

Assignment: Short Story Essay

ENC 1102

Length: 700-1000 words

Format: Research Paper—2 quotes from primary text and references from at least two secondary sources. At least one must be from Library Databases. The other can be from print, internet, or other sources. Be sure to review the guidelines for literary writing in the essay topics folder. MLA Documentation

Topic questions/statements:

1. Explain the symbolism of setting, objects, characters, actions in the story “Hills like White Elephants.”
2. Discuss the way Hemingway communicates moods and tones through the dialogue in “Hills.” How does this technique emphasize the conflict or communicate the resolution of the conflict? How does this illustrate other male and female conflicts seen in other short stories?
3. Discuss the elements of ritual, tradition, and scapegoating in “The Lottery.”
4. Is Sammy in “A&P” a reliable or an unreliable narrator? How does what we learn about his character communicate a theme of the story? Does Sammy take a moral stance in “A&P” or is he simply showing off? You may discuss various elements of the story such as Sammy’s discussions about the girls, the various characters reactions to them, the girls motives behind coming into the store dressed as they were, Sammy’s actions after the girls leave the store.
6. How does the story “Bride Comes to Yellow Sky” employ a balance of “stereotyped” elements of the old western stories (we may know them more from movies) and new often ironic elements? How do these elements support the theme of the end of the Old Western Frontier era?
7. What does the story “The Chrysanthemums” communicate about human desires bred from isolation, about the cultural limitations placed on women from custom and mere isolation during the early 20th century, about the limitation of the creative spirit forced on us by the demands of the everyday world? You can later compare her to Ophelia in *Hamlet*.
8. What do the stories “The Story of an Hour” and “The Storm” communicate about Kate Chopin’s views of the status of women in the 19th century? Are these the typical views you have witnessed concerning women in that time frame? How do they compare to feminine themes in other short stories we’ve read, or in *Hamlet*?
9. Compare the Gothic Horror styles and strategies used in Faulkner’s “A Rose for Emily” to those in one or more of Poe’s stories. Revenge themes can be compared to those in *Hamlet*.
10. Discuss the Hemingway Code and / or masculine and feminine themes in “Macomber.” May be expanded by discussing this in “Hills.”
11. Discuss male/female relationships in both of the Hemingway stories.

In this essay, as in any essay, you communicate your exact focus in your thesis statement, so these topics can be viewed as a starting point rather than a series of complete questions that you must address in your essay. You may not write on a story not on our syllabus. You may ask permission from me to write on a different topic from the ones given.