

Paper 1

Content: Write a 5-page paper (plus a works cited page) on one or more work(s) on the syllabus up to the midterm. See **Structure** below. This assignment is not a research paper but seeks to test *your* close-reading and interpreting skills; therefore, you should avoid secondary criticism. You may use handbooks to literature, dictionaries, the Bible, mythology, history, philosophy, literary theories, etc.

Suggestions for Topics

1. Discuss one of the smaller pieces of literature or a section of a larger piece in detail.
2. Do a thematic or structural reading of one of the *Lais* of Marie de France.
3. Compare a small aspect of two works to each other, such as the figure of the steward, magical animals, ships, for instance.
4. Explore the notion of the *Bildungsroman* (coming of age story) in one of the chivalric works.
5. Pick a modern critical approach and exemplify it on a work of your choice. You could also write an essay demonstrating how a particular approach would not work with a given text.
6. A topic of your choice cleared with me first.

Format: Please follow the guidelines outlined in the *Guide to Style* (link on class website) containing the format guidelines of the *MLA*. Double-space the paper, identify the text passage you are working from, and supply a works cited of all materials used or consulted. Review documentation procedures and follow the distinctions outlined for poetry as well as shorter and longer quotations. Failure to provide the correct format will result in lower grades. An explanation of grade rubrics can be found on my website under Engl. 450/550. I have added an example of paper to the Sample Paper file on the class website. You can access the file with your UNM netid and password.

Structure: I would like to reiterate that you are writing a **formal** paper, both in content and in style. Thus, your paper needs an introduction providing a context and a precisely phrased thesis at the end of the first paragraph (see especially #2-3 in *Guide to Style*; online at <http://www.unm.edu/~aobermei/Guide/indexGuide.html>). I encourage you to edit, revise, and proofread your papers, striving for coherence, grammatical correctness, and good transitions. First drafts rarely hold up to critical scrutiny. I am available in office hours or via email to discuss ideas, outlines, and drafts of your paper with you before it is due.

Note: The following sections in the *Guide to Style* might be especially helpful for this assignment: 1-10, 28-30, 32, 42-50, 53-62, 72-76, 81-83.

Due Date: Thursday, 10.21.2010.