

Senior Final 2012 – Prepare to write on ALL of the following essays. On final exam day, I will select two of the questions for the class to write on. At that time, you will then select ONE of the TWO questions and write an in-class essay that thoroughly answers the question.

READ THIS!!!!!! You may NOT use any notes or note cards for the final exam.

Question #1:

Trace the development of the hero in literature. Over the course of this year, we have examined many types of heroes:

- The Existential Hero and Absurd Heroes of *Brave New World* and *The Truman Show*
 - The epic hero, also considered the archetypal hero of the *Odyssey*.
 - The tragic hero of drama, from the classical hero outlined by Aristotle in *Antigone* to Shakespeare's *Macbeth*.
 - Finally, we look at the modern hero and/or anti-hero of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*.
- a) Your essay should identify ALL of the characteristics of each of these hero types and how they apply to the works above. Be very specific. Use the handouts you have received over the course of the year to help you prepare. You may NOT use the handouts the day of the test.
- b) Also, discuss how your understanding of "hero" has evolved from this study of literature.

Question #2:

We have studied one epic and two tragedies. Choose ONE of the following and discuss the evolution of one of the genres over time and cultures.

- A. The Epic: Using the *Odyssey*, do the following:
- Identify the key traits of an epic and discuss how these traits are present in the *Odyssey*.
 - Discuss how the epic reveal attitudes, beliefs, traditions, and value systems of the Greek culture from which it originates.
 - Include in your answer Joseph Campbell's influence in our understanding of the classical hero.
 - Briefly discuss how the epic has influenced modern pop culture and media as well.
- B. The Tragedy: Using both *Antigone* and *Macbeth*, do the following:
- Identify the key traits of a tragedy as defined by Aristotle and discuss how these traits are present in EACH of the tragedies.
 - Discuss how the genre of tragedy remained the same and how it changed from Sophocles' day to Shakespeare's. Which traits are still present? Which are gone? Which have evolved?
 - Discuss briefly whether or not the tragic hero is still a viable heroic force in modern culture. [Hint: For ideas on this view the essay "Tragedy & the Common Man" on the Cuckoo's Nest subpage of Mrs. Jones' website.]

Question #3:

Over the course of the year, we have studied how authors will often provide hidden clues and meanings in their works through the use of archetypal motifs and symbolism. These were certainly present in *Brave New World*, *Macbeth*, and *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. Discuss the role of motifs and symbols in ONE of the following two ways:

- A. Select THREE of the above works and discuss the role of **text specific** motifs and symbols in each work as they develop the central theme of that specific work. **OR:**
- B. Select ONE of the above works and discuss in depth and with great detail the **full use of text specific** motifs and symbols as they develop through the work. Be sure to discuss the purpose and significance of the motifs as they relate to the work as a whole.

Question #4:

We began and ended the semester with a discussion on satire. Explain the satire of **EITHER** *The Truman Show* and/or *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* by identifying and explaining the following:

- The issue(s), institution(s), and person(s) being satirized
- The author's/director's satiric purpose regarding each of the satiric targets. What is the message or themes being addressed? Why? What message does the director/author wish the audience to take away?
- Identify the satiric techniques used (lots) with specific explanations and examples.

Question #5:

Late in the semester we discussed three critical approaches a reader can take to literature. Each of these approaches could be applied separately or together to any of the works of literature we have read this year. Using a literary work of your choice that we have studied, discuss the work from each of the following perspectives: a) psychoanalytical b) cultural/historical c) New Criticism (text-based analysis of language to reveal author's purpose—imagery, motifs, symbolism, etc.) [Note: Rereading the details of these approaches in the essay "Understanding the Machine" on the Cuckoo's Nest subpage on Mrs. Jones' website may prove helpful in preparing to answer this question.]

Question #6:

Archetypes in Literature: Over the course of the year we have discussed the symbolic role of archetypes in literature. Carl Jung said, "All literature is imbued with the same mythic world order, with the same cultural patterns that reveal and shape man's psychic and social life." The basic contention of archetypal criticism is that literary expression is an unconscious product of the collective experience of the entire human species. As such, literature is integrally related with man's cultural past. From this experience archetypes emerge. Look at the list of archetypes below. The number of archetypes is as unlimited as the variety of man's experiences. Their appearance, however, can be grouped in three major categories—characters, situations, and symbols.

Using the partial list of archetypes below and drawing from the literature we have read this year, prepare to write an essay that analyzes and discusses the role of any **ONE Category** (either characters OR situations) of the following archetypes in literature, using all the works we have studied over the course of the year.

1. Archetypal characters

- A. The Hero – the protagonist whose adventures and/or circumstances drive the literary work.
- B. The Scapegoat: An animal or more usually a human whose death in a public ceremony expiates (wipes out or cleanses) some taint or sin that has been visited upon a community.
- C. The Outcast: A figure who is banished from a social group for some crime against his fellow man.
- D. The Woman Figure:
 - The Earthmother: The woman symbolic of fruition, abundance, fertility. This character traditionally offers spiritual and emotional nourishment to those she comes into contact with.
 - The Temptress: Characterized by sensuous beauty. This woman is one to whom the protagonist is physically attracted and who ultimately brings about his downfall.
 - The Faithful Wife: A woman who supports her husband in all he does regardless of any conflicts or temptations to stray from her vows.

2. Situations:

- A. The Task: To save the kingdom, to win the fair lady, to identify himself so that he may resume his rightful position.
- B. The Initiation: This usually takes the form of an initiation into life, that is, the depiction of an adolescent coming into maturity and adulthood with all the attendant problems that this process involves.
- C. The Journey: Usually combined with any or all of the above (A-C). The journey sends the hero in search of information or some intellectual truth. This may also include a descent into Hell. Another way this is used is the depiction of a limited number of people who are isolated some way or another from others and are used as microcosm of society.
- D. The Fall: The descent from a higher to a lower state of being.