

## Appreciation Paper

**Purpose.** The purpose of this assignment is to practice and refine appreciation skills. As noted on the syllabus, "appreciation" in this course means the ability to explain to someone else a poem's significance and value.

**Basic Assignment.** Select a poem from *The Norton Anthology of Poetry*. It can be any poem in *The Norton Anthology of Poetry* **except** for the following: the poem you used for the explication paper, the poem you used for the paper on form, the poem you discussed in the essay part of the midterm, or the poem you'll be using for your poetry presentation. It may be a poem we've discussed in class or some other poem in the volume.



Emily Dickinson

Imagine that a friend has also read this poem, and that she or he dislikes it. Imagine too the reasons why your friend does not appreciate the poem or recognize its worth or even its meaning. The last time you talked he or she simply just dismissed the poem. Now, in a calm and reflective mood, you would like to explain to your friend what he or she might have missed or overlooked.

Write a four to six page letter to this friend. State your reasons for thinking the poem interesting, significant, or valuable; and then explain to this friend the importance you find in the poem.

Make your reasons clear; make your explanation convincing by providing evidence (quotations from the poem itself) to support your ideas; and create interest and enthusiasm for the text by discussing it in a specific and detailed manner.

**Proposals.** I will need a proposal from everyone sometime before **November 16th**. I can accept three different kinds of proposals: (1) a conference with me (I will send around a sign-up sheet the week of November 7th); (2) a typed one-paragraph proposal that indicates the text you've selected and gives a preliminary indication of what you would like to do with the topic; or (3) a one-paragraph email that indicates the text you've selected and gives a preliminary indication of what you would like to do with the topic.

**What-I'm-Really-Looking-For.** When I read these letters, my major focus will be on how well you've explained the importance and meaning that you see in the poem's worth. In deciding how good the explanation is, I look for the following: papers that directly address the question of the poem's significance and value; papers that make specific and direct references to the text under consideration; and papers that are organized clearly enough so that anyone in the class could read your letter to your friend and follow what was going on. Make sure that your main points are clear and that you explain your ideas clearly by using direct quotations to the texts that you're writing about. You'll also want the letter to proofread and edited.

**Technical Information.** Type and double-space your paper. Put your name, the course name/number, the assignment name/number, and the date in the upper left hand corner of your paper. When quoting poetry, reproduce the lines exactly as the poet arranged them. Indicate the end of the printed line of poetry with a spaced slash [ / ]. For example: "There she stands / As if alive" (lines 46-47). When quoting more than two or three lines, set off the quotation by indentation; quotation marks are not necessary in block quotations. For example:

The Soul selects her own Society--

Then--shuts the Door--

To her divine Majority--

(lines 1-3)

As in the example above, use line numbers to indicate from where in the poem you've taken the quotation. For this assignment, there is no need to cite page numbers or the anthology title. I will simply assume that you are using the poem as printed in *The Norton Anthology of Poetry*, 5th edition.

This assignment requires neither research at the library nor consultation of any poetry criticism. Nevertheless, if you do use the ideas or interpretations or insights of another reader or critic in your paper, make certain you acknowledge precisely where you got those ideas or interpretations or insights. Use the format outlined by the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 6th edition, by Joseph Gibaldi. You can find this book at the K-State Union or the library; the library also provides a single sheet handout that explains the MLA format for citation of work by others.



**Langston Hughes**

**Let's Talk.** If you have questions or concerns about your paper or you just want someone to bounce some ideas off of, please drop by the office to talk with me. I enjoy talking with students about their work, so please don't hesitate to drop by. I'll be in my office during my office hours (Monday and Friday 10:30-11:20, Thursdays 9:00-10:30). If those times don't fit with your schedule, I would be happy to set up some other time to meet with you.

**Length.** Four to six typed, double-spaced pages.

**Due Date.** Wednesday, November 30th.