

Paper 2

Content:

Undergraduates: Write an 8-10-page paper (plus a works cited) on one or more work(s) on the syllabus. See **Structure** below. You may use secondary sources for this paper. A good place to start is the online *MLA Bibliography* available in Libros under Research Databases. See also the hardcopy Reserve files and other Libros holdings.

Graduates: Write a 15-page research paper (plus works cited) on one or more work(s) on the syllabus (or additional works by the same authors) plus provide an annotated list of works cited containing ten secondary source entries **OR** do a review of a book (2-3 pages). A good place to start is the online *MLA Bibliography* available in Libros under Research Databases.

Definition: An **annotated list of works cited** is a list containing bibliographical entries in their usual form. Additionally, each entry is accompanied by a descriptive or an evaluative summary paragraph of the secondary source. Scholarly annotations are a valuable tool for researchers and annotated bibliographies keep being produced for all kinds of topics.

Format: Entries could be alphabetized or arranged by year. They should always follow MLA format and they have to be singlespaced. You should provide annotations of 1/3 to 1/2 of a page for ten sources you used in your paper. See my website under Engl. 451/551 for a sample annotated works cited. If you are doing a review, I have samples as well.

Suggestions for Topics

1. 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.
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*, or Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *History of the Kings of Britain*

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. A topic of your choice cleared with me first.

Format: Please follow the guidelines outlined in the *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 poetry as well as shorter and longer quotations. Failure to provide the correct format will result in lower grades. Sample English literature papers are also available on my website. Email me for the 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*). 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**. Also see **102-7** for proper usage of quotations and paraphrases.

Due Dates: Email proposal due 4.26.2007; final version due 5.3.2007.