

Essay #1: Write an essay that is a minimum of 4 to 6 pages in length in response to any prompt below. This essay is due in class on Tuesday, March 6. It is worth 30% of your final grade.

1. Hardcopies only will be accepted.
2. Identify the poems, manifestos, or prose works discussed on a cover sheet; if you draw on primary texts beyond our course materials (you must receive my prior approval to do so), append a copy of these texts to your essay.
3. The length requirement – a minimum of 4 pages of your original writing– will be strictly enforced; block quotations do not count toward the page-length requirement.
4. Follow MLA Style for setting and integrating prose and verse quotations as well as for including properly set parenthetical citations following quotations. Your paper must have a Works Cited list if it uses any text beyond our assigned ones.
5. With my prior consent, you are free to turn one of your discussion questions or your presentation topic into this essay.
6. You may engage any writer we have read to date; that said, your paper must analyze poems. (You cannot simply write on Henry James and Charlotte Perkins Gilman, our two short-story writers, although you can discuss either or both in relation to poets.)
7. **You must see me in my office hours by 2/28 firm for any option requiring consent or to propose any other divergence from any of these requirements.**
8. **If you plagiarize any part of this essay, you will fail this assignment and the course.**

Essay Assignment:

Choose any two texts assigned to date (note: they may be by the same author), and write an essay or a lesson plan that shows how they illuminate each other; A successful essay will use textual evidence to support a specific critical argument. A successful lesson plan will also work toward substantiating a specific argumentative thesis about the texts. If you opt to write a lesson plan, you must also write a 2-3 page explanatory paper that explains your methodology and reasons; if you have not taken class with me before, see me in office hours by 2/28.

You have considerable latitude in choosing texts; the only requirement is that they involve a discussion of poetry (so two prose works are not permitted unless they are brought to bear on verse). Here are some possibilities meant to inspire your choices, not to shut down options:

1. Elaborate on whether the Imagists accomplished their principles via close readings of one to three Imagist poems; you might discuss Imagism relative to Cubism or Futurism, too.
2. Compare a Frost poem to a poem by a High Modernist, such as Pound, H.D. or Eliot (e.g., “Neither Out Far Nor In Deep” and “Sea Garden”: both are about things located at boundaries of experience). The analysis can be a springboard for discussing in what ways, if at all, Frost is or is not a modernist. Similarly, you could compare poems by Amy Lowell with poems by Ezra Pound or H. D. and evaluate whether Lowell’s verse is on par with the other Imagists’ or not.
3. Evaluate modernist poets’ reliance on impersonality by discussing any of the following: the notion of a mask or persona; double consciousness; the objective correlative; or poetry as a machine made of words. Does this strategy differ for poets depending on their gender and/or race?
4. Compare a Cubist artwork with a poem (Stein would be a good choice) and discuss the compositional strategies of both artworks.
5. Prove whether or not Eliot deserves the mantle of most significant modernist poet.