

## SEMESTER PROJECT

British Literature is a huge topic, far too broad in scope to cover in a semester. To both supplement and deepen our coverage of the topic, all students will complete a semester-long project. The project will be personal in that each student will choose the material that she/he wants to cover. It will be significant in that it will include the study of specific works of literature, as well as research on the context in which those works occurred.

## REQUIREMENTS

## i) SELECT A CONTENT AREA

Choose a literary area that interests you. This can be a traditional, chronological period (Medieval, Elizabethan, 19<sup>th</sup> century, the 60s), a literary movement (romanticism, ), a genre (romantic poetry, satire, nineteenth century novel), a theme (war poetry, heroic literature, Arthurian literature), an author (Shakespeare, Alexander Pope, Mary Shelley, George Eliot), or a category of your own devising.

## ii) CHOOSE THE CONTENT

Within the area of your choosing, please select several works for study. These works should fall into the following categories:

1. At least **one major work** of fiction or poetry of novel length<sup>1</sup>. Some major works, a play or long poem for example, will not be of sufficient length. In this case, you may choose an additional work(s) to meet this requirement. (If you are interested in working with a body of poetry, see me.)
2. At least **three short works** of fiction or poetry (5-20 pages in length).
3. At least **one book-length work of non-fiction**. Depending on your content area, this may be a primary source (part of the content) or secondary source (about your content).
4. At least **three short secondary works** on your topic (5-20 pages). Internet sources *may* be acceptable; print them out and bring them to me for verification. Option: you may substitute a meaningful field trip (to a museum, to a play, to interview a professor, etc.), an interview, or a documentary to fulfill one or two parts of this requirement.

## iii) RESEARCH YOUR CONTENT AREA

You should spend some time (a month?) getting to know some of the key issues surrounding your topic. You may find yourself satisfying requirements 3 & 4 above at this stage.

Keep notes about what you uncover in a **Project Journal**, which will be assessed as part of your overall grade. This should be a notebook devoted strictly for this purpose, and separate from your class notes. I will collect these roughly every two-to-three weeks on Wednesdays (to return to you on Fridays).

You will also complete several written reports (online, handwritten, or typed) on your progress, to be presented given to me during during one-on-one conferences. There will be a minimum of three of these, although individually we may decide to have additional meetings.

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<sup>1</sup> Yes, this is subjective; if you're not certain what constitutes "novel length," please ask.

## iv) STUDY YOUR CONTENT

Read the works of fiction that you have selected. Your reading, however, should be considered study. You may find yourself refining your research thesis, for example; or you may discover some new insights you had not thought of (or read of) before.

Your project journal should show extended reflections on topics that catch your attention.

## v) REPORT ON YOUR STUDY

*Writing:* Your study will result in two pieces of writing. One will be a 5-10 page **report** on the results of your research. The second will be a **thesis**, a 10-15 page documented essay in which you explain your conclusion (s) resulting from your research and study. In other words, it's more than just an essay of literary analysis: it combines your knowledge of your topic and the literature you've studied to reach an intelligent and insightful conclusion. \*

*Presentation:* Finally, you will create a presentation for the class. Your presentation must include a summary of your study, which you will present orally. Consider this teaching, as you will be sharing your learning with the class. Your presentation will include some other medium/media than writing & speaking (e.g. visuals, such as Powerpoint, posters, models, sketches/paintings, etc; music; video; etc. — the traditional “project”).

The presentations will be done in a “round-robin” format, with 5-8 students presenting at the same time with the rests of the class circulating around the room. This is informal, so you need not prepare a speech, though speaking notes might help.

## vi) GRADING

You will receive five grades for your project:

- I will grade both papers independently (100 points each).
- You will receive “process” grades on the quality and depth of your progress (from your Journal, reports, and our conferences). (35 points each)
- You will receive a grade for the thoroughness of your presentation. (100 points)
- Finally, all three of these separate grades will be quantified into a final “project” grade. (300 points)

## vii) SUMMARY:

- Choose a topic.
- Plan your research & study, keep a Project Journal on your progress, and report on it in writing and conferences.
- Research that topic. Write a paper on your findings. \*
- Choose & read works of literature related to your topic. Write a thesis in which you explain your conclusion(s) about your topic, based on your research & study. \*
- Report on your work the class.

\* *The order in which the papers are completed is up to you.*

## viii) CALENDAR

Following are planned due dates:

Feb. 15	Topic Due
Feb. 25-March 7:	Conference #1
March 7:	Working Thesis Due
March 12:	Journal Check
April 2:	Journal Check
April 7-18:	Conference #2
April 28:	First Paper (either Report of Thesis) Due
May 7:	Journal Check
May 12-23:	Conference #3
May 27:	Senior Presentations
May 30:	Final (Seniors)
June 9-13:	Junior Presentations
June 16:	Second Paper (either Thesis or Report) Due
June 19:	Final (Juniors)