

CLOSE READING OF A TEXT

Due Date

COMPOSITION 1



Your first composition this semester will have two parts. The first part will be a close reading (or explication) of a passage from one of the texts we've studied together. In a close reading, the writer examines as many elements of literature as possible to determine how they work to create the meaning of the text (for example, symbolism, metaphor, rhyme, meter, imagery, voice, point of view, tone, diction, repetition, etc.). Because a close reading deals with so many elements, it normally covers a much shorter piece of literature. While an analysis may discuss an entire story, novel or play, close reading is usually limited to a short poem, song lyric, or brief excerpt from a longer prose work.

In keeping with our course theme, you will select a poem or prose passage (up to 3 pages long) that you feel exemplifies *the strange* in the text. What is strange in this passage? How does the writer use diction, syntax, grammar, description, organization, and other strategies to create the effect of strangeness? How does that strangeness function within the text? Your explication should engage these questions in some way. As we have been focusing our readings and discussions on strange places, you may want to find a passage that deals specifically with place (this is encouraged, but not required; you are free to choose whatever passage you like with no consequence to your grade). You should write this paper for a scholarly audience of your peers, and it should be approximately 1,000 words.

For the second part of this composition, you will create a playlist of approximately 3-5 tracks that represent the selection you use for your close reading. For example, if you choose a passage that focuses on place, your playlist will represent the place. The tracks you select can be any genre of music. For each track, you will write a brief explanation (up to 250 words) of why it represents your passage. The explanation should connect elements from the song with features of the text, using specific details you examined in your close reading to support your explanation. The format for this part will be a blog post, and your audience is your peers.

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Process

- choose a poem or passage (due date)
 - blog post identifying the literary elements at work (due date)
 - blog post making a tentative claim (due date)
 - develop a composition plan (due date)
 - draft your essay (due date)
 - revise your essay (due date)
 - blog post of music and explanations (due date)
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Basic Features

- claim or controlling idea that advances an argument about the meaning of the text
 - examination of literary elements in support of your claim
 - quotes and specific detail from the text as evidence
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Learning Objectives

You will develop critical thinking and reading skills, which are necessary for close reading. You will depend on rhetorical knowledge as you develop an argument about your passage. You will be required to go through a process of planning, composing, and revising to produce this composition. You will identify genre conventions and make choices about how best to persuade your audience. You will gain experience composing, sharing, and presenting your work using digital tools and media. With the playlist assignment, you will create a multimodal critical engagement with the text and develop dynamic connections between the written text and other media.

Grading

Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Does the student take satisfactory steps to plan, create, and revise this composition?
Rhetorical Choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Does the student demonstrate a sophisticated awareness of audience?- Does the student develop her or his ethos appropriately?- Is the composition organized and arranged effectively?- Has the student made an effective argument?- Does the student demonstrate an understanding of the genre and conventions?
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Is the text in this composition stylistically interesting and sophisticated?- Does the writer transition smoothly between ideas and paragraphs?- Does the format of the text adhere to conventions of the genre and medium?- Is the writing free of grammar and spelling errors?- Are quotes used effectively and correctly?- Does the writer grab readers' attention in the beginning?- Does the writer effectively conclude the text?
Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Is the design of this composition appropriate to the content and genre conventions?- Does the visual rhetoric of the design support the rhetoric of the written text?
Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Does the student offer a clear claim about the meaning of the selected poem or passage in relation to <i>the strange</i>?- Does the student offer sufficient evidence from the text (details and quotes) to support the claim?- Does the student make an argument explaining how the the evidence offered supports the claim?- Are all ideas fully developed?
Basic Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Did the student choose a poem or passage to explicate that deals with <i>the strange</i> in some way?- Did the student compose a close-reading essay of approximately 1,000 words?- Did the student include a Works Cited page for the source(s)?-

Play List

- Did the student select 3-5 music tracks that relate to the poem or passage?
- Does the student offer an explanation (up to 250 words) for each track?
- Do the explanations connect elements of the song to elements from the passage using specific quotes and details examined in the essay?
- Are the explanations clear, concise, insightful, and well-written?
- Did the student publish the playlist and explanations to her or his blog?