

engl 245/cwl 267 first essay: summary/response

description

This essay assignment is designed to help you learn to locate and respond to academic discourse pertaining to our course texts. Using University library resources, you will choose a **scholarly, peer-reviewed journal article or book chapter** that pertains to “Hills Like White Elephants,” “Story of an Hour,” “Sonny’s Blues,” or “Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been.” Your essay will clearly and concisely summarize the article and then respond critically to its thesis, using specific examples from both the article and the text to support your point of view.

Note: “responding critically” doesn’t necessarily mean “criticize”; you aren’t stating whether the article is good or bad so much as considering how the ideas the article presents impact your reading of the course text. Instead of “I agree with Author that . . .,” your sentences should read more like, “Author points out that . . . ; I argue that her argument is further supported by. . . .”

You are advised to annotate the article thoroughly, taking notes and highlighting key points of the article. You should be able to identify the author’s argument (or, “thesis”) and any evidence from the text (or other scholars) that he/she uses to support that thesis. Ultimately, however, the goal of this paper is for you to produce a thoughtful discussion of one of our course texts.

This paper will be about 1000 words (3-4 pages).

content

Your **introduction** will be two-fold; it will 1) summarize the article or book chapter you’re working with, and 2) state where your own reading converges/diverges with it, naming the article, author, and the text the article is about. Briefly characterize what kind of article it is. To do so, consider things like: does it take a theoretical or historical approach? Does it discuss the short story alone or does it pair the short story with other works? Is there a specific aspect of the text the article focuses on, like a character, or a moment, or an image? Then, summarize the author’s main argument and supporting arguments and evidence. Assume that your reader has not read the article. Don’t quote the article to do this—you need to put the article’s thesis in your own words.

Next, you should give a general impression of your perception of the author’s argument. Where have you found value in the article, and what facets of the argument do you wish to add to, or even outright reject? Again, no direct quotes just yet— this is the place for general characterizations, not specific evidence. This should lead to a clear thesis that makes an observation about your text, using the secondary article as a launch-point for your argument. This section of your paper should be about 250 words.

Your **body paragraphs** will each begin with a smaller claim that supports your thesis about the story in response to your secondary article. Each paragraph should make an original statement or observation about your text(s), provide evidence to support the plausibility of that observation (from the article or text), and identify what the implications of that observation are for the larger point you’re making about the article. (Hint: though it is not specifically required of you, the SEXI format can be a mnemonic tool for constructing your body paragraphs.)

Your **conclusion** should *not* simply restate everything you have already said in your paper. Instead, this is the place to reflect on how your paper contributes to the academic conversation that your article author started, and the place to envision other directions that conversation might take. What's useful or important about understanding the text in this particular way?

format

Please follow MLA guidelines for citation and formatting, including your paper's heading (see below). Links to the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) are posted on the course website. Your paper should be typed, double-spaced in Times New Roman or Calibri font, one-inch margins all around, MLA-style headings (no cover page). Your Works Cited page will need to include full citations for both of your texts, and you will need to include in-text citations in the body of your paper as well.

	Lastname 1
Firstname Lastname	
Ms. E. Vigiletti	
English 245	
3 May 2015	
	Descriptive Title

This essay is due on the Tuesday, September 22, as a hard copy in class. It is worth 50 points, 10% of your overall course grade.