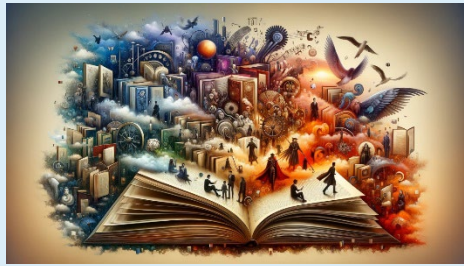


English 2: The Power of Stories

Final Paper Directions



Context: The final paper for English 2 will show your comprehensive understanding of the power of stories as we have explored this theme in various works of literature and theoretical texts. You will conduct research and use secondary sources to write a persuasive paper.

Requirements:

- 1500 words (6-8 pages double spaced, MLA style)
- 2-3 primary works of literature we have studied
- 4 scholarly journal articles
- 1 theoretical lens text
- 1 additional credible source (news article/website or another theoretical text)
- Total: 8 sources

Choose one of the prompts below:

1. **A Defense of Literature:** In Sir Philip Sidney's 16th Century "A Defense of Poetry" he claims that the purpose of poetry is to "teach and delight". Consider Sidney's defense of poetry and two other authors we have studied who advocate for the importance of reading literature. What are their arguments about the continuing importance of literature? What is the purpose of reading literature? Write a thesis-driven essay of 6-8 pages (1500 words or more) that combines a historical and contemporary defense of literature based on these authors primary works. Include four additional secondary sources found in scholarly journals on the significance of literature for human flourishing, and one or two additional news articles on contemporary debates about the significance of literature and/ or the humanities for a total of 8 or more sources. Include one multimodal element (chart/graph/image) that supports your claims.
2. **Literature and Social Justice:** How is literature used as a tool to promote social justice? Choose three of the authors we have read and compare and contrast their methods for promoting a form of social justice through literature. What particular concern or social injustice is the author exploring through literature? What rhetorical and literary techniques do the authors use to present these themes? Write a thesis-driven essay of 6-8 pages (1500 words or more) that argues for the

retorical effectiveness of using literature as a means of promoting social justice in two-three authors primary works. Include four additional secondary sources found in scholarly journals on the historical and contemporary use of literature to advocate for social justice, and one or two additional news articles on contemporary debates about contemporary authors or movements (such as Avan Jogia's work *Mixed Feelings*) for a total of 8 or more sources. Include one multimodal element (chart/graph/image) that supports your claims.

3. **Literature and Ethics:** What is the purpose of human life and how does literature help us understand our lives? In Aristotle's perspective, the purpose of human life is to achieve *eudamonia* or happiness through the practice of virtues. Virtue may sound unusual to us today but to ancient thinkers it meant the power of excellence for humans and all things. Virtues include loyalty, kindness, hopefulness and resilience among many others. Identify three central virtues in the works of two-three authors we have studied. How do the authors' present these virtues? What ends or goals do these virtues help to achieve? Consider rhetorical and literary techniques in your analysis. Write a thesis-driven essay of 6-8 pages (1500 words or more) that argues for the ethical value of learning about virtues through literature in three authors primary works. Include four additional secondary sources found in scholarly journals on the historical and contemporary understanding of virtue ethics, and one or two additional news articles on contemporary movements for ethics (such as the Templeton Foundation) for a total of 8 or more sources. Include one multimodal element (chart/graph/image) that supports your claims.

Primary source texts:

- Wang Ping, "Book War"
- Firoozeh Dumas, "Leffingwell Elementary"
- Robert Hayden, "Those Winter Sundays"
- William Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*
- Sandra Cisneros, "Recognizing Ourselves"
- Jhumpa Lahiri, "A Temporary Matter"
- James Joyce, "Araby"

- Hisaye Yamamoto, "Seventeen Syllables"

Theoretical lens texts:

- Ben Okri, *From The Mystery Feast, Thoughts on Storytelling*
- Aminatta Forna, "Selective Empathy"
- Adichie, "The Danger of a Single Story"
- Sidney, *A Defense of Poetry*
- Aristotle, from *Poetics*
- Michael Penn, "Why Constructive Resilience"