

Directions

Please read the directions below for your first major project #1.

Due dates: Super Outline/draft (9/20); final essay (10/4)



Project #1: Literary Analysis (20%)

Context: In the video, "A Tribute to Hope," psychologist Dr. Michael Penn reminds us that "The fondest hope of every human being is to reach our **potential**."

In this first unit, we have studied diverse authors who explore different ways of understanding hope and resilience in literature. In the short story, "The Book

War" by Wang Ping, the narrator (Ping herself) explores hope in education and access to reading when some stories were banned when she was a child during the Cultural Revolution in China; in the light-hearted stories of Iranian-American author Firoozeh Dumas we delighted in humor that explains how she felt both empowered and embarrassed as a seven year old immigrant to Whittier, California in the 1970s; in the poetry of Robert Hayden, we were touched by the depiction of the father - son relationship; and in two musical pieces with very different contexts, "Fresh Eyes" and "Dos Oruguitos" we studied the power of storytelling to evoke empathy.

Objectives: For this first essay you will be practicing the foundational skill of "close reading" and using a theoretical lens of either 1) historicism or 2) Narrative and ethics when writing your essay.

Prompt: For this assignment, write a 900-1000 word (3-4 page) essay using close reading skills to explore what hope means in one of the texts below and what hope means to you in light of those ideas from the text. You will need to also cite a text from the theoretical lens you choose (historicism or narrative and ethics. You are allowed and even encouraged to use the pronoun "I" (but avoid the pronoun "you") to answer the following three questions:

1) *Theme:* How is hope represented in the text? Is hope an idea? Is it an image? Is it in relation to the individual or family?

2) *Theoretical lens:*

- **For historicism:** what is the significance of hope in the cultural context of the text? How does hope help the speaker/author/narrator overcome the challenges in the particular social environment? Be specific in terms of the authors' diverse backgrounds (Chinese-American or Iranian-American, for example) and the particular challenges explored in the text (some challenges in these texts: racial or ethnic discrimination/oppression and bias, legal or governmental restrictions/oppression, immigration and language barriers among others).
- **For narrative and ethics:** how does this text (or song/lyrics) evoke empathy in its viewers? Review the presentation on "Narrative and Ethics".

3) Conclusion and image: How does /can this idea of hope help you or help others in terms of your educational journey (or another aspect of life you feel comfortable mentioning)?

- This is a multimodal assignment. Multimodal means more than one mode of communication. You will have a written portion, your essay, and a visual mode that enhances your essay. For the visual mode, include **one image** at the end or beginning of the paper that captures your feelings about the topic of “hope” as you have been exploring it in this paper. It can be embedded in the text as well like the picture I have included in the context section.

Steps to success:

1. Re-read the prompt and context
2. Choose 1 primary text from the following options as the focus of your essay:
 - "The Book War" (short story/memoir)
 - "Leffingwell Elementary" (short story/memoir)
 - "Those Winter Sundays" (poem)
 - "Fresh Eyes" (music video)
 - "Dos Oruguitos" (music video)
3. Choose 1 secondary theoretical text we studied:
 - Ben Okri (narrative and ethics)
 - Aminatta Forna (narrative and ethics)
 - Michael Penn (narrative and ethics)
 - History page on Cultural Revolution in China (historicism)
4. Read, and re-read your text; review class discussions on the text
5. Begin close reading using the guidelines from class
6. Then, explore the theoretical lens we studied thus far: **historicism or narrative and ethics**. Choose **one** to use in your analysis of the text.
7. Read this example of a student paper using a theoretical lens of new historicism (not on our class readings)
8. Follow the outline (essay map) below for your paper to be clear and organized

Grading Criteria: Successful papers will

- Engage with **one primary text** for close reading and make reference to **one additional text from the theoretical readings** to cite **2 or more** texts total.
- Integrate the text fluently and cite accordingly in MLA format
- Demonstrate comprehension and knowledge of the texts that is evidence of careful and complete reading
- Show attention to the context of the class and its purposes
- Be well-organized by a driving thesis statement and correlating topic sentences that follow the templates here

- Be clear and easy to read without major errors
- Have a good title
- Respond to the directions (below) and meets the word count
- Show **no use** of AI/Chat GPT/Grammarly in generating content or **the voice (your authentic voice is needed)**

Format: Your paper should be typed and use the following [MLA formatting rules](#)

- 1" margins all around
- Times New Roman 12-point font
- Correct heading: student's name, professor's name, class, and date
- Running header: student's last name and page number at the top right of each page
- Centered title
- Double spacing
- ½ inch indentation for the first line of each paragraph



Use this Essay Map as a Guide

(you may adjust as you develop your writing capacities!)

Introduction Paragraph:

In your introductory paragraph, introduce the theme of hope in relation to the **text** you are working on:

- *Example: Wang Ping explores the idea of hope in her short memoir "The Book War"...*

Then, provide a short summary (approximate 1 sentence) of the primary text:

- *Example: In Wang Ping's story "Book War", we see how Ping the young protagonist survives the ... through reading...*

Finally, transition into a SARI thesis (sophisticated, arguable, relevant and insightful) using the "How, What, Why" format from Dr. K's presentation

- *Example: Author uses x (literary device/how)... and y (literary device/how)... to show how (themes/what)... Her aim is to illustrate how (why/themes/big picture/...) when considered through the perspective of (theoretical lens)*

Body Paragraphs:

For each body paragraph, begin with a topic sentence that connects main ideas previewed in your thesis to your examples about that main idea.

Example topic sentences

- *Ping uses the symbolism of... to show how hope is...*
- *Ping uses hope to overcome the obstacle of...that is brought on by the Cultural Revolution in China, which was...(provide historical context from class reading-theoretical lens)*
- *Y author uses hope to overcome the obstacle of...*
- *The historical context of the story emphasizes how...*

Then, develop (explain/ analyze/describe) each example with quotations from the primary (at least 1 quotation per paragraph) and the **theoretical lens text**.

We write our paragraphs and organize by *claim, evidence, warrant* which often follows the first sentence of the paragraph which is the topic sentence:

Claim (the engaging, non-obvious, logical point you are making):

- *Dumas describes how she has an awakening through her first day of elementary school*

Evidence (the quotation or possibly scene from the text):

- *Dumas concludes that "....." (page)*

Warrant (an interpretation of the above quotations; include a paraphrase sometimes):

- *Dumas' description of the "clean bathrooms" and kind people compares two ideas... and shows how... This also reveals her humorous tone. In terms of the power of this story to.. in the words of Ben Okri.... As Aminatta Forna writes... "... Dumas story helps the readers become more empathetic to her and feel compassion (example of using the narrative and ethics lens)*

Conclusion Paragraph and image:

Finally, write a concluding paragraph (avoid the transitional expression "In conclusion,") in which you make one final unique point about your whole essay:

- *I can consider the idea of hope from Ping or (X author) to overcome my educational obstacle of....*
- *This image captures my hope of...because...*