear, I felt sad and guilty--for her, for my comrades who had been killed and wounded, for everything. But that feeling was overwhelmed by my vast sense of relief. I had survived. And I was going home. I would be myself again, or so I thought.

But some fifteen years later she and the war are still on my mind, all those memories, each with its secret passages and cutbacks, hundreds of labyrinths, all leading back to a truth not safe but essential. It is about why we can love and hate, why we can bring forth Fe and snuff it out why each of us is a battleground where good and evil are always at war for our souls.

The power of war, like the power of love, springs from man's heart. The one yields death, the other life. But life without death has no meaning; nor, at its deepest level, does love without war. Without war we could not know from what depths love rises, or what power it must have to overcome such evil and redeem us. It is no accident that men love war, as love and war are at the core of man. It is not only that we must love one another or die. We must love one another and die. War, like death, is always with us, a constant companion, a secret sharer. To deny its seduction, to overcome death, our love for peace, for life itself, must be greater than we think possible, greater even than we can imagine.

Hiers and I were skiing down a mountain in Vermont, flying effortlessly over a world cloaked in white, beautiful, innocent, peaceful. On the ski lift up we had been talking about a different world, hot, green, smelling of decay and death, where each step out of the mud took all our strength. We stopped and looked back, the air pure and cold, our breath coming in puffs of vapor. Our children were following us down the hill, bent over, little balls of life racing on the edge of danger.

Hiers turned to me with a smile and said, "It's a long way from Nam isn't it?"

Yes.

And no.

The Press and the Myths of War

In wartime the press is always part of the problem. This has been tree since the Crimean War, when William Howard Russell wrote his account of the charge of the Light Brigade and invented the profession of the modem war correspondent. When the nation goes to war, the press goes to war with it. The blather on CNN or Fox or MSNBC is part of a long and sad tradition.

The narrative we are fed about war by the state, the entertainment industry and the press is a myth. And this myth is seductive. It empowers and ennobles us. It boosts rating and sells newspapers--William Randolph Hearst owed his fortune to it. It allows us to suspend individual conscience, maybe even consciousness, for the cause. And few of us are immune. Indeed, social critics who normally excoriate the established order, and who also long for acceptance and acclaim, are some of the most susceptible. It is what led a mind as great as Freud's to back, at least at its inception, the folly of World War I. The contagion of war, of the siren call of the nation, is so strong that most cannot resist.

War is where I have spent most of my adult life. I began covering the insurgencies in El Salvador, where I spent five years, then went to Guatemala and Nicaragua and Colombia, through the first intifada in the West Bank and Gaza, the civil wars in Sudan and Yemen, the uprisings in Algeria and the Punjab, the fall of the Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu, the Gulf War, the Kurdish rebellions in southeastern Turkey and northern Iraq, the war in Bosnia, and finally Kosovo. I have been in ambushes on desolate stretches of Central American roads, shot at in the marshes of southern Iraq, imprisoned in Sudan, beaten by Saudi military police, deported from Libya and Iran, captured and held prisoner for a week by the Iraqi Republican Guard during the Shiite rebellion following the Gulf War, strafed by MIG-21 s in Bosnia, fired upon by Serb snipers and shelled for days in Sarajevo with deafening rounds of heavy artillery that threw out thousands of deadly bits of iron fragments. I have painful memories that lie buried and untouched most of the time. It is never easy when they surface.

War itself is venal, dirty, confusing and perhaps the most potent narcotic invented by humankind. Modem industrial warfare means that most of those who are killed never see their attackers. There is nothing glorious or gallant about it. If we saw what wounds did to bodies, how killing is far more like butchering an animal than the clean and neat Hollywood deaths on the screen, it would turn our stomachs. If we saw how war turns young people into intoxicated killers, how it gives soldiers a license to destroy not only things but other human beings, and if we saw the perverse thrill such destruction brings, we would be horrified and frightened. If we understood that combat is often a constant battle with a consuming fear we have perhaps never known, a battle that we often lose, we would find the abstract words of war--glory, honor and patriotism--not only hollow but obscene. If we saw the deep psychological scars of slaughter, the way it maims and stunts those who participate in war for the rest of their lives, we would keep our children away. Indeed, it would be hard to wage war.

For war, when we confront it truthfully, exposes the darkness within all of us. This darkness shatters the illusions many of us hold not only about the human race but about ourselves. Few of us confront our own capacity for evil, but this is especially tree in wartime. And even those who engage in combat are afterward given cups from the River Lethe to forget. And with each swallow they imbibe the myth of war. For the myth makes war palatable. It gives war a logic and sanctity it does not possess. It saves us from peering into the darkest recesses of our own hearts. And this is why we like it. It is why we clamor for myth. The myth is enjoyable, and the press, as is tree in every nation that goes to war, is only too happy to oblige. They dish it up and we ask for more.

War as myth begins with blind patriotism, which is always thinly veiled self-glorification. We exalt ourselves, our goodness, our decency, our humanity, and in that self-exaltation we denigrate the other. The flip side of nationalism is racism--look at the jokes we tell about the French. It feels great. War as myth allows us to suspend judgment and personal morality for the contagion of the crowd. War means we do not face death alone. We face it as a group. And death is easier to bear because of this. We jettison all the moral precepts we have about the murder of innocent civilians, including children, and dismiss atrocities of war as the regrettable Cost of battle. As I write this article, hundreds of thousands of innocent people, including children and the elderly, are trapped inside the city of Basra in southern Iraq-a city I know well--

without clean drinking water. Many will die. But we seem, because we imbibe the myth of war, unconcerned with the suffering of others.

Yet, at the same time, we hold up our own victims. These crowds of silent dead--our soldiers who made "the supreme sacrifice" and our innocents who were killed in the crimes against humanity that took place on 9/11--are trotted out to sanctify the cause and our employment of indiscriminate violence. To question the cause is to defile the dead. Our dead count. Their dead do not. We endow our victims, like our cause, with righteousness. And this righteousness gives us the moral justification to commit murder. It is an old story.

In wartime we feel a comradeship that, for many of us, makes us feel that for the first time we belong to the nation and the group.' We are fooled into thinking that in wartime social inequalities have been obliterated. We are fooled into feeling that, because of the threat, we care about others and others care about us in new and powerful waves of emotion. We are giddy. We mistake this for friendship. It is not. Comradeship, the kind that comes to us in wartime, is about the suppression of self-awareness, self possession. All is laid at the feet of the god of war. And the cost of this comradeship, certainly for soldiers, is self-sacrifice, self-annihilation. In wartime we become necrophiliacs.

The coverage of war by the press has one consistent and pernicious theme--the worship of our weapons and our military might. Retired officers, breathless reporters, somber news anchors, can barely hold back their excitement, which is perverse and--frankly, to those who do not delight in watching us obliterate other human beings--disgusting. We are folding in on ourselves, losing touch with the outside world, shredding our own humanity and turning war into entertainment and a way to empower ourselves as a nation and individuals. And none of us are untainted. It is the dirty thrill people used to get from watching a public execution. We are hangmen. And the excitement we feel is in direct proportion to the rage and anger we generate around the globe. We will pay for every bomb we drop on Iraq.

"The first casualty when war comes," Senator Hiram Johnson said in 1917, "is truth."

The reasons for war are hidden from public view. We do not speak about the extension of American empire but democracy and ridding the world of terrorists--read "evil"--along with weapons of mass destruction. We do not speak of the huge corporate interests that stand to gain even as poor young boys from Alabama, who joined the Army because this was the only way to get health insurance and a steady job, bleed to death along the Euphrates. We do not speak of the lies that have been told to us in the past by this Administration--for example, the lie that Iraq was on the way to building a nuclear bomb. We have been rendered deaf and dumb. And when we awake, it will be too late, certainly too late to save the dead, theirs and ours.

The embedding of several hundred journalists in military units does not diminish the lie. These journalists do not have access to their own transportation. They depend on the military for everything, from food to a place to sleep. They look to the soldiers around them for protection. When they feel the fear of hostile fire, they identify and seek to protect those who protect them. They become part of the team. It is a natural reaction. I have felt it.

But in that experience, these journalists become participants in the war effort: They want to do their bit. And their bit is the dissemination of myth, the myth used to justify war and boost the morale of the soldiers and civilians. The lie in wartime is al, most always the lie of omission. The blunders by our generals-whom the myth makers always portray as heroes--along with the rank corruption and perversion, are masked from public view. The intoxication of killing, the mutilation of enemy dead, the murder of civilians and the fact that war is not about what they claim is ignored. But in wartime don't look to the press, or most of it, for truth. The press has another purpose.

Perhaps this is not conscious. I doubt the journalists filing the hollow reports from Iraq, in which there are images but rarely any content, are aware of how they are being manipulated. They, like everyone else, believe. But when they look back they will find that war is always about betrayal. It is about betrayal of the young by the old, of soldiers by politicians and of idealists by the cynical men who wield power, the ones who rarely pay the cost of war. We pay that cost. And we will pay it again.

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By Chris Hedges, Chris Hedges, the author of War Is a Force That Gives Us Meaning (Public Affairs), writes the "Public Lives" column for the New York Times.

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"I Was Certain, but I Was Wrong"

In 1984 I was a 22-year-old college student with a grade point average of 4.0, and I really wanted to do something with my life. One night someone broke into my apartment, put a knife to my throat and raped me.

During my ordeal, some of my determination took an urgent new direction. I studied every single detail on the rapist's face. I looked at his hairline; I looked for scars, for tattoos, for anything that would help me identify him. When and if I survived the attack, I was going to make sure that he was put in prison and he was going to rot.

When I went to the police department later that day, I worked on a composite sketch to the very best of my ability. I looked through hundreds of noses and eyes and eyebrows and hairlines and nostrils and lips. Several days later, looking at a series of police photos, I identified my attacker. I knew this was the man. I was completely confident. I was sure.

I picked the same man in a lineup. Again, I was sure. I knew it. I had picked the right guy, and he was going to go to jail. If there was the possibility of a death sentence, I wanted him to die. I wanted to flip the switch.

When the case went to trial in 1986, I stood up on the stand, put my hand on the Bible and swore to tell the truth. Based on my testimony, Ronald Junior Cotton was sentenced to prison for life. It was the happiest day of my life because I could begin to put it all behind me.

In 1987, the case was retried because an appellate court had overturned Ronald Cotton's conviction. During a pretrial hearing, I learned that another man had supposedly claimed to be my attacker and was bragging about it in the same prison wing where Ronald Cotton was being held. This man, Bobby Poole, was brought into court, and I was asked, "Ms. Thompson, have you ever seen this man?"

I answered: "I have never seen him in my life. I have no idea who he is."

Ronald Cotton was sentenced again to two life sentences. Ronald Cotton was never going to see light; he was never going to get out; he was never going to hurt another woman; he was never going to rape another woman.

In 1995, 11 years after I had first identified Ronald Cotton, I was asked to provide a blood sample so that DNA tests could be
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run on evidence from the rape. I agreed because I knew that Ronald Cotton had raped me and DNA was only going to confirm that. The test would allow me to move on once and for all.

I will never forget the day I learned about the DNA results. I was standing in my kitchen when the detective and the district attorney visited. They were good and decent people who were trying to do their jobs -- as I had done mine, as anyone would try to do the right thing. They told me: "Ronald Cotton didn't rape you. It was Bobby Poole."

The man I was so sure I had never seen in my life was the man who was inches from my throat, who raped me, who hurt me, who took my spirit away, who robbed me of my soul. And the man I had identified so emphatically on so many occasions was absolutely innocent.

Ronald Cotton was released from prison after serving 11 years. Bobby Poole pleaded guilty to raping me.

Ronald Cotton and I are the same age, so I knew what he had missed during those 11 years. My life had gone on. I had gotten married. I had graduated from college. I worked. I was a parent. Ronald Cotton hadn't gotten to do any of that.

Mr. Cotton and I have now crossed the boundaries of both the terrible way we came together and our racial difference (he is black and I am white) and have become friends. Although he is now moving on with his own life, I live with constant anguish that my profound mistake cost him so dearly. I cannot begin to imagine what would have happened had my mistaken identification occurred in a capital case.

Today there is a man in Texas named Gary Graham who is about to be executed because one witness is confident that Mr. Graham is the killer she saw from 30 to 40 feet away. This woman saw the murderer for only a fraction of the time that I saw the man who raped me. Several other witnesses contradict her, but the jury that convicted Mr. Graham never heard any of the conflicting testimony.

If anything good can come out of what Ronald Cotton suffered because of my limitations as a human being, let it be an awareness of the fact that eyewitnesses can and do make mistakes. I have now had occasion to study this subject a bit, and I have come to realize that eyewitness error has been recognized as the leading cause of wrongful convictions. One witness is not enough, especially when her story is contradicted by other good people.

Last week, I traveled to Houston to beg Gov. George W. Bush and his parole board not to execute Gary Graham based on this kind of evidence. I have never before spoken out on behalf of any inmate. I stood with a group of 11 men and women who had been convicted based on mistaken eyewitness testimony, only to be exonerated later by DNA or other evidence.

With them, I urged the Texas officials to grant Gary Graham a new trial, so that the eyewitnesses who are so sure that he is innocent can at long last be heard.

I know that there is an eyewitness who is absolutely positive she saw Gary Graham commit murder. But she cannot possibly be any more positive than I was about Ronald Cotton. What if she is dead wrong?

Thompson, Jennifer. “I Was Certain But I Was Wrong.” New York Times. 18 June 2000. <http://nytimes.com>.

Jennifer Thompson is a homemaker in North Carolina and does volunteer work with abused children.

Donald Murray “The Maker’s Eye”

When students complete a first draft, they consider the job of writing done – and their teachers too often agree. When professional writers complete a first draft, they usually feel that they are at the start of the writing process. When a draft is completed, the job of writing can begin.

That difference in attitude is the difference between amateur and professional, inexperience and experience, journeyman and craftsman. Peter F. Drucker, the prolific business writer, calls his first draft "the zero draft" – after that he can start counting. Most writers share the feeling that the first draft, and all of those which follow, are opportunities to discover what they have to say and how best they can say it.

To produce a progression of drafts, each of which says more and says it more clearly, the writer has to develop a special kind of reading skill. In school we are taught to decode what appears on the page as finished writing. Writers, however, face a different category of possibility and responsibility when they read their own drafts. To them the words on the page are never finished. Each can be changed and rearranged, can set off a chain reaction of confusion or clarified meaning. This is a different kind of reading which is possibly more difficult and certainly more exciting.

Writers must learn to be their own best enemy. They must accept the criticism of others and be suspicious of it; they must accept the praise of others and be even more suspicious of it. Writers cannot depend on others. They must detach themselves from their own pages so that they can apply both their caring and their craft to their own work.

Such detachment is not easy. Science fiction writer Ray Bradbury supposedly puts each manuscript away for a year to the day and then rereads it as a stranger. Not many writers have the discipline or the time to do this. We must read when our judgment may be at its worst, when we are close to the euphoric moment of creation.

Then the writer, counsels novelist Nancy Hale, should be critical of everything that seems to him most delightful in his style. "He should excise what he most admires, because he wouldn't thus admire it if he weren't ... in a sense protecting it from criticism." John Ciardi, the poet, adds, "The last act of the writing must be to become one's own reader. It is, I suppose, a schizophrenic process, to begin passionately and to end critically, to begin hot and to end cold; and, more important, to be passion-hot and critic-cold at the same time."

Most people think that the principal problem is that writers are too proud of what they have written. Actually, a greater problem for most professional writers is one shared by the majority of students. They are overly critical, think everything is dreadful, tear up page after page, never complete a draft, see the task as hopeless.

The writer must learn to read critically but constructively, to cut what is bad, to reveal what is good. Eleanor Estes, the children's book author, explains: "The writer must survey his work critically, coolly, as though he were a stranger to it. He must be willing to prune, expertly and hard-heartedly. At the end of each revision, a manuscript may look worked over, torn apart, pinned together, added to, deleted from, words changed and words changed back. Yet the work must maintain its original freshness and spontaneity."

Most readers underestimate the amount of rewriting it usually takes to produce spontaneous reading. This is a great disadvantage to the student writer, who sees only a finished product and never watches the craftsman who takes the necessary step back, studies the work carefully, returns to the task, steps back, returns, steps

back, again and again. Anthony Burgess, one of the most prolific writers in the English-speaking world, admits, "I might revise a page twenty times." Roald Dahl, the popular children's writer states, "By the time I'm nearing the end of a story, the first part will have been reread and altered and corrected at least 150 times. . . . Good writing is essentially rewriting. I am positive of this."

Rewriting isn't virtuous. It isn't something that ought to be done. It is simply something that most writers find they have to do to discover what they have to say and how to say it. It is a condition of the writer's life. There are, however, a few writers who do little formal rewriting, primarily because they have the capacity and experience to create and review a large number of invisible drafts in their minds before they approach the page. And some writers slowly produce finished pages, performing all the tasks of revision simultaneously, page by page, rather than draft by draft. But it is still possible to see the sequence followed by most writers most of the time in reading their own work.

Most writers scan their drafts first, reading as quickly as possible to catch the larger problems of subject and form, then move in closer and closer as they read and write, reread and rewrite.

The first thing writers look for in their drafts is information. They know that a good piece of writing is built from specific, accurate, and interesting information. The writer must have an abundance of information from which to construct a readable piece of writing.

Next writers look for meaning in the information. The specifics must build to a pattern of significance. Each piece of specific information must carry the reader toward meaning.

Writers reading their own drafts are aware of audience. They put themselves in the reader's situation and make sure that they deliver information which a reader wants to know or needs to know in a manner which is easily digested. Writers try to be sure that they anticipate and answer the questions a critical reader will ask when reading the piece of writing.

Writers make sure that the form is appropriate to the subject and the audience. Form, or genre, is the vehicle which carries meaning to the reader, but form cannot be selected until the writer has adequate information to discover its significance and an audience which needs or wants that meaning.

Once writers are sure the form is appropriate, they must then look at the structure, the order of what they have written. Good writing is built on a solid framework of logic, argument, narrative, or motivation which runs through the entire piece of writing and holds it together. This is the time when many writers find it most effective to outline as a way of visualizing the hidden spine by which the piece of writing is supported.

The element on which writers may spend a majority of their time is development. Each section of a piece of writing must be adequately developed. It must give readers enough information so that they are satisfied. How much information is enough? That’s as difficult as asking how much garlic belongs in a salad. It must be done to taste, but most beginning writers underdevelop, underestimating the reader[1]s hunger for information.

As writers solve developmental problems, they often have to consider questions of dimension. There must be a pleasing and effective proportion among all the parts of the piece of writing. There is a continual process of subtracting and adding to keep the piece of writing in balance.

Finally, writers have to listen to their own voices. Voice is the force which drives a piece of writing forward. It is an expression of the writer's authority and concern. It is what is between the words on the page, what glues the piece of writing together. A good piece of writing is always marked by a consistent, individual voice.

As writers read and reread, write and rewrite, they move closer and closer to the page until they are doing line-by-line editing. Writers read their own pages with infinite care. Each sentence, each line, each clause, each phrase, each word, each mark of punctuation, each section of white space between the type has to contribute to the clarification of meaning.

Slowly the writer moves from word to word, looking through language to see the subject. As a word is changed, cut, or added, as a construction is rearranged, all the words used before that moment and all those that follow that moment must be considered and reconsidered.

Writers often read aloud at this stage of the editing process, muttering or whispering to themselves, calling on the ear's experience with language. Does this sound right – or that? Writers edit, shifting back and forth from eye to page to ear to page. I find I must do this careful editing in short runs, no more than fifteen or twenty minutes at a stretch, or I become too kind with myself. I begin to see what I hope is on the page, not what actually is on the page.

This sounds tedious if you haven't done it, but actually it is fun. Making something right is immensely satisfying, for writers begin to learn what they are writing about by writing. Language leads them to meaning, and there is the joy of discovery, of understanding, of making meaning clear as the writer employs the technical skills of language.

Words have double meanings, even triple and quadruple meanings. Each word has its own potential for connotation and denotation. And when writers rub one word against the other, they are often rewarded with a sudden insight, an unexpected clarification.

The maker's eye roves back and forth from word to phrase to sentence to paragraph to sentence to phrase to word. The maker's eye sees the need for variety and balance, for a firmer structure, for a more appropriate form. It peers into the interior of the paragraph, looking for coherence, unity, and emphasis, which make meaning clear.

I learned something about this process when my first bifocals were prescribed. I had ordered a larger section of the reading portion of the glass because of my work, but even so, I could not contain my eyes within this new limit of vision. And I still find myself taking off my glasses and bending my nose towards the page, for my eyes unconsciously flick back and forth across the page, back to another page, forward to still another, as I try to see each evolving line in relation to every other line.

When does this process end? Most writers agree with the great Russian writer Tolstoy, who said, "I scarcely ever reread my published writings; if by chance I come across a page, it always strikes me: all this must be rewritten; this is how I should have written it."

The maker’s eye is never satisfied, for each word has the potential to ignite new meaning. This article has been twice written all the way through the writing process, and it was published four years ago. Now it is to be republished in a book. The editors made a few small suggestions, and then I read it with my maker’s eye. Now it has been re-edited, re-revised, re-read, re-re-edited, for each piece of writing to the writer is full of potential and alternatives.

A piece of writing is never finished. It is delivered to a deadline, torn out of the typewriter on demand, sent off with a sense of accomplishment and share and pride and frustration. If only there were a couple more days, time for just another run at it, perhaps then . . .

"In Praise of the Humble Comma"

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The gods, they say, give breath, and they take it away. But the same could be said -- could it not? -- of the humble comma. Add it to the present clause, and, of a sudden, the mind is, quite literally, given pause to think; take it out if you wish or forget it and the mind is deprived of a resting place. Yet still the comma gets no respect. It seems just a slip of a thing, a pedant's tick, a blip on the edge of our consciousness, a kind of printer's smudge almost. Small, we claim, is beautiful (especially in the age of the microchip). Yet what is so often used, and so rarely recalled, as the comma -- unless it be breath itself?

Punctuation, one is taught, has a point: to keep up law and order. Punctuation marks are the road signs placed along the highway of our communication -- to control speeds, provide directions and prevent head-on collisions. A period has the unblinking finality of a red light; the comma is a fl ashing yellow light that asks us only to slow down; and the semicolon is a stop sign that tells us to ease gradually to a halt, before gradually starting up again. By establishing the relations between words, punctuation establishes the relations between the people using words. That may be one reason why schoolteachers exalt it and lovers defy it ("We love each other and belong to each other let's don't ever hurt each other Nicole let's don't ever hurt each other," wrote Gary Gilmore to his girlfriend). A comma, he must have known, "separates inseparables," in the clinching words of H.W. Fowler, King of English Usage.

Punctuation, then, is a civic prop, a pillar that holds society upright. (A run-on sentence, its phrases piling up without division, is as unsightly as a sink piled high with dirty dishes.) Small wonder, then, that punctuation was one of the first proprieties of the Victorian age, the age of the corset, that the modernists threw off: the sexual revolution might be said to have begun when Joyce's Molly Bloom spilled out all her private thoughts in 36 pages of unbridled, almost unperioded and officially censored prose; and another rebellion was surely marked when E.E. Cummings first felt free to commit "God" to the lower case.

Punctuation thus becomes the signature of cultures. The hot-blooded Spaniard seems to be revealed in the passion and urgency of his doubled exclamation points and question marks ("Caramba! Quien sabe?"), while the impassive Chinese traditionally added to his so-called inscrutability by omitting directions from his ideograms. The anarchy and commotion of the '60s were given voice in the exploding exclamation marks, riotous capital letters and Day-Glo italics of Tom Wolfe's spray- paint prose; and in Communist societies, where the State is absolute, the dignity -- and divinity -- of capital letters is reserved for Ministries, Sub-Committees and Secretariats.

Yet punctuation is something more than a culture's birthmark; it scores the music in our minds, gets our thoughts moving to the rhythm of our hearts. Punctuation is the notation in the sheet music of our words, telling us when to rest, or when to raise our voices; it acknowledges that the meaning of our discourse, as of any symphonic composition, lies not in the units but in the pauses, the pacing and the phrasing. Punctuation is the way one bats one's eyes, lowers one's voice or blushes demurely. Punctuation adjusts the tone and color and volume till the feeling comes into perfect focus: not disgust exactly, but distaste; not lust, or like, but love.

Punctuation, in short, gives us the human voice, and all the meanings that lie between the words. "You aren't young, are you?" loses its innocence when it loses the question mark. Every child knows the menace of a dropped apostrophe (the parent's "Don't do that" shifting into the more slowly enunciated "Do not do that"), and every believer, the ignominy of having his faith reduced to "faith." Add an exclamation point to "To be or not to be . . . " and the gloomy Dane has all the resolve he needs; add a comma, and the noble sobriety of "God save the Queen" becomes a cry of desperation bordering on double sacrilege.

Sometimes, of course, our markings may be simply a matter of aesthetics. Popping in a comma can be like slipping on the necklace that gives an outfit quiet elegance, or like catching the sound of running water that complements, as it completes, the silence of a Japanese landscape. When V.S. Naipaul, in his latest novel, writes, "He was a middle-aged man, with glasses," the first comma can seem a little precious. Yet it gives the description a spin, as well as a subtlety, that it otherwise lacks, and it shows that the glasses are not part of the middle-agedness, but something else.

Thus all these tiny scratches give us breadth and heft and depth. A world that has only periods is a world without inflections. It is a world without shade. It has a music without sharps and flats. It is a martial music. It has a jackboot rhythm. Words cannot bend and curve. A comma, by comparison, catches the gentle drift of the mind in thought, turning in on itself and back on itself, reversing, redoubling and returning along the course of its own sweet river music; while the semicolon brings clauses and thoughts together with all the silent discretion of a hostess arranging guests around her dinner table.

Punctuation, then, is a matter of care. Care for words, yes, but also, and more important, for what the words imply. Only a lover notices the small things: the way the afternoon light catches the nape of a neck, or how a strand of hair slips out from behind an ear, or the way a finger curls around a cup. And no one scans a letter so closely as a lover, searching for its small print, straining to hear its nuances, its gasps, its sighs and hesitations, poring over the secret messages that lie in every cadence. The difference between "Jane (whom I adore)" and "Jane, whom I adore," and the difference between them both and "Jane -- whom I adore -- " marks all the distance between ecstasy and heartache. "No iron can pierce the heart with such force as a period put at just the right place," in Isaac Babel's lovely words; a comma can let us hear a voice break, or a heart. Punctuation, in fact, is a labor of love. Which brings us back, in a way, to gods.

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Sample Format Essay

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Raymond Carver: His Use of Conversation in His Stories

Raymond Carver, spinner of terse tales on the working class poor, uses a simplistic writing form which does not include great descriptive paragraphs of background, passionate speeches or grandiose endings. Classified as a minimalist by some standards, Carver uses conversation to set the mood of a story, signify defining moments in a character's life, or to allude to the eventual outcome or fate of his characters.

Choosing not to spoon feed his readers with detail, Carver uses dialogue to enable readers to feel the mood and to create character's history. Leo and Toni, the principal characters in Carver's "Are These Actual Miles?" do not directly address their marital problems in the story. Readers sense the tension between the characters by the tone used in the conversation. Early on, we learn through dialogue that Toni is being sent out to sell the couple's car due to financial difficulty. There is an easily discernible patronizing tone in the way Leo is instructing Toni on the art of negotiating, and Toni's snappish response to Leo is "You're nothing" (96), reminding him that it is his financial inadequacy causing their financial trouble. As the story progresses, tension builds as Toni does not return home, and the conversations between Toni and Leo grow thick with suspicion as Toni telephones home occasionally to make excuses for her absence. Readers feel Leo's desperation only through his reaction to Toni when she calls, and are reminded of a moment earlier in the story when Leo promises that "Things,are going to be different. We start over Monday. I mean it" (98). Through their conversation, the reader feels not only the troubled relationship, but senses a couple struggling with civility and the question of rebuilding a future together.

Another common element in Carver stories is the moment of truth -- an epiphany of sorts -- that at least one character experiences in each story. Staying true to his simple minded characters, Carver uses only a word or phrase to indicate that the character has been affected in some way. There is no brilliant soliloquy or emotional outpouring, only a simple indicator in the conversation that the character has

experienced a defining moment. As John Clute observes, "there is no condescension. No moment of epiphanic wisdom couched in terms to which his subjects could never lay claim" (62). Readers are privy to the emotions of the characters only through Carver's use of simple, spare conversation, matching the simple intellect of his characters.

"Cathedral" exemplifies this observation. A nameless narrator meets an old friend of his wife's, a blind man named Robert. The reader follows the story as the pre-conceived notions of the narrator about the blind are shattered, primarily through conversation between the two characters. One notable scene between the narrator and Robert takes place as the two share some time together at the television, where the narrator feels obligated to discuss his viewings with Robert. At one point, the narrator mentions to Robert that the camera is focusing on an Italian cathedral's paintings. Robert asks "Are those fresco paintings, bub?" to which the narrator can only respond "That's a good question. I don't know" (277). Through dialogue such as this, readers observe that the narrator is slowly realizing that his knowledge is limited as compared to the blind Robert.

In the end, the narrator is taught by Robert to experience a different kind of "vision" when he aids the blind man in drawing a cathedral with his eyes closed. The reader senses that a wisdom of sorts has overcome the narrator, but Carver uses only the simple, spoken line "It's really something" (279). In that phrase, the reader senses the emotions that the narrator is experiencing. Were it not for that line, the reader may not realize that a change has taken place as the cynical, simple minded narrator has experienced something that touches him in a unique way.

The epiphanic moment in this and other Carver stories lends itself to Brad Hooper's comment that "it's not what Carver put in a story so much as it is what he left out" (7). By not explaining the emotions of a character, Carver permits the reader to personalize a story with their own real life experiences or situations, creating what Hooper refers to as a "universal human experience" (7). Readers absorb the words spoken between characters and are permitted to interject their own perceptions or motivations into the actions of the characters.

Lastly, it is through conversation that the reader has the opportunity to draw conclusions as to the outcome of the story or fate of the characters. Mars Jones notes that "endings . . . are bound to be a

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