**INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE:**

The ***Independent Study Unit*** prepares students for university writing and presentations, further develops formal research skills, and offers a forum for well-supported, independent argument.

Your Independent Study Unit will focus on two novels. One of the novels must be from a Canadian author. Use this list: <http://www.cbc.ca/books/books100.html>

Your second choice can be any author you want, but I recommend using this list: <http://bit.ly/1S7hO6L>. Note that some of the authors/novels appear on both lists.

**If you would like to choose a novel not on either list, the teacher must approve it.**

**OUTLINE OF ASSIGNMENTS:**

Once you choose your novels, consider the four assignments you will complete for this unit.

1. **Reading Report for Novel One:**

* As you read, create annotations, (stick notes help!) to track various literary elements in the novel. Use the information in Assignment One to focus your notes.
* Build personal connections between your own experiences and that of the novel

1. **Thesis Proposal & Directional Statement**

* You will outline your thesis proposal after completing both novels
* Outline the literary element(s) you wish to explore and compare/contrast
* You will conference/interview with me to ensure you’re on the right track

1. **Oral Presentation/Seminar:**

* You will deliver a 15-20 minute presentation/seminar to the class your novels
* You will provide short (~1-2 minute) summaries of each novel
* The presentation will involve a student-led seminar discussion.

1. **Each student will write a compare-and-contrast literary essay of 1000-1200 words that will**

* Be based on two novels.
* Compare and contrast elements of literature between the two novels
* Conform to MLA Standards
* **Essay should be 4-5 pages** (Note: do not rely on your word processor word count. University length calculations are based on a base of 250 words per page and do not include quotations).

**IMPORTANT DATES & INFORMATION:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **DEADLINE** | **TASK** | **MARKS** |
| **1.** | **Friday, April 1** | **Novels Chosen/Approved by teacher** |  |
| **2.** | **Friday, April 22** | **Reading Report – Novel 1** | **20%** |
| **3.** | **Friday, May 13** | **Thesis Proposal and Directional Statement: Conferencing/Interviews with Teacher** | **5%** |
| **4.** | **Week of May 30** | **Detailed Essay Outline: Conferencing/Interviews with Teacher** | **5%** |
| **5.** | **Friday, June 10** | **FINAL COPY OF ESSAY**  1200-1500 word essay (5-7 typed pages) on a specific topic | **45%** |
| **6.** | **Week of June 13** | **Oral Presentation/Seminars** | **25%** |

***\*Independent Study Unit is worth 15% of total mark***

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Carefully read the outline and information for each assignment. A rubric is provided for each of the four assignments to assist you in ensuring all steps are followed and all expectations are met.
2. Hand in rubrics with each component of the Independent Study Unit
3. Take notes as you read. These will come in handy as you conference with me.
4. Due dates, including presentation dates, cannot be rescheduled without the permission of the principal and teacher. You are also expected to attend other students’ presentation dates.
5. Please ensure any issues are communicated to me as soon as possible. Waiting until the last minute is not acceptable.

**ASSIGNMENT 1: READING REPORT – NOVEL ONE**

**The Assignment**   
Note-taking is an integral part of the study of a novel and response journals provide a way for readers to write about their reactions to something they have read. In the journal, students are asked to critically analyze literary elements and make connections to their first ISU text. Students will use post-it notes in their text to write the journal. A minimum of 3 quotations to support the journal will be required.

You will provide evidence of reading by creating a journal/graphic organizer/information piece with details from the following categories. You will be prepared to speak to any of these points for your novel.

**The Format**

* Mention the title of your ISU text early in the response Avoid redundancies in the response
* Be concise
* You may use first person, but the language must be academic
* You do not necessarily have to respond to all questions in each category. Some may be combined.
* Embed at least three quotations from the beginning, middle and end of the text
* DO NOT SUMMARIZE THE PLOT.

**Character**

* An analysis of the main character (attitude, philosophy, motivation)
* Relationship with others
* A character as a symbol or representation of an idea
* How the author develops characterization, or the revelation of character traits
* Does a character speak for the author? Reveal or represent themes?
* Does the character change as a result of the events in the text? How?
* **Personal Connection**: What does the text have to do with you personally?

**Setting**

* How is the theme developed through the use of setting(s)?
* What is the setting’s impact on character(s), their actions, attitudes, etc.?
* What is the setting’s impact on the struggles or conflicts that exist?
* Are aspects of the setting symbolic?
* Does the author use figurative language to help create the setting? Is it effective?
* Do recurring images run through the novel? Explain the purpose of each.
* **Personal Connection**: What is your overall reaction to the text in relation to setting?

**Theme**

* What is the central purpose of the story?
* Is the author making a moral statement?
* What is (s)he saying about life? How is the theme portrayed?
* Why did the author write this story? What message did (s)he want to express?
* How is the theme revealed through the other literary elements? Does the setting contribute to the theme? Does the conflict involve a greater message that applies to the human condition?
* **Personal Connection**: What is your overall reaction to the text in relation to theme?

**Mood**

* A description of mood as it appears throughout the work or within a specific section of the work
* An analysis of how the author achieved this mood (setting, dialogue, humour, irony)
* An explanation of the impact of the mood on the work’s theme or on other literary elements
* **Personal Connection:** How much does the text agree or clash with your view of the world and what you consider right and wrong?

**Conflict**

* What is the central conflict and what type of conflict is it (i.e. person vs. person)?
* What are the minor conflicts and how do they relate to the central plot?
* What events contribute to the working out of the conflict?
* Where does the climax occur? Is it effective?
* What does the resolution of the conflict reveal about the author’s main messages or themes?
* What is the incident that triggers the conflict?
* **Personal Connection**: How well does the text address things that you care about and consider important in the world?

***ASSIGNMENT ONE – READING JOURNAL - RUBRIC AND MARKS:***

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **CATEGORY** | **Insufficient (Less than 50%)** | **Limited**  **(50-59%)** | **Some**  **(60-69%)** | **Considerable**  **(70-79%)** | **Thorough**  **(80-100%)** | **Mark:** |
| Student shows knowledge of novel’s literary elements | This category was not completed to the minimum expectations | A limited knowledge of literary elements was demonstrated | Some knowledge of literary elements was demonstrated | Considerable knowledge of literary elements was demonstrated | A thorough knowledge of literary elements was demonstrated | /10 |
| Specific and clear support, reasons, and examples provided | This category was not completed to the minimum expectations | Limited support from the novel is provided | Some support from the novel is provided | Considerable support from the novel is provided | Thorough support from the novel is provided | /10 |
| Personal connections between elements and student developed | This category was not completed to the minimum expectations | Limited personal connections are developed | Some personal connections are developed | Considerable personal connections are developed | Thorough personal connections are developed | /10 |
| Assignment is edited and formatted correctly | This category was not completed to the minimum expectations | Limited editing and formatting demonstrated | Some editing and formatting demonstrated | Considerable editing and formatting demonstrated | Thorough editing and formatting demonstrated | /10 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**COMMENTS:**

**ASSIGNMENT TWO: THESIS PROPOSAL AND DIRECTIONAL STATEMENT**

**The Assignment**

You will complete information listed below and schedule a meeting with the teacher to conference your area of focus, your novel progress, and your thesis. Come prepared!

**EXPECTED FORMAT**

The following format should be followed:

Name:

Course:

Teacher:

Date:

Thesis Proposal and Directional Statement:

1. Citation of your novels. Your entries must follow MLA Style, and it *must* contain the proper punctuation, *including indentation on the second line*:

Author’s Last Name, First Name. *Title of Book*. Place of Publication: Publishing Company’s

Name, Date of Publication.

2. In ONE well-developed, formal, expository paragraph describe the literary element(s) that you are examining from the first novel. Provide detailed information about why/how this element is important.

3. Thesis Statement – explains in one to two sentences what it is you will explore and ultimately prove about your text in your 1000-1200 word literary, research essay. (You may offer two proposed theses if you are as yet undecided on one).

4. Directional Statement – list **4 to 6** key points you will utilize to prove your argument. You *must* then elaborate on how each will be employed to illustrate and support your argument.

***ASSIGNMENT TWO – THESIS PROPOSAL - RUBRIC AND MARKS:***

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **CATEGORY** | **Insufficient (Less than 50%)** | **Limited**  **(50-59%)** | **Some**  **(60-69%)** | **Considerable**  **(70-79%)** | **Thorough**  **(80-100%)** | **Mark:** |
| Knowledge of literary element(s) for essay | This category was not completed to the minimum expectations | Limited knowledge of literary element(s) provided | Some knowledge of literary element(s) provided | Considerable knowledge of literary element(s) provided | Thorough knowledge of literary element(s) provided | /10 |
| Specific and clear support, reasons, and examples provided | This category was not completed to the minimum expectations | Limited support from the novel is provided | Some support from the novel is provided | Considerable support from the novel is provided | Thorough support from the novel is provided | /10 |
| Thesis is provided and developed | This category was not completed to the minimum expectations | Limited thesis provided and developed | Some parts of thesis provided and developed | Considerable parts of thesis provided and developed | Thorough parts of thesis provided and developed | /10 |
| Evidence of essay’s directional planning provided | This category was not completed to the minimum expectations | Limited evidence of directional planning provided | Some evidence of directional planning provided | Considerable evidence of directional planning provided | Thorough evidence of directional planning provided | /10 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**COMMENTS:**

**ASSIGNMENT THREE: THE ESSAY**

Using both of your ISU novels, complete a formal comparative literary essay. This will be an analysis of significant literary elements in both texts. Your essay must follow a logical progression and use direct quotations and examples as support for your arguments. Current MLA guidelines must be followed.

* This essay must be submitted electronically to TurnItIn.com by the submission due date.
* One peer/self-edit must be completed and checked by the teacher for process marks. These edits must be kept by the student until the final essay is marked and returned, in the event the teacher needs to refer to them again.
* Length of Essay: 1000-1200 words (4-5 pages)

**How to Write a Comparative Essay**

I recommend searching for outline techniques, samples of essays, and other “how to write” guides to assist you with this step. See me if you need help!

When writing a literary comparison, you will answer the question: *So What?*

In other words, you will not only explain the similarities and differences between the two or more) literary works, but also explain the significance of your comparison. A comparison intends to inform readers of something they haven’t thought of before. Therefore, for a comparison to be illumi­nating, the things compared must either:

1. Appear different but have significant similarities;
2. Or, appear similar but have significant differences;

You must have a purpose for your comparison. The reader of the comparison should not have to ask **SO WHAT?** at the end of your essay – this should be outlined, explained, and supported by the writer.

Remember that comparison and contrast is an organizational and analytical structure that supports your ideas, but you still need a thesis in the introduction.

The introduction should contain:

1) The names the items to be compared

2) The purpose of the comparison

3) What is being compared and/or contrasted

Sample Thesis Statements:

Unacceptable — “It is important to compare the similarities and differences between the novels *The Life of Pi* and *The Great Gatsby.”*

Acceptable — “A close examination of title characters, the protagonist of Quinn’s *Ishmael*, and Pi, the protagonist of Martel’s *Life of Pi*, provide an understanding of the meaning of life and how individual persons fit into that life.

***ASSIGNMENT THREE – ESSAY – RUBRIC ONE***

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Knowledge and**  **Understanding** | **Insufficient**  **1.5 2** | **Level One**  **2.5 2.7 2.9** | **Level Two**  **3.0 3.2 3.4** | **Level Three**  **3.5 3.7 3.9** | **Level Four**  **4.2 4.4 4.7 5** |
| **Overall**  Demonstrates knowledge of  literary text with an understanding of ideas, themes, and concepts | ▪ demonstrates insufficient  knowledge of the subject/ text and ideas, themes, concepts | ▪ demonstrates limited knowledge of the subject/ text and ideas, themes, concepts | ▪ demonstrates adequate  knowledge of the subject/ text and  ideas, themes, concepts | ▪ demonstrates considerable  understanding of the subject/ text and ideas, themes, concepts | ▪ demonstrates a thorough  understanding of the subject/ text and ideas, themes, concepts |
| **Thinking** | **Insufficient**  **3 4** | **Level One**  **5.2 5.5 5.8** | **Level Two**  **6.2 6.5 6.8** | **Level Three**  **7.2 7.5 7.8** | **Level Four**  **8.4 8.9 9.5 10** |
| **Introduction**  Formulates and refines a thesis  **Body: Primary Source**  Integrates specific and  convincing evidence from the primary text to support critical analysis | ▪ thesis is inadequate and/or is not an argument  ▪ provides inadequate, inaccurate, and/or irrelevant supporting evidence from primary source | ▪ formulates a limited thesis  ▪ provides limited supporting  evidence from primary source which is frequently  vague or inappropriate | ▪ formulates a developing thesis  ▪ provides some supporting  evidence from primary source, but is occasionally  vague or inappropriate | ▪ formulates a reasonable to meaningful thesis  ▪ integrates considerable and  convincing supporting  evidence from primary source | ▪ refines an insightful thesis  ▪ integrates substantial and  compelling supporting evidence  from primary source |
| **Communication** | **Insufficient**  **1.5 2** | **Level One**  **2.5 2.7 2.9** | **Level Two**  **3.0 3.2 3.4** | **Level Three**  **3.5 3.7 3.9** | **Level Four**  **4.2 4.4 4.7 5** |
| Organizes information and ideas with clarity and focus  Uses language and style appropriate to purpose and  audience (diction, voice, sentence structure, devices)  Uses correct language structures of Standard Canadian English  and its conventions of grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation | ▪ lacks clear sense of direction  ▪ demonstrates a lack of  competence in the use of  language and style  ▪ numerous major and minor  errors interfere seriously with  expression of ideas | ▪ frequent loss of focus and  logical sequencing of ideas  ▪ language and style are  frequently ineffective and  demonstrate limited sense of  audience and purpose  ▪ errors frequently interfere with expression of ideas and/or frequently weaken impact of the essay | ▪ occasional lapse(s) in focus  and/or logical sequencing of ideas  ▪ language and style are  occasionally ineffective, but  demonstrate some sense of  audience and purpose  ▪ errors occasionally interfere  with expression of ideas  and/or weaken impact of the  essay | ▪ organization is clear, focused, and logical  ▪ language and style are  effective and demonstrate a  considerable sense of  audience and purpose  ▪ errors do not significantly  interfere with expression of  ideas or weaken impact of  the essay | ▪ organizes information and ideas with a high degree of coherence and unity  ▪ language and style are well crafted and engaging with a strong sense of audience and purpose  ▪ few errors do not interfere with  expression of ideas or weaken  impact of the essay |
| **Application** | **Insufficient**  **3 4** | **Level One**  **5.2 5.5 5.8** | **Level Two**  **6.2 6.5 6.8** | **Level Three**  **7.2 7.5 7.8** | **Level Four**  **8.4 8.9 9.5 10** |
| **Format**  Formats using template, following specific mechanics instructions given by teacher  **MLA**  Follows proper MLA format | ▪ insufficient application form/ mechanics  ▪ insufficient application of MLA form in citations and/or quotation (uses APA , for example) | ▪ limited application form/ mechanics  ▪ limited application of MLA form in citations and/or quotation (attempts to use MLA but is not alphabetical and makes frequent errors in quotations) | ▪ occasional lapse(s) in form/ mechanics  ▪ some application of MLA form in citation and/or quotation (attempts to use MLA but either is not alphabetical or makes occasional errors in quotations) | ▪ consistent application form / mechanics  ▪ considerable application of MLA form in citation and/or quotation (uses MLA and errors to do not significantly interfere with expression of ideas or weaken impact) | ▪ a thorough command of the  form/ mechanics  ▪ high degree to thorough application of MLA form in citation and/or quotation |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Expectation** | **Below Expectations** | **Level 1** | **Level 2** | **Level 3** | **Level 4** |
| **Reading and Literature Studies:**  *Reading for Meaning*  1.3 Demonstrates knowledge of literary text with an understanding of ideas, themes, and concepts  1.5 Integrates specific and compelling evidence from the text to support critical analysis  1.6 Explains, analyses, and synthesizes ideas, themes, and concepts | Insufficient knowledge of the text  Provides inadequate, inaccurate or irrelevant evidence from text  Insufficient explanations or mere plot summary | Demonstrates limited  knowledge of the text and ideas, themes, concepts  Provides limited supporting evidence which is frequently vague or inappropriate  Provides limited  explanation of ideas | Demonstrates adequate  knowledge of the text and  ideas, themes, concepts  Provides some supporting  evidence, but is occasionally vague or inappropriate  Provides explanation and  shows some analysis of  ideas | Demonstrates considerable understanding of the text  and ideas, themes, concepts  Integrates considerable and convincing supporting evidence  Shows considerable  analysis and synthesis of  ideas | Demonstrates thorough  understanding of the text  and ideas, themes, concepts  Integrates substantial and  compelling supporting  evidence  Shows thorough analysis  and skilful synthesis of  ideas |
| **Writing:**  *Using Knowledge of Form and Style*  2.1 Transfers and applies knowledge of literary essay form and text to the prompt  2.3/2.4 Uses language and style appropriate to purpose and audience (diction, voice, sentence structure, devices) | Insufficient application of essay form, subject and/or text to the prompt, or misunderstanding of the prompt, results in an ineffective essay  Demonstrates lack of competence in the use of language and style | Limited application of the essay form, subject and/or text to the prompt results in an essay that is frequently ineffective  Language and style are  frequently ineffective and demonstrate limited sense of audience and purpose | Occasional lapse(s) in essay form, subject and/or text to the prompt results in an essay that is at times ineffective  Language and style are  occasionally ineffective;  demonstrate some sense of audience and purpose | Consistent application of  essay form, subject and text to the prompt results in an effective essay  Language and style are  effective and demonstrate  a considerable sense of  audience and purpose | Thorough command of the  essay form, subject and text, and prompt results in a masterful essay  Language/style are sophisticated, well-crafted, and engaging with a strong sense of audience and purpose |
| **Writing:**  *Applying of Knowledge of Conventions*  3.1-3.4 Uses correct language structures of Standard Canadian English and its conventions of grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation  3.6-3.7 Produces published work to meet criteria identified by the teacher (specifically MLA format) | Numerous major and minor errors interfere seriously with expression of ideas and/or has fewer than 500 words  Insufficient application of MLA form in citations and/or quotations and/or works cited (uses APA, for example) | Errors frequently interfere with expression of ideas and/or frequently weaken impact of the essay  Limited application of MLA form in citations and/or quotations and/or works cited (attempts to use MLA but either is not alphabetical or makes frequent errors in quotations or forgets works cited) | Errors occasionally interfere with expression of ideas and/or weaken  impact of the essay  Some application of MLA form in citations and/or quotations and/or works cited (attempts to use MLA but either is not alphabetical or makes occasional errors in quotations or works cited) | Errors do not significantly interfere with expression of ideas or weaken impact of the essay  Considerable application of MLA form in citations and/or quotations and/or works cited (uses MLA and errors to do significantly interfere with expression of ideas or weaken) | Few errors do not interfere  with expression of ideas or  weaken impact of the essay  High degree to thorough application of MLA form in citations and/or quotations and/or works cited |

***ASSIGNMENT THREE – ESSAY – RUBRIC TWO***

***OVERALL READING LEVEL: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ OVERALL WRITING LEVEL: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ OVERALL ESSAY LEVEL: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
Comments:***

**ASSIGNMENT FOUR: THE PRESENTATION/SEMINAR**

# TOPICS

You are required to give a 15-20 minute presentation as part of your ISU. In this presentation, you may discuss:

1. Writer's style. You can analyse the writer's style and its effect on the novels or on the themes. Is the style unique to these writer, or is it representative of a group?
2. Narrative elements. Choose elements such as atmosphere, characters, or setting and show how the writers use these to develop a theme or themes.
3. Literary devices/techniques. Discuss how the writers use imagery, symbolism, contrast, or point of view to enhance the novels.
4. Theme topics/issues. Discuss social, political or global issues that may have influenced the author to write about these in the novel. Are these issues relevant and universal? How or why are they important?

* You may NOT choose a topic which you have already discussed in your Essay.

# PRESENTATION

1. Introduce your novels by giving the title and the author and a brief summary of the plot. Do not give away the ending! (**max.** 2 mins.)
2. Introduce your topic and the reason for your choice. (< 1 min.)
3. Present your analysis/information. (~8 mins.)

**You must integrate audio/visual support**. This can be in the form of handouts, overheads, PowerPoint slides, music, song, poetry, painting, poster, or otherwise… Be creative!

1. **Involve the class in some way**: do not just be a talking head! (5-10 mins.)
   1. You may create a short class discussion using a seminar topic/question
   2. You might play a game or run an activity
   3. Come up with some way to involve/engage the class
2. Take comments/questions from the audience. (2 mins.)

***ASSIGNMENT FOUR – PRESENTATION/SEMINAR - RUBRIC AND MARKS:***

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **CATEGORY** | **Insufficient (Less than 50%)** | **Limited**  **(50-59%)** | **Some**  **(60-69%)** | **Considerable**  **(70-79%)** | **Thorough**  **(80-100%)** | **Mark:** |
| Student shows knowledge of material | This category was not completed to the minimum expectations | A limited knowledge of material has been shown | Some knowledge of material has been shown | Considerable knowledge of material has been shown | Thorough knowledge of material has been shown | /10 |
| Presentation is organized, including clear preparation | This category was not completed to the minimum expectations | Limited organization and/or preparation is evident | Some organization and/or preparation is evident | Considerable organization and/or preparation is evident | Thorough organization and/or preparation is evident | /10 |
| Audio/Visual elements are included to support presentation | This category was not completed to the minimum expectations | Limited audio/visual elements are included for support | Some audio/visual elements are included for support | Considerable audio/visual elements are included for support | Thorough audio/visual elements are included for support | /10 |
| Presentation effectively engages audience | This category was not completed to the minimum expectations | The presentation had limited audience engagement | The presentation had some audience engagement | The presentation had considerable audience engagement | The presentation had thorough audience engagement | /10 |

**COMMENTS:**