ENGL3651 RE-WRITING WOMEN

Course Co-ordinator: Dr Caroline Webb
Room: H.O. 1.21
Ph: (02) 4348 4061
Fax: (02) 4348 4075
Email: Caroline.Webb@newcastle.edu.au
Consultation hours: Wednesday 2-4 (EXCEPT weeks 4, 5: Monday 10.15-12.15)

Semester: Semester 2, 2006
Unit Weighting: 20
Teaching Methods: Seminar

Brief Course Description
Examines work by women writers since approximately 1900, focusing primarily on narratives of female identity by English and Australian writers. It considers in particular the attempts by modern and contemporary women writers to situate their characters—in some cases themselves—in relation to traditional female roles in western (or western-influenced) cultures. We shall consider the ways in which women's stories and fiction draw on existing narratives of the female life to revise those narratives, and also examine the process of such reflection in poetry, essay, or biography.

Contact Hours
Seminar for 4 hours per Week for the Full Term

Learning Materials/Texts
Charlotte Brontë, Jane Eyre (Penguin)
Miles Franklin, My Brilliant Career and My Career Goes Bung (Harper)
Virginia Woolf, A Room of One’s Own (any text, e.g. in A Room of One’s Own and Three Guineas (Oxford) or in M.H. Abrams, ed., The Norton Anthology of English Literature, vol 2 (Norton))
Henry Handel Richardson, The Getting of Wisdom (Text Publishing)
Virginia Woolf, To the Lighthouse (Oxford)
Jean Rhys, Wide Sargasso Sea (Penguin)
Amy Heckerling, dir. Clueless (DVD; Paramount)
Melina Marchetta, Looking for Alibrandi (Penguin)
Amy Witting, I for Isobel (Penguin)
Jane Campion, dir. The Piano (DVD; Dendy)
Angela Carter, Nights at the Circus (Vintage)
Janette Turner Hospital, Charades (University of Queensland Press)
A.S. Byatt, Possession (Vintage)
Jeanette Winterson, Sexing the Cherry (Vintage)
Re-Writing Women Additional Readings (University of Newcastle)

Course Objectives
On successful completion of this course, students should be able to demonstrate:

1) the necessary interpretive skills to comprehend the theory and practice of modern and contemporary English and Australian writing;
2) a close acquaintance with a number of literary works;
3) familiarity with a) critical debates surrounding works across this period b) debates about gender;
4) skills in writing analytic essays of various lengths and on narrow or broad topics at advanced undergraduate level.

Course Content
The course will examine a range of literary works by women writers since approximately 1900, moving chronologically. We will focus primarily on narratives of female identity by English and Australian writers, though some other Anglophone works may be included, and will also consider feminist theoretical and critical debates in recent years.

Assessment Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essays / Written Assignments</th>
<th>2000-word essay 30% due Wednesday 6 September</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Written assignment in form of academic critical essay discussing aspects of modern (early 20th-century) literary works</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essays / Written Assignments</th>
<th>3000-word essay 40% due Wednesday 8 November</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Written assignment in form of academic critical/research essay discussing aspects of contemporary literary works</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reports</th>
<th>Three 1000-word reports 10% each - total 30% One due weeks 2-5, one due weeks 6-9, one due weeks 10-13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Written analyses each of an aspect of a text in detail; at least one report must be on a modern writer and one on a contemporary writer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assumed Knowledge
20 units of English at 1000-level

Ourimbah Timetable
ENGL3651 RE-WRITING WOMEN
Enquiries: School of Humanities and Social Science

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester 2 – 2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09:00 - 13:00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Plagiarism
University policy prohibits students plagiarising any material under any circumstances. A student plagiarises if he or she presents the thoughts or works of another as one’s own. Without limiting the generality of this definition, it may include:
• copying or paraphrasing material from any source without due acknowledgement;
• using another’s ideas without due acknowledgement;
• working with others without permission and presenting the resulting work as though it was completed independently.

Plagiarism is not only related to written works, but also to material such as data, images, music, formulae, websites and computer programs.

Aiding another student to plagiarise is also a violation of the Plagiarism Policy and may invoke a penalty.

For further information on the University policy on plagiarism, please refer to the Policy on Student Academic Integrity at the following link -


The University has established a software plagiarism detection system called Turnitin. When you submit assessment items please be aware that for the purpose of assessing any assessment item the University may –

• Reproduce this assessment item and provide a copy to another member of the University; and/or
• Communicate a copy of this assessment item to a plagiarism checking service (which may then retain a copy of the item on its database for the purpose of future plagiarism checking)
• Submit the assessment item to other forms of plagiarism checking

Written Assessment Items
Students may be required to provide written assessment items in electronic form as well as hard copy.

Extension of Time for Assessment Items, Deferred Assessment and Special Consideration for Assessment Items or Formal Written Examinations
Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date, as advised in the Course Outline, unless the Course Coordinator approves an extension of time for submission of the item. University policy is that an assessment item submitted after the due date, without an approved extension, will be penalised.

Any student:
1. who is applying for an extension of time for submission of an assessment item on the basis of medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment; or
2. whose attendance at or performance in an assessment item or formal written examination has been or will be affected by medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment;

must report the circumstances, with supporting documentation, to the appropriate officer on the prescribed form.

Please go to the Policy and the on-line form for further information, particularly for information on the options available to you, at:
Students should be aware of the following important deadlines:

- **Requests for Special Consideration** must be lodged no later than 3 working days after the date of submission or examination.
- **Requests for Extensions of Time on Assessment Items** must be lodged no later than the due date of the item.
- **Requests for Rescheduling Exams** must be lodged no later than 5 working days before the date of the examination.

Your application may not be accepted if it is received after the deadline. Students who are unable to meet the above deadlines due to extenuating circumstances should speak to their Program Officer in the first instance.

**Changing your Enrolment**
The last date to withdraw without financial or academic penalty (called the HECS Census Dates) is:

For semester 2 courses: **31 August 2006**.

Students may withdraw from a course without academic penalty on or before the last day of semester and prior to the commencement of the formal exam period. Any withdrawal from a course after the last day of semester will result in a fail grade.

Students cannot enrol in a new course after the second week of semester/trimester, except under exceptional circumstances. Any application to add a course after the second week of semester must be on the appropriate form, and should be discussed with the Student Enquiry Centre.

To change your enrolment online, please refer to [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/enrolment/changingenrolment.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/enrolment/changingenrolment.html)

**Contact Details**

**Faculty Student Service Office**
The Faculty of Education and Arts
Room: GP1-22 (General Purpose Building)
Phone: 02 4921 5314

**Ourimbah Focus**
Room: AB1.01 (Administration Building)
Phone: 02 4348 4030

**The Dean of Students**
Dr Jennifer Archer
Phone: 02 4921 5806
Fax: 02 4921 7151
resolutionprecinct@newcastle.edu.au

**Deputy Dean of Students (Ourimbah)**
Dr Bill Gladstone
Phone: 02 4348 4123
Fax: 02 4348 4145

Various services are offered by the University Student Support Unit: [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/studentsupport/index.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/studentsupport/index.html)
Alteration of this Course Outline
No change to this course outline will be permitted after the end of the second week of the term except in exceptional circumstances and with Head of School approval. Students will be notified in advance of any approved changes to this outline.

Web Address for Rules Governing Undergraduate Academic Awards

STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY OR CHRONIC ILLNESS
The University is committed to providing a range of support services for students with a disability or chronic illness.

If you have a disability or chronic illness which you feel may impact on your studies, please feel free to discuss your support needs with your lecturer or course coordinator.

Disability Support may also be provided by the Student Support Service (Disability). Students must be registered to receive this type of support. To register please contact the Disability Liaison Officer on 4921 5766, or via email at: student-disability@newcastle.edu.au.

As some forms of support can take a few weeks to implement it is extremely important that you discuss your needs with your course coordinator or Student Support Service staff at the beginning of each semester.

For more information related to confidentiality and documentation please visit the Student Support Service (Disability) website at: www.newcastle.edu.au/services/disability.

Online Tutorial Registration
Students are required to enrol in the Seminar for this course via the Online Registration system:
Registrations close at the end of week 2 of semester.

Studentmail and Blackboard: www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/
This course uses Blackboard and studentmail to contact students, so you are advised to keep your email accounts within the quota to ensure you receive essential messages. To receive an expedited response to queries, post questions on the Blackboard discussion forum if there is one, or if emailing staff directly use the course code in the subject line of your email. Students are advised to check their studentmail and the course Blackboard site on a weekly basis.

Written Assignment Presentation and Submission Details
Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date. Late assignments will be subject to the penalties described below.

Hard Copy Submission
Type your assignments: All work must be typewritten in 11 or 12 point black font. Leave a wide margin for marker’s comments, use double spacing, and include page numbers.
Word length: The word limit of all assessment items should be strictly followed – 10% above or below is acceptable, otherwise penalties may apply.
- **Proof read your work** because spelling, grammatical and referencing mistakes will be penalised.
- **Staple the pages** of your assignment together (do not use pins or paper clips).
- **University coversheet**: All assignments must be submitted with the University coversheet: [www.newcastle.edu.au/school/hss/studentguide.index.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/school/hss/studentguide.index.html)
- **Assignments are to be deposited at any Student Focus. Focus are located at:**
  - Level 3, Shortland Union, Callaghan
  - Level 2, Student Services Centre, Callaghan
  - Ground Floor, University House, City
  - Ground Floor, Administration Building, Ourimbah, Room H01.43

  Any changes to this procedure will be announced during the semester.
- **Do not fax or email assignments**: Only hard copies of assignments will be considered for assessment. Inability to physically submit a hard copy of an assignment by the deadline due to other commitments or distance from campus is an unacceptable excuse. Assignments mailed to Schools are accepted from the date posted.
- **Keep a copy of all assignments**: All assignments are date-stamped upon receipt. However, it is the student’s responsibility to produce a copy of their work if the assignment goes astray after submission. Students are advised to keep updated back-ups in hard copy and on disk.

**Online Copy Submission to Turnitin**

In addition to hard copy submission, students are required to submit an electronic version of all five assignments to Turnitin via the course Blackboard website.

Prior to final submission, all students have the opportunity to submit one draft of their assignment to Turnitin to self-check their referencing.

Assignments will not be marked until both hard copy and online versions have been submitted. Marks may be deducted for late submission of either version.

**Penalties for Late Assignments**

Assignments submitted after the due date, without an approved extension of time will be penalised by the **reduction of 5% of the possible maximum mark** for the assessment item for each day or part day that the item is late. Weekends count as one day in determining the penalty. Assessment items submitted **more than ten days** after the due date will be awarded **zero marks**.

**Special Consideration/Extension of Time Applications**

Students wishing to apply for Special Consideration or Extension of Time should obtain the appropriate form from the Student Focus. [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/forms/index.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/forms/index.html)

**No Assignment Re-submission**

Students who have failed an assignment are not permitted to revise and resubmit it in this course. However, students are always welcome to contact their Tutor, Lecturer or Course Coordinator to make a consultation time to receive individual feedback on their assignments.

**Re-marks**

Students can request to have their work re-marked by the Course Coordinator or Discipline Convenor (or their delegate); three outcomes are possible: the same grade, a lower grade, or a higher grade being awarded. Students may also appeal against their final result for a course. Please consult the University policy at: [www.newcastle.edu.au/policy/academic/adm_prog/procedures_appeals_finalresult.pdf](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policy/academic/adm_prog/procedures_appeals_finalresult.pdf)
Return of Assignments
Students can collect assignments from a nominated Student Focus during office hours. Students will be informed during class which Focus to go to and the earliest date assignments will be available for collection. Students must present their student identification card to collect their assignment.

Preferred Referencing Style
Essays in this course may be submitted either in Chicago Style (using endnotes with bibliography; see the Guidelines on Essay Writing at the end of this course outline) or in MLA Style (parenthetical in text with Works Cited, giving in parentheses ONLY author’s surname, first main word of title if there are two works by the author in your Works Cited, and page number of quotation or passage alluded to). If you have taken courses in English at Ourimbah in recent years (e.g. HUMA1650) you should already be familiar with Chicago Style and should use this style.

Further information on referencing and general study skills can be obtained from:
Infoskills:

Student Representatives
We are very interested in your feedback and suggestions for improvement. Student Representatives are the channel of communication between students and the School Board. Contact details of Student Representatives can be found on the School website.

Student Communication
Students should discuss any course related matters with their Tutor, Lecturer, or Course Coordinator in the first instance and then the relevant Discipline or Program Convenor. If this proves unsatisfactory, they should then contact the Head of School if required. Contact details can be found on the School website.

Essential Online Information for Students
Information on Class and Exam Timetables, Tutorial Online Registration, Learning Support, Campus Maps, Careers information, Counselling, the Health Service and a range of free Student Support Services can be found at:
Infoskills:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Topic/Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19 July</td>
<td>Introduction; Katherine Mansfield, “The Tiredness of Rosabel”; poems by Mary Gilmore, Ada Cambridge, Anna Wickham, Lesbia Harford, Oodgeroo Noonuccal (all in Re-Writing Women Additional Readings)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 July</td>
<td>Charlotte Brontë, Jane Eyre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 August</td>
<td>Indigenous Women’s Lives. Guest lecturer: Kathy Butler (readings in Additional Readings)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 August</td>
<td>Miles Franklin, My Brilliant Career; Virginia Woolf, A Room of One’s Own</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 August</td>
<td>Woolf, A Room continued; Henry Handel Richardson, The Getting of Wisdom [first report must have been submitted]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 August</td>
<td>Virginia Woolf, To the Lighthouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 August</td>
<td>Jean Rhys, Wide Sargasso Sea; essay writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6 September</strong></td>
<td><strong>2000-word essay due</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 September</td>
<td>Clueless, dir. Amy Heckerling; Melina Marchetta, Looking for Alibrandi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 September</td>
<td>Amy Witting, I for Isobel; The Piano, dir. Jane Campion [second report must have been submitted]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 September</td>
<td>Angela Carter, Nights at the Circus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 September</td>
<td>Janette Turner Hospital, Charades; essay consultation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4 October</strong></td>
<td><strong>RECESS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11 October</strong></td>
<td><strong>RECESS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 October</td>
<td>A.S. Byatt, Possession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 October</td>
<td>Jeanette Winterson, Sexing the Cherry; poems by Judith Wright, Dorothy Auchterlonie, Gwen Harwood, Sylvia Kantaris, Kate Llewellyn, Edith Speers, Gig Ryan, Jean Kent (in Additional Readings) [third report must have been submitted]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 November</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8 November</strong></td>
<td><strong>3000-word essay due</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ENGL3651 Critical and Theoretical Readings

Works on the list below have been placed in Short Loans in the IRC, either as articles (marked with an asterisk) or as books. At least one of your seminar reports should include discussion of at least one of these readings. Where appropriate, I have indicated the texts I consider most useful to consider in relation to each reading, but in most cases the readings may also be relevant to other works.

Note that I do not assume or expect that you will agree with the arguments of any given reading! You may wish to think especially of the date when the reading you are discussing was published.


*Carter, Angela. “Poemical Preface.” The Sadeian Woman and the Ideology of Pornography. [Nights at the Circus]


ASSESSMENT

The Assessment Items

(a) One 2000-word essay 30% due Wednesday 6 September
Written assignment in form of academic critical essay discussing aspects of modern (early 20th-century) literary works
Topics are included below. These topics are intended to cover material from the course up to 23 August, and you may focus on one or more of the texts assigned up to that point. You will be expected to include some evidence of secondary reading, but this is not the focus of the assignment. In any case, you must of course supply a list of Works Cited (including citations for texts) for all written work. See below in the Guidelines for Essay Writing for preferred referencing style and other material.

(b) One 3000-word essay 40% due Wednesday 8 November
Written assignment in form of academic critical/research essay discussing aspects of contemporary literary works
This essay should be considered a full academic research paper drawing on available paper and electronic resources as appropriate. You should therefore develop your own topic, in consultation with me, by week 11 if possible and in any case no later than week 12. You should draw for this essay on at least some material from the second half of the course (after week 6), although you may also include material from the earlier seminars. While you may wish here to refer to texts examined in the first essay, you should discuss different texts at length, and should address a substantially different topic.

(c) Three 1000-word reports 10% each - total 30%: one due in any class in weeks 2-5, one in weeks 6-9, and one in weeks 10-13—in all cases at the beginning of class.
Written analyses each of an aspect of a text in detail; at least one report must be on a modern writer and one on a contemporary writer
Choose any text we are to study in the week in which you submit the report and write on some aspect of it that interests you. Unlike the essays, which will draw on your experience of class discussion, these reports must be submitted before we have discussed the material, and are therefore expected to be less conclusive; they should still, however, be written in essay form. You may draw on ideas from these reports, and examine texts discussed there, in your later essays, but may not directly duplicate material.

A set of theoretical readings (listed below, p. 9), some applying to specific texts, will be available in Short Loans. At least one of the reports should include discussion of one of these readings; you may wish to make a reading central to the second or third of your reports.

Attendance
Assessments are designed to enhance and reflect your participation in the seminars. Consequently, attendance of all seminars is vital. Although no marks are allocated for seminar attendance, attendance will be recorded. Absence will hamper your capacity to participate and to complete assessments as required. If you do miss a seminar because of illness or misadventure, please contact the lecturer as soon as is practicable and get a copy of notes from a classmate.
ENGL3651 TOPICS FOR FIRST ESSAY

2000-word written assignment in form of academic critical essay discussing aspects of modern (early 20th-century) literary works, due Wednesday 6 September

You should write on at least one work we have studied in the first six weeks of the course (i.e. up to and including To the Lighthouse).

1) “Women can’t paint; women can’t write.” (Virginia Woolf, To the Lighthouse)

Discuss how one or two women writers we have studied represent the relationship between women and art.

2) “But I feel this, Helen: I must dislike those, who, whatever I do to please them, persist in disliking me; I must resist those who punish me unjustly.”
(Charlotte Brontë, Jane Eyre)

“[I]n the shadow of the letter ‘I’ all is shapeless as mist. Is that a tree? No, it is a woman. But . . . she has not a bone in her body, I thought . . . Then Alan got up and the shadow of Alan at once obliterated Phoebe. For Alan had views and Phoebe was quenched in the flood of his views.”
(Virginia Woolf, A Room of One’s Own)

Either

a) Examine Jane Eyre in light of Virginia Woolf’s comments on the novel in A Room of One’s Own. Do you agree with Woolf’s analysis? In your answer you should develop your own argument about the relationship between Woolf’s ideas in general and Brontë’s novel.

OR

b) Discuss the nature of identity and the idea of the self in one or two works we have studied. To what extent do these writers posit a specifically female self?

OR

c) Discuss how the narrative structure of one or two of the novels we have read so far contributes to the author’s meditation on female identity and its formation.

3) “The real concern of early twentieth-century women’s writing is not gender but class: it’s class differences between women, real or imagined, that cause all the problems.” Do you agree? You should examine at least one text in your response.

4) Choose two or three poems from the reader for week 1 and develop an argument about how they reflect (or critique) assumptions about women’s lives.

5) “The major struggle experienced by turn-of-the-century women is not with the patriarchy but with romanticism.” Do you agree? Your response should include detailed discussion of at least one work we have studied so far.

6) Yet still I seek,  
Month after month in vain,  
Beauty and meaning in recurrent pain.

(Lesbia Harford, “Periodicity”)
To what extent does women’s poetry concern itself with an experience of and/or attitude to matters such as time (or pain) that is uniquely female? Your analysis should focus on no more than three poems from the reader for week 1.

7) Write an essay on a topic of your own choice. Please consult with me first!

**GUIDELINES FOR ESSAY WRITING**

1. **The Essay**
   The majority of assignments you will be required to write in literature classes will be in essay form. These guidelines address the essentials of essay design and academic style.
   
   An essay is not a mere presentation of facts. We seldom want to find out how much you know; rather, we want to find out what you think, or more precisely, how you think. A good essay argues a case and supports it with evidence.
   
   A boring and unsatisfactory essay structure consists of a first paragraph that restates the topic in other words; a middle section that quotes from what other authorities have said, or from parts of the text that might be used to support a point of view on the topic, though no point of view is argued for; and a last paragraph that restates the topic in other words again.
   
   It is better if you can find in the essay topic a problem that requires solution, an issue which can be argued in more than one way, or a point of view that is overstated unless other considerations are taken into account. The middle section then becomes a marshalling of evidence to find an inductive solution to the problem; to weigh up arguments pro and con before giving a final judgement; to set out what can be said in defence of the topic statement but what, in view of competing formulations, would be a better definition of the case. If you conceive of your first paragraph as the proposal of a problem for solution, your last paragraph will become non-repetitive and easier to write.

2. **The Essay Question**
   
   a) **The instructional word "discuss"**
   "Discuss" means "examine by argument," and it asks you to express your opinion about, or your point of view on, the idea that follows: for example, "Discuss Charlotte Brontë’s use of nature in Jane Eyre." In the context of a literary critical essay, "discuss" does not mean "hold a leisurely conversation" or "toss about ideas that seem relevant." Nor does it mean "provide a survey of all possible opinions about the topic." You are being asked to take a stand: to examine an idea, to formulate an opinion about it, and to support that opinion by a reasoned, coherent argument.
   
   b) **Other instructional words**
   Compare: examine similarities and differences.
   Criticize: make a reasoned assessment (whether favourable or unfavourable)
   Analyse: break the whole into parts so that you can interpret each part separately and examine internal relationships between parts, before reconsidering the whole.
Relate: describe connections.

Evaluate: analyse strengths and limitations, in order to pass a reasoned judgement.

c) The question

Having noted the instructional word, look carefully at the whole question: for example, "Discuss Charlotte Brontë’s use of nature in Jane Eyre." The question does not ask for a catalogue of natural imagery in Jane Eyre; rather, it asks you to determine what use Charlotte Brontë makes of nature—as an agent in the narrative, as a device for revealing character, as a means for creating atmosphere, or as a source of imagery and recurrent motifs.

Your essay should be focused directly on the essay question. Read the question carefully, and read all of it. Do not simply seize on a few key words and use them as a launching pad for a general discussion of the text. The question should rather give you a basis for planning your essay structure.

d) The word limit

The word limit is not there simply to tell you when to stop writing. A word limit forces you to be selective, to decide what you think are the most important issues, and to express your ideas as clearly and succinctly as possible. A 500-word essay may require less writing than a 2000-word essay, but it does not require less thought. Going substantially over the word limit indicates lack of an essay plan; falling well short of the essay limit indicates that not only forethought is lacking. You should have to plan carefully and write precisely to fit your argument into the word limit.

3 Essay Design

Your essay will need an opening paragraph that is a deliberate beginning and not an accident: it should establish the character and tone of your argument, and its direction, telling the reader where you are going in the rest of your essay and why you want to go there. Your essay will need a substantial middle that defines and amplifies your argument, making it concrete and convincing. And your essay will need a conclusion that feels like a conclusion and not as if you have run out of steam: it should drive your point home, letting the reader know you have arrived, and precisely where. As has been suggested, conceiving of the topic as proposing a problem for solution (for the solution of which you will need to assemble data) is a more promising approach than considering the topic as indicating an area in which data need to be assembled.

4 The Argument

Your argument should stand up in public. It should not be based simply on personal taste or private belief but on reasoned judgement. The substance of your argument should consist mainly of evidence you provide to support your opinions or the approach you have taken. In a literary critical essay "evidence" usually takes two forms: examples from the text and use of authorities or critics.

a) Examples from the text

You should instance specific episodes, scenes, passages or lines which support your ideas with concrete examples. Examples can be provided either by direct quotation from the text or by reference and description.
Quotations shorter than three lines should appear in inverted commas within the same line as your own writing. The end of a line in verse or poetry should be indicated with a slash. For example:

Ruskin sees decay and is depressed, we infer, by its suggestion of a moral parallel, Hamlet’s “unweeded garden / That grows to seed” (Ham. 1.2.135-36).

Quotations longer than three lines should be indented throughout, without inverted commas. Prose quotations may be run together, but verse quotations should retain the original lineation exactly. Shorter quotations from poems should indicate lineation with slashes (/). Likewise when quoting a play you must retain the separation and identification of characters.

When quoting directly, select only what is immediately relevant to your argument. Make sure that the grammar of a quotation coordinates with the grammatical structure of surrounding sentences. Alterations to a quotation should be shown in square brackets, where alteration is needed to maintain grammatical coherence: for example, “Keats points out that, once terms are fixed in an art-work, their relations to one another are immutable, that ’not a soul to tell/ Why [the town is] desolate can e’er return.’” Omissions in a quotation should be shown with ellipses: for instance, “When Keats’s persona avers that the urn will ’remain, in midst of other woe . . . a friend to man,’ he is rediscovering how his condition has also been reflected in the urn.”

When you refer to the text, avoid merely paraphrasing the author: summarise, criticize, and relate. You should make clear how the example supports your argument, why it is relevant, what interpretation of the passage is suggested by your argument.

b) Use of authorities or critics

An authority or critic can provide persuasive support for an argument you have already made (or are about to make). The critic’s opinion can only be a support, never a substitute for your own argument. You should enter into dialogue with the critic’s theory or opinion; it should be placed within the structure of your own argument. Some "authorities" you may find good reason to disagree with. Citing a critical opinion which you are setting out to disprove valuably establishes your essay’s credentials as an argument.

Whenever you make use of a critic, whether you quote the critic directly or simply make use of his or her ideas, you must acknowledge the debt. Where you quote directly, all the words cited should be enclosed in inverted commas or indented according to the same rules as text quotations. The borrowing should be introduced with an appropriate acknowledgment and the context from which the borrowing has been drawn should be noted. Consider this passage from Richard Holmes, Coleridge: Early Visions (New York: Viking, 1989), page 173:

In the symbolic killing of the albatross, he [Coleridge] found what might be called a "green parable," the idea of man’s destructive effect on the natural world, so that human moral blindness inadvertently introduces evil into the benign systems of nature, releasing uncontrollable forces that take terrible revenge. The Mariner was thus slowly developed from a sea-yarn out of an old folio into a metaphysical allegory of the Fall, a transformation that Coleridge alone could have accomplished.
This is a correct citation from the passage (see bottom of page for the Chicago Style footnote):

In Richard Holmes's view, it is possible to think of The Rime of the Ancient Mariner as a "green parable." "Human moral blindness" is shown as introducing "evil into the benign systems of nature."¹

When you make use of an authority's ideas, even if you do not repeat him or her verbatim, you should still acknowledge the source. The following paraphrase also sufficiently acknowledges a reliance on Holmes: "According to Richard Holmes, Coleridge's Rime of the Ancient Mariner is an ecological parable based on the myth of the Fall."²

**Simply placing a footnote at the close of your borrowing from a critic does not indicate where the borrowing (which might extend over many sentences) begins.** This is why it is essential to mark the point at which your indebtedness begins with a phrase like "In Richard Holmes's view" and to mark the point of closure with a reference. The following passage does not adequately acknowledge indebtedness to Holmes:

> It is possible to think of The Rime of the Ancient Mariner as an ecological parable. Human moral blindness is shown as introducing evil into "the benign systems of nature."²

Acknowledging the critic by name at the beginning of the borrowing is more than simply a courtesy. Consulting critics and acknowledging them properly raises the level of scholarship of your essay. **Students who fail to note adequately where they have drawn from their critical reading are falling into habits of plagiarism.** See above for University advice on plagiarism.

**Please note that much internet material has no scholarly status**—has not been approved by independent publishers or refereed by other scholars—and is in many cases written by undergraduates or high school students who are no better informed on the topic than you are, and quite possibly less well informed. Simply entering a search term in Google is therefore not usually an appropriate way to begin researching secondary material! You should first look rather in approved scholarly databases such as the Expanded Academic index (which includes both refereed and unrefereed material), JSTOR, or Project Muse, all of which include full-text articles and are available through the library website—and in any case pay attention to the nature of the site and the material.

Note that many internet sites (and other sources) contain extensive quotation, paraphrase, or complete republication of other scholars' work. **You must indicate clearly in your footnote both the original source of quoted material (first) and (saying “quoted in” or “reprinted in”) the text/site in which you found it.**

### 5 The Bibliography

All written assignments presented should include a bibliography. Even if your bibliography includes no more than details of the edition you have read (or video you have watched) in order to write on a particular novel, poem, play or film, that information is of use to a marker. It informs the marker which edition you have used,

---

² Holmes, p. 173. [subsequent citation of Holmes]
and it informs her or him that in this assignment you have not consulted critical authorities.

You should list all the works (books, articles, multimedia) you have used in preparing an assignment, even if you have not quoted from them. Exceptions to this are a dictionary (though if you quote a dictionary’s definitions, you should name the dictionary in your essay) and the Bible (though if you quote from the Bible, you should cite book, chapter and verse in your essay).

There are various referencing styles in which you may be asked to submit work by lecturers in different disciplines. These styles have been developed by scholars to fit the needs of particular disciplinary areas. In English literature courses you should use either MLA Style or Chicago Style. You will find the appropriate edition of the Chicago Manual of Style in the IRC reference collection; below is a brief summary.

Whether you prepare your assignment in MLA Style or Chicago Style, your bibliography (called “Works Cited” in MLA Style) will comprise a single unified list of books, multimedia items, and articles (including internet articles), which should be arranged alphabetically by authors’ surnames.

Necessary publication details for a book are author, title, place of publication, publisher, and date of publication.

Necessary publication details for a journal article are author, title of article, name of journal, volume number of journal, date of publication and page numbers.

Necessary publication details for an article in a collection of essays are article author, title of article, name of essay collection, name of editor(s), place of publication, date of publication, and total page numbers of the particular article you are quoting. If you have quoted from a particular essay within an essay collection you should clearly identify the essay and its author in your bibliography (and in your footnote/parenthesis)—don’t just list the whole volume and its editors, but insert the essay alphabetically in your bibliography by its author’s name and give details of the volume where you found it.

Bibliography citation of an article you found on the internet must give as much information as possible, such as author’s name (which should be available!), article title, and site name, concluding with the URL and date on which you accessed the website. If the article is a republication from a previous print or online source (as with articles in Expanded Academic and most other journal databases) you should provide details of that source before giving the database details, URL, etc..

When you cite an audio-visual work in your bibliography, the medium (e.g. DVD, VHS, CD-ROM) should be listed directly after the title of the work as a whole. Where possible the original release date of a film should be given in parentheses followed by a semicolon prior to the details of place, publication, and date of the video release (as with current editions of older books). In footnotes (Chicago Style) the track title should be identified for a DVD or CD. Note that if you quote from or cite material originally published on the videocassette/DVD, such as commentaries, you should not include the release date of the original film in your footnote to this quotation/citation as that is not the date when this material was published. If you cite both the film and the extra material across your essay, it may be appropriate to include both as entries in your bibliography.
If any of the necessary referencing details are not available, e.g. date of release of the video, just say e.g. “n.d.” (no date) at the appropriate point in your footnote/bibliography.

Titles of novels, plays, films, book-length poems or periodicals may be either underlined (Middlemarch, Hamlet, Citizen Kane, The Prelude, Meanjin) or italicised (Middlemarch, Hamlet, Citizen Kane, The Prelude, Meanjin). The title of a short poem or journal article, a chapter or an essay from a book should be placed inside inverted commas.

Some sample bibliography entries for submission in Chicago Style:


CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

High Distinction (85+)
The essay displays the characteristics of a Distinction-level essay and also shows a high level of originality in its ideas (which may include its choice and analysis of evidence) and/or in its use of critical and scholarly perspectives.

Distinction (75-84)
The essay is well written and consistently demonstrates insight into the text(s) and issues under discussion. It responds to the assigned topic and provides a clear, cohesive, and well-developed non-trivial argument in essay form in relation to that topic. It discusses relevant issues in detail and includes detailed and precise analysis of appropriate evidence. It includes adequate referencing and research and is of approximately the length assigned.

Credit (65-74)
The essay is clearly written without extensive stylistic or grammatical errors and demonstrates understanding of the text(s) and issues under discussion. It responds to the assigned topic and provides a clear non-trivial argument in relation to that topic. It discusses relevant issues showing comprehension of these and includes appropriate evidence and analysis. It is structured in essay form. It includes adequate referencing and research and is of approximately the length assigned.

Pass (50-64)
The essay demonstrates a reading knowledge of the text(s) under discussion. It responds to the assigned topic and provides an argument in relation to that topic. It treats some relevant issues in at least a superficial way and includes some evidence. It includes adequate referencing and is of approximately the length assigned. While it may have a number of grammatical or stylistic errors it is comprehensible and is structured in essay form.

Fail (<50)
The essay does not demonstrate reading knowledge of the text(s) under discussion and/or demonstrates pervasive faults in grammar and style so substantial as to render it difficult to comprehend and/or does not respond to the assigned topic and/or makes no coherent claim in response to the topic and/or makes assertions without adequate supporting evidence (including appropriate analysis) and/or is not appropriately structured and/or is extensively plagiarised or otherwise not adequately referenced and/or is incomplete and/or is substantially shorter than the assigned word limit.

N.B. An essay substantially longer than the assigned word limit may not be assessed past that point.

Assessment Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Mark</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>85+</td>
<td>HD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75-84</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-74</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-64</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;50</td>
<td>FF</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>