

Paper 2

Content: Write an 8-10-page paper (plus a works cited) on one or more work(s) on the syllabus (or additional works by the same authors). You may expand on your Paper 1. See **Structure** below.

Suggestions for Topics

1. Apply a modern critical approach to one or more of our Middle English texts.
2. The importance of the word (the oath, the “trouthe”) in medieval literature. Select specific works.
3. The hero/ine in ME literature, particularly in romance. Select specific works.
4. Narrative technique or narrative structures in medieval writing (possibly compare ME texts with modern narrative techniques).
5. The role of women in medieval literature. Examine the courtly lady in romance or the female saint.
6. Discuss the use of dreams in ME literature.
7. Discuss the theme of the fall of Arthur’s kingdom. Who or what was really responsible for the fall? Or compare Malory’s treatment with another medieval Arthurian work, such as the alliterative *Morte Arthure*, the stanzaic *Le Morte Arthur*, the *Mort Artu*, Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *History of the Kings of Britain*, or Harding’s *Chronicle*.
8. Examine the method by which the mystery plays dramatize the “sacred narrative.” You will need to discuss a number of mystery plays here. Or contrast medieval dramatic techniques with modern.
9. Compare a particular episode (*Noah’s Flood*; *The Shepherds’ Play*; *The Crucifixion*) in more than one cycle. You will need to consult other texts for the comparison.
10. The place, or function, of the marvelous or the supernatural in medieval literature. Why is it there? Would the work be a different work if there were no marvels? Select specific works, and find a focus.

11. A topic of your choice cleared with me first.

Format: I will **NOT ACCEPT** papers that do not follow the guidelines outlined in the online *Guide to Style* containing the format guidelines of the *MLA*, plus instructions on writing papers, sample introductory paragraphs with developed theses, frequent errors in critical writing, and a list of tools for the literature student. Review documentation procedures and follow the distinctions outlined for shorter and longer prose and poetry quotations. Persistent errors in format will result in lower grades.

Sources: You should draw on a **minimum of 5 scholarly sources** to support your thesis; this means you might actually have to look at 10 to find 5 useful ones. Only one of those sources should be an online source, such as a respectable website. In case of doubt, run the source by me first. Full-text databases are NOT considered online sources, as they usually only make regular scholarly journal articles available online. You should consult scholarly books and journals. Start with the *International MLA Bibliography* (NOT the Index of Periodicals) in and/or the *International Medieval Bibliography* in the UNM database system. Links to those and others are on the class webpage. After you identify potential books and articles in these databases, you need to check if they might be available through one of the online full-text resources or in the stacks in the form of essay collections. If not, you can order them through Interlibrary Loan (ILL): <http://illiad.unm.edu/illiad/logon.html>. Articles come through in a few days as pdf files, but you clearly must plan ahead. You should also search **Libros** for books on your topic, and you might try **WorldCat** in the database section. It lists all books published, while Libros only contains what UNM has.

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*). 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.** Sample papers for this assignment can be accessed on the class webpage with a UNM netid and password.

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**. Also see **102-7** for proper usage of quotations and paraphrases.

Due Date: Email proposal by **11.23.2010**. Final version due Tuesday, **12.7.2010**.