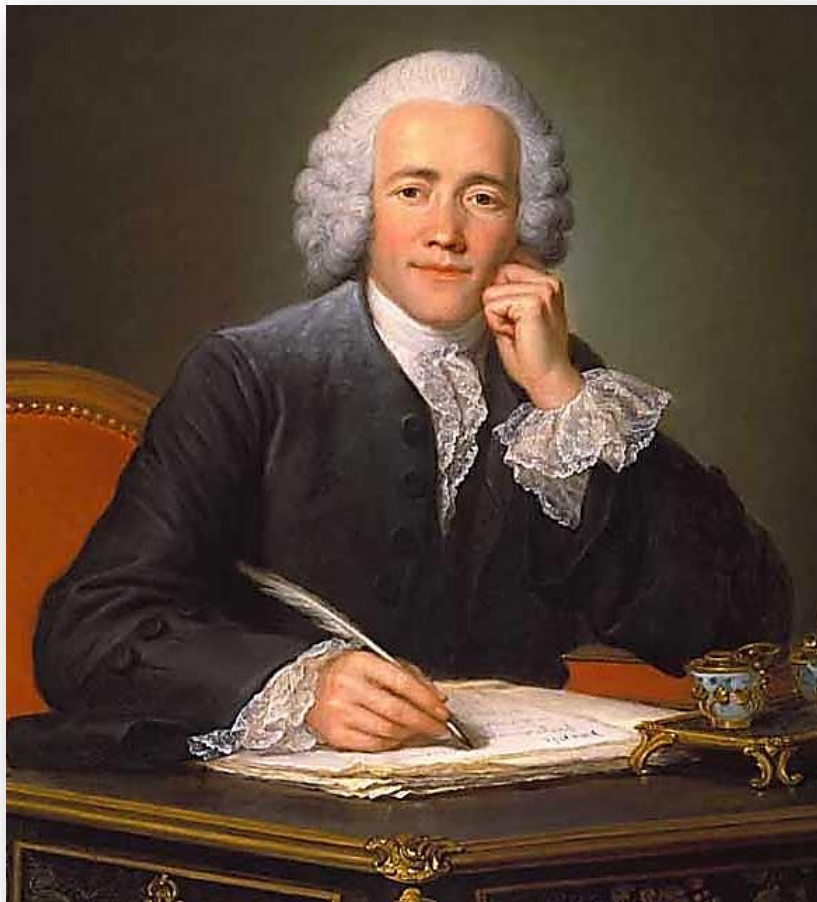


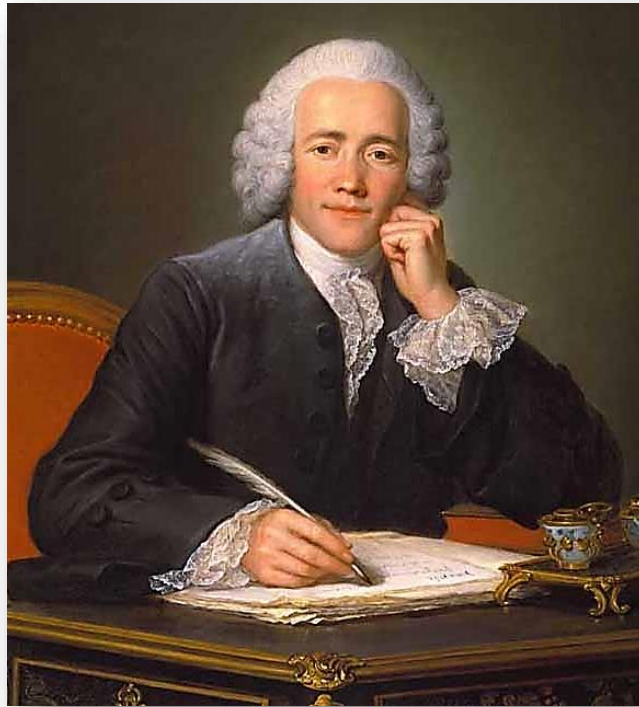
**ENGLISH 3384.01**  
**EARLY ENGLISH MASTERWORKS**



**DR. PAUL W. CHILD**  
**SPRING 2020**

**ENGLISH 3384.01  
EARLY ENGLISH MASTERWORKS  
SPRING 2020**

**(THREE SEMESTER CREDIT HOURS)**



**DR. PAUL W. CHILD**

**DR. PAUL W. CHILD  
CAMPUS OFFICE: EVANS 204  
TELEPHONE: 936-294-1412  
E-MAIL: PCHILD@SHSU.EDU**

**CLASS DAYS AND TIME: MWF 11:00 A.M. TO 11:50 A.M.**

**LOCATION: EVANS 351**

**OFFICE HOURS:  
MWF 7:00 A.M. TO 8:00 A.M.  
MWF 10:00 A.M. TO 11:00 A.M.  
AND BY APPOINTMENT**

**ENGLISH 3384.01**  
**EARLY ENGLISH MASTERWORKS**  
**SPRING 2020**  
**DR. PAUL W. CHILD**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

English 3384W, Early English Masterworks (writing-enhanced), surveys British literature from its beginnings in the “Old English” to the end of the eighteenth century. The familiar and not-so-familiar works that we read include the anonymous *Beowulf* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, Marlowe’s *Faustus*, lyrics from Shakespeare and Donne, Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels* and “A Modest Proposal,” and Pope’s *The Rape of the Lock*.



While the course seeks to provide a sound reading foundation in the literature of Britain by examining various thematic and formal developments in their social and cultural contexts, it also challenges some preconceptions by asking what makes a work of literature a “masterwork” and who decides upon this status: Does the work become a classic simply because the venerable editors of *The Norton Anthology* and other academics have institutionalized and enshrined it as such? Or is it, in fact, part of the larger fabric of our culture and the world in which we live, in the *now*?

As a junior-level survey, the course also seeks to develop your critical reading and writing skills. To those ends, the class requirements include substantial critical writing, three unit examinations, a crossdisciplinary interpretation project, and active participation. In other words, there are *many* ways for you to succeed.

Prerequisites: Successful completion of ENGL 1301 and ENGL 1302 (or approved equivalents) and a required sophomore-level English.

Course value: Three semester credit hours.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course aims to

- introduce you to canonical works of British literature, from its beginnings in the Old English to the end of the eighteenth century
- give you the facts about such literature (which are, indeed, important)
- develop your ability to read such works of literature critically by giving you reading approaches and strategies
- develop your ability to write arguments about such literature in an academic genre appropriate to literary studies
- develop the critical vocabulary that you use in writing about such works of literature intelligently and economically
- develop your ability to integrate supporting sources into your critical arguments
- assure that you can use MLA citation format correctly

## **POLICIES AND REQUIREMENTS**

**DR. PAUL W. CHILD**

**CAMPUS OFFICE: EVANS 204**

**TELEPHONE: 936-294-1412**

**E-MAIL: PCHILD@SHSU.EDU**

**OFFICE HOURS:**

**MWF 7:00 A.M. TO 8:00 A.M.**

**MW 10:00 A.M. TO 11:00 A.M.**

**AND BY APPOINTMENT**



### **I. CLASS MEETING DAYS, TIME, AND LOCATION**

MWF 11:00 A.M. TO 11:50 A.M. EV 351

### **II. REQUIRED TEXT**

Greenblatt, Stephen, et al., ed. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*. 10<sup>th</sup> ed., vols. A-C, W.W. Norton & Company, 2018.

ISBN: 978-0-393-60312-5

Volume A: The Middle Ages

ISBN 978-0-393-60302-6

Volume B: The Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Century

ISBN 978-0-393-60303-3

Volume C: The Restoration and the Eighteenth Century

ISBN 978-0-393-60304-0

You *must* purchase or otherwise procure the book for this class, and you must bring the appropriate volume to class every day. To assure me that you have, in fact, procured the text for this class, I ask that you bring it to show me on or before Friday, January 24.

There will also be a quiz for every major reading assignment; to encourage you to bring the book to class, most quizzes will include an open-book section.

### **III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS (WITH APPROXIMATE RELATIVE VALUES)\***

Reading Response Journal (35% Collectively)  
Reading Quizzes (25% Collectively)  
Three Unit Examinations (10% each; 30% collectively)  
Crossdisciplinary Project (10%)

### **IV. OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXTRA CREDIT**

None. There are too many other ways to succeed in this class.

### **V. ATTENDANCE POLICY (NON-NEGOTIABLE)**

Since you have decided to take this class at this time, I presume that you *want* to be here. Accordingly, I hope and expect that you attend class *every* day. Life being what it is, however, you are allowed *five* absences. After the fifth absence, your final grade begins dropping one increment for each subsequent absence. So, for example, if you have an *A*, your grade drops to a *B* with the sixth absence; that *B* drops to a *C* with the seventh absence; that *C* drops to a *D* with the eighth absence; and that *D* drops to an *F* with the ninth absence.

Except in the case of a university-excused absence (for which I should receive formal documentation), I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. Please—no doctor's notes, hospital vouchers, death certificates, court summons, or long tales of woe!

An extended illness does not excuse you from this policy; my rationale is that if you are too ill to attend all classes, you should withdraw from your courses and try them again when you can attend without distraction or dis-ease.

If you have a time-consuming job, demanding pet, "personal problems," or any other extracurricular distractions that will prevent your attending class regularly and submitting all assignments on time, please take another class and try this one again in a later term.

### **VI. LATE ARRIVAL, EARLY DEPARTURE**

Arriving late is both disruptive and impractical. And on those frequent days when there is a reading quiz, you may hold up the class proceedings if you try to take that quiz while others are waiting. It's also unfair if you come in after the quiz and then ask to make it up after you've had the benefit of class discussion about the materials on that quiz.

So for the protection of your fellow students (and myself), I count every two instances of tardiness as one absence. You are tardy if you arrive after I begin making announcements or lecturing.

Do not leave class early unless you provide me with a formal note *before class begins* explaining the reason for leaving. If you stay less than half the class, of course, you are absent for the day.

## **VII. READING QUIZZES**

To assure me that you have made an honest attempt to read the assigned materials, you will take a reading class for every substantial reading assignment. To assure me that you have the works under consideration in class on the days on which we discuss them, the quiz will include an open-book section. The reading quizzes will count collectively as 25% of your final course grade.

You will find a sample reading quiz on pages 19-20 of this syllabus.

## **VIII. EXAMINATIONS**

Three unit examinations, spaced more or less evenly throughout the term, will assess not only how conscientiously you have engaged the class discussion over the works but also how well you can make critical arguments about them. Each unit exam will count 10% of your final course grade.

The final unit examination will not be comprehensive.

You will find the examination format and sample questions on pages 21-22 of this booklet.

## **IX. MAKE-UP POLICY**

An absence, even one of those rare ones excused by the University, does not excuse you from taking a reading quiz or an examination or from submitting a written assignment on time.

If you miss a reading quiz because of an absence or tardiness, you must make up the quiz before the next class of ours that you attend. I hold office hours on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. and from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. If your class schedule conflicts with one of those times, I will do my best to accommodate you. But the responsibility for making up the quiz is yours. If you fail to do so before we begin discussing the materials in class, you will receive a "0" for that quiz.

You should try always to avoid missing an examination date, of course. In the rare case that you must miss such a day, however, give me substantial notice; I'd rather not hear about your absence after the fact. We will arrange for you to make up the examination before the next class period of attendance.

If you are absent on the day on which a journal assignment is due, you must get the response to me in *physical* form on the due date (except in the most unusual circumstances, I do not accept materials in electronic form). Give it to me sometime before the due date, or send it by way of a trusted friend.



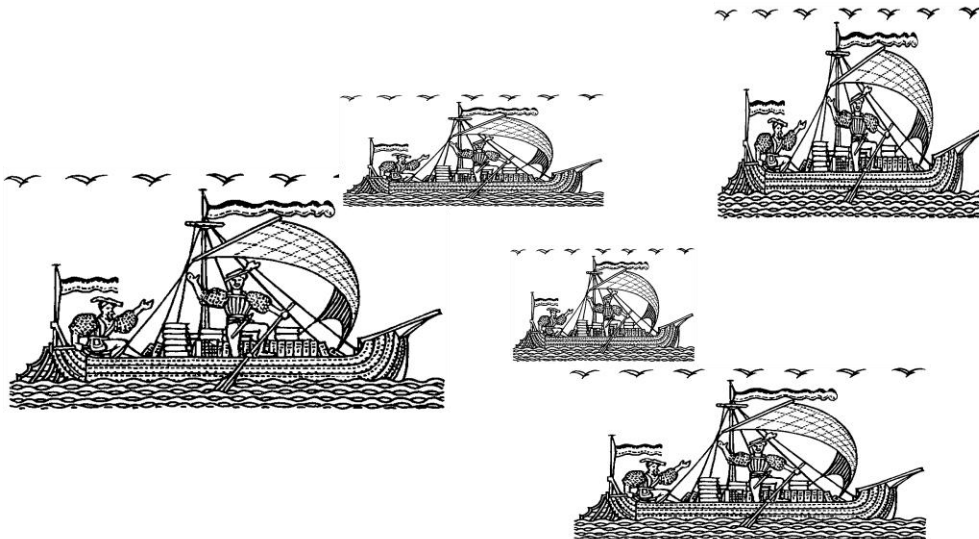
## X. GRADING

We follow a standard ten-point grading scale:

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	Below 60

At about the middle of the term, I will make up a spread sheet with your average so that you know where you stand in the class to that point. While I would never encourage anyone to drop a course, except in a case in which excessive absences make passing impossible, the spread sheet average will help you make a better-informed decision about your possibilities for success in the course.

I will post grades confidentially on line no later than noon on Monday, May 11, the deadline set by the Office of the Registrar.





## XI. ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

For definitions, I refer you first to the Sam Houston State University policy statement about academic dishonesty in Paragraph 5.3 of the “Code of Student Conduct and Discipline” in the official *Student Guidelines*. Please read through the short description very carefully.

*Plagiarism* (a word that comes from the Latin term for plundering) is literary theft, the intentional or sometimes merely careless stealing of someone else’s words or ideas and the passing them off as one’s own without giving due credit to the original author. Plagiarism not only defeats the very purpose of the educational process—to make an independent thinker and writer of you—but also constitutes academic fraud. Any written assignment convicted of plagiarism will fail; in serious and clearly deliberate cases, the student will fail the course and face the appropriate dean for further disciplinary action. *Don’t do it.*

Unintentional plagiarism is plagiarism nonetheless.

There are a number of sources on the Internet that give guidelines about academic honesty; some of them are even reliable. For example, check out the Purdue University site on plagiarism prevention, at the following site: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/> . Useful in itself, the site also has links to several other resources that will help you make distinctions.



## **XII. NOTE ON NOTES: CLIFF'S NOTES, MONARCH NOTES, SPARKNOTES, AND OTHER SUCH DIGEST GUIDES TO LITERATURE**

Usually such resources provide useful plot and character summaries, cultural backgrounds, and some critical commentary. You may find them helpful for establishing contexts and understanding the texts, which are not always easy.

Do not, however, read such digest guides as *substitutes* for the primary works themselves; a work of literature is not a paraphrase or summary. In order to pass any quiz or examination, you will have to read the original works.

Of course, to avoid plagiarism, you should never draw language or ideas from these guides in writing assignments. (I own copies of all these and can almost always spot plagiarism.)

And please—as a matter of respect to your professor, your fellow students, and the venerable Chaucer, Shakespeare, Swift, et alia—do not ever bring such a guide into the classroom. Agreed?

## **XIII. CLASSROOM COMPORIMENT**

Please observe the customary classroom courtesies. I will merely paraphrase the University's policy statement here: Students will avoid any classroom conduct that intentionally or unintentionally disrupts the learning process and thus impedes the missions of the University.

The use of cell phones and laptops is forbidden in this classroom. Turn your cell phone *off* (not merely to “vibrate”). Use a notebook and a pen to take notes.

You should not eat in class; use tobacco products, including e-cigarettes; make derogatory remarks about fellow students or the class (your professor has a remarkably good sense for hearing whispers); read newspapers or do work for other classes; sleep (ouch); talk with fellow students (or to yourself!) at inappropriate times; wear inappropriate clothing; or engage in any other form of distraction.

Until you are dismissed from class each day, please do not begin to pack up belongings; doing so is very distracting to your professor and your fellow students. (Thank you.)

If you engage in disruptive or otherwise inappropriate behavior in the classroom, I will ask that you leave the room. Continued behavior of this sort will result in dismissal from the class and referral to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action.

#### **XIV. ADDENDA**

**Students with Disabilities:** Sam Houston State University responsibly observes the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you have a disability that may adversely affect your work in this class, please register with the SHSU Counseling Center and talk with your professor about how he can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. No accommodation can be made until you register with the Counseling Center, however. Contact the Chair of the Committee for Continuing Assistance for Disabled Students and Director of the Counseling Center, Lee Drain Annex, by calling (936) 294-1720.

**Observance of Religious Holy Days:** Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. University policy 861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. A student desiring to absent himself or herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day(s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s) early in the term.

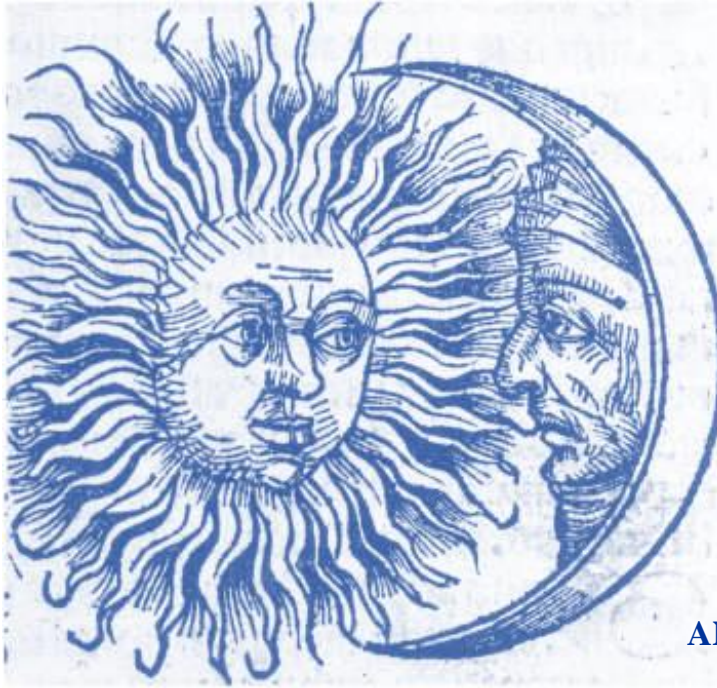
**Visitors in the Classroom:** I always welcome visitors in the classroom—a chance for *you* to show off. But the visitor must not disrupt the classroom with his or her attendance.

**Instructor Evaluation:** The University asks that you complete a course/ instructor evaluation form toward the end of the term. So if you bide your time patiently, you will have the opportunity to turn the tables on your professor by evaluating *him*.

**E-Mail Policy:** I am always happy to answer questions or address concerns by e-mail (eng\_pwc@shsu.edu). But in e-mailing, please address me (“Dear Professor Child”), and identify yourself clearly. (Thank you.)

**Concealed Handgun Carry Policy:** As of August 1, 2016, in accordance with Texas Government Code Section 411.2031, a licensed, trained individual twenty-one years of age or older is permitted to carry a concealed handgun into this classroom; the individual is not required to disclose that he or she is carrying the concealed handgun. Instructor’s additional policy: Students who carry concealed weapons into this classroom are not *allowed* to disclose—that is, to show or to announce to other students in the classroom that they are carrying a concealed handgun—except in the event of an active shooting situation. Disclosure for any other reason constitutes “open carry,” which is forbidden on campuses of public universities in the State of Texas.

**And Finally:** I reserve the right to make minor changes in the syllabus.



## CLASS CALENDAR AND READING SCHEDULE

The following schedule lists class meeting days and dates for completion of reading and writing assignments. We will try to follow this calendar as closely as possible; given the vagaries of life, however, we may have to modify the schedule some as we go.

Reading assignments designated “N” come from *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, 10<sup>th</sup> ed. The letter following “N” indicates the Norton volume from which the reading comes. So, for example, the designation “N C 454-60” means that the reading is on pages 454-60 of Volume C (*The Restoration and the Eighteenth Century*) of *The Norton Anthology*.

The designation “RRJ” refers to the Reading Response Journal booklet, from which all writing assignments come; the designation “CB” refers to this course booklet.

Reading assignments for *The Norton Anthology* give the inclusive pages only for the works themselves. Please read also the good introductions to authors and works; because these introductions provide useful contexts, material from them will likely arise in class discussions.

The reading schedule is moderately demanding. Pace yourself well, read ahead as necessary, and always come to class prepared.

Unless otherwise noted, come to class every day listed below, even if there is no reading assignment.

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15**

First Class Day

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 17**

**MONDAY, JANUARY 20**

No Class: Martin Luther King Day

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22**

Reading Assignment: "The Reading Response Journal" (RRJ 1-8), "Quotations and Works Cited" (RRJ 9-17)

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 24**

Deadline for Procuring Text

Reading Assignment: *Beowulf* lines 1-1599 (N A 42-77)

**MONDAY, JANUARY 27**

Reading Assignment: *Beowulf* lines 1600-3182 (N A 77-109)

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29**

Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal #1 (RRJ 30)

Reading Assignment: Old English Riddles (CB 30-32)

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 31**

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3**

Reading Assignment: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* Fitt 1-Fitt 2  
(N A 204-27)

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5**

Reading Assignment: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* Fitt 3-Fitt 4  
(N A 227-56)

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7**

Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal #2 (RRJ 31)

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10**

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12**

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 14**

Unit Examination One



**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17**

Reading Assignment: Marlowe, *The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus*  
(N B 679-715)

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19**

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 21**

Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal #3 (RRJ 32)

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24**

Reading Assignment: Shakespeare, Sonnets 18 (N B 724-25), 73 (N B 729); Donne, "A  
Valediction: Forbidding Mourning" (N B 935-36), Holy Sonnet 14 (N B 963-64); Herrick,  
"To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time" (N B 1312)

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26**

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28**

Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal #4 (RRJ 33)

**MONDAY, MARCH 2**

Reading Assignment: Milton, *Paradise Lost* Book 1 (N B 1495-1514)

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4**

Reading Assignment: Milton, *Paradise Lost* Book 9 (N B 1643-68); Book 12 lines 574-649 (N B  
1726-27)

**FRIDAY, MARCH 6**

Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal #5 (RRJ 34)

**MONDAY, MARCH 9 TO FRIDAY, MARCH 13**

No Classes: Spring Recess

**MONDAY, MARCH 16**

Unit Examination Two

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18**

Reading Assignment: Dryden, "MacFlecknoe" (N C 62-68)

Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal #6 (RRJ 35)

**FRIDAY, MARCH 20**

**MONDAY, MARCH 23**

Reading Assignment: Swift, "A Modest Proposal" (N C 454-60)

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25**

Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal #7 (RRJ 36)

**FRIDAY, MARCH 27**

**MONDAY, MARCH 30**

Reading Assignment: Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* Book 1 (N C 282-322)

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1**

**FRIDAY, APRIL 3**

Reading Assignment: Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* Book 2 (N C 322-65)

**MONDAY, APRIL 6**

Reading Assignment: Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* Book 4 (N C 407-54)

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8**

Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal #8 (RRJ 37)

**FRIDAY, APRIL 10**

No Class: Good Friday

**MONDAY, APRIL 13**

Reading Assignment: Pope, *The Rape of the Lock* (N C 506-25)

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15**

**FRIDAY, APRIL 17**

Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal #9 (RRJ 38)



**MONDAY, APRIL 20**

No Class: Professional Obligation

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22**

Crossdisciplinary Project Presentations

**FRIDAY, APRIL 24**

Crossdisciplinary Project Presentations

**MONDAY, APRIL 27**

Crossdisciplinary Project Presentations

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29**

Crossdisciplinary Project Presentations

**FRIDAY, MAY 1**

Crossdisciplinary Project Presentations

Last Class Day

**MONDAY, MAY 4, NO LATER THAN NOON**

Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal #10 (RRJ 39)

Submit Bound Reading Response Journal (RRJ 40)

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 6, 12:00 P.M. TO 2:00 P.M.**

Unit Examination Three



## THE CROSSDISCIPLINARY PROJECT

In taking a crossdisciplinary approach to a subject, we try to understand it better or see it in a new way by applying methods from one academic discipline to another. For example, in diagnosing a patient's illness, a doctor might not simply rely upon her scientific methods but also apply the methods of a literary critic by listening to the kind of language that the patient uses in reporting his symptoms and looking for a plot in the patient's narrative. Or an epidemiologist might consider political and economic issues in trying to understand and control the outbreak of a global pandemic.

Your mission in this crossdisciplinary project is to interpret a work of literature in a new way by applying the methods and approaches of another discipline. How, for example, can our interests in the "hard sciences," mathematics, performing and visual arts, psychology, history, and so forth—and the *methods* we employ in these other disciplines—lead to fresh *interpretations* of the literature?

Here are some possibilities, taken from past student presentations:

- Research dramatic costumery in Marlowe's day; make a costume and explain its functions to the class.
- Choreograph or set a poem to music; perform it for the class.
- Give a visual presentation of some work of literature—a drawing, painting, tapestry, or film, for example.
- Interpret a work or character according to some modern theory of psychology or sociology.
- Explain the scientific background of a piece of literature.
- Conduct a statistical computer analysis of the style of a poem or passage of prose.
- Translate a work of literature into another language.
- Market "A Modest Proposal."
- Prepare a lesson that teaches a work of literature to elementary or secondary students.
- Create a home page for an author or a work of literature.

I have set aside several days at the end of the semester for presenting your various projects to the class. The presentation may take any number of forms: a simple report of your findings, a dramatic or musical presentation, a scientific experiment (?). The formal presentation will last no fewer than ten and no more than fifteen minutes. During the presentation, you must explain clearly *how* the project interprets the literature. Consider, especially, the challenges that you confronted in interpreting the work using the new method.

Rehearse your presentation thoroughly, and dress appropriately for standing in front of an audience.

I will evaluate the project (10% of your final grade) according to the following criteria: originality, depth and understanding of interpretative process, labor involved in preparation, and presentation.

The best project by popular acclaim wins a prize.

Rules:

1. Work with English literature written before 1800, and make sure that the project relates specifically to the literature.
2. Discuss the project with me before beginning work on it.
3. Be creative.
4. Be impressive.
5. Have fun.

## SAMPLE READING QUIZ

The following reading quiz on Alexander Pope's *The Rape of the Lock* appears exactly as students in a previous term received it. Quizzes this semester will be similar, although they may include identifications of quotations also.

English 384, Spring 2008, Dr. Child      Name:  
Reading Quiz: *The Rape of the Lock*

Take no more than five minutes in completing the following reading quiz:

I. Using the bank of personages below, match the characters with their descriptions. Some characters may be used more than once; some may not be used at all. (1 point each)

A. Ariel	C. Belinda	E. Umbriel
B. The Baron	D. Clarissa	

1. \_\_\_\_ The protagonist of the poem
2. \_\_\_\_ The Sylph who watches over the protagonist.
3. \_\_\_\_ This character commits the "rape."
4. \_\_\_\_ This character wears "a sparkling Cross," "Which *Jews* might kiss, and Infidels adore."
5. \_\_\_\_ The character who puts on makeup ritualistically
6. \_\_\_\_ This person wins the card game, which is the centerpiece of the action.
7. \_\_\_\_ This character cautions the protagonist toward the end of the poem that "she who scorns a Man, must die a Maid."
8. \_\_\_\_ Having lost the card game, this character schemes "New Stratagems, the radiant Lock to gain."
9. \_\_\_\_ Following the "rape," this character makes a journey to the Cave of Spleen, where he collects a "wondrous Bag" of "Sighs, Sobs, and Passion, and the War of Tongues."
10. \_\_\_\_ In a dream, this character warns the protagonist to "beware of Man!"

II. Choose the *best* answer for each of the following questions.

(1 point each)

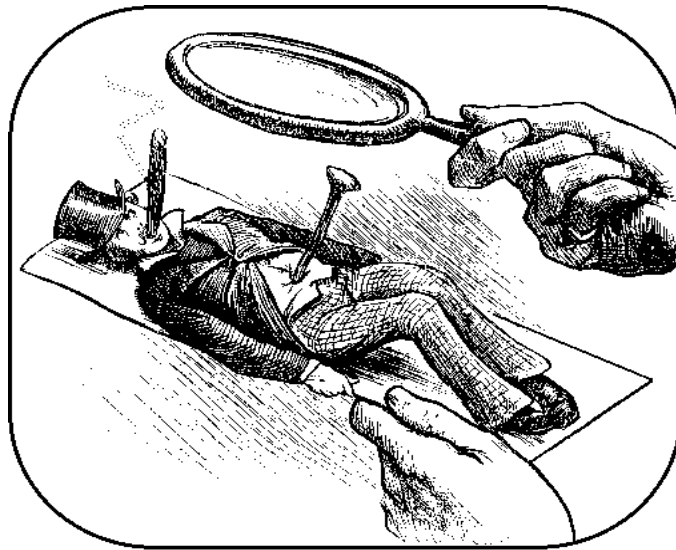
11. \_\_\_\_ How many "cantos" are there in *The Rape of the Lock*?  
(a) 2 (b) 3 (c) 5 (d) 7
12. \_\_\_\_ In what city do the events of the poem take place? (a) Paris (b) Berlin (c) Amsterdam  
(d) London
13. \_\_\_\_ What card game do the characters play in the middle of the tale? (a) bridge (b) whist  
(c) ombre (d) Catch the Ten

14. \_\_\_ The Cave of Spleen is a strange underworld ruled over by (a) the Goddess of Spleen (b) Persephone (c) the Duchess of Doom (d) Nicole Richie

15. \_\_\_ What becomes of the lock of hair at the end of the poem? (a) It is transformed into a comet. (b) It is enshrined in a glass case on Clarissa's toilet (dressing table). (c) It is braided into a "love Knot" and honored ever after by the fashionable young men of the town. (d) We never find out.

Bonus (1 point). What is the name of the protagonist's lapdog?

**III. Having submitted this portion of the quiz, you will then take a brief open-book section, to assure me that you have the book in class on this day.**



## EXAMINATION FORMAT

Each unit examination will comprise three sections, with instructions (more or less) as you find them below.

About one week before each exam I will hand out a review sheet to help guide your study.

**SECTION ONE: MULTIPLE CHOICE.** Choose the *best* answer for each of the following questions or statements. If you happen to find a question that you think has more than one answer, make a brief argument in the margin about why you selected the answer that you did. (In other words, please make your argument *now*, rather than after the fact.)

### SAMPLE QUESTION

1. \_\_\_\_ Which of the following does *not* link Hrothgar and Beowulf thematically and symbolically?
  - a) Both rule their kingdoms for fifty years before they are confronted with an evil that threatens to destroy their people.
  - b) The hall of each is burned to the ground.
  - c) We see both in old age.
  - d) Each is able to exact *wergild* from the enemy who has threatened his people.
  - e) Both are righteous pagan kings.

**SECTION TWO: DEFINITIONS OF TERMS.** In the spaces provided, define [number to be determined] of the following terms that we have encountered in our study of Old and Middle English works. For each, provide a definition of three or four complete sentences that could serve as a kind of guidebook introduction for students first encountering these materials. Give at least one specific example from the literature that we read to support your definition. If you work on more than (the specified number of) terms, I will read only the first (specified number) for evaluation.

SAMPLE TERM:

henotheist

SAMPLE DEFINITION:

A henotheist is a pagan who accepts, more or less, the supremacy of a single god among the pantheon of gods. From a Christian point of view, the henotheist is a kind of enlightened pagan, since he or she is moving in the direction of the monotheism that is central to Christianity. In *Beowulf*, both Beowulf and Hrothgar are henotheists while their people apparently remain polytheists (we recall that Hrothgar's people turn to their false idols in response to Grendel's attacks). The Christian narrator, however, treats them ironically and with a certain sadness because, despite their enlightenment, they have not yet found the narrator's own Christian truth.

**SECTION THREE: SHORT ESSAY RESPONSE.** Write a well-developed essay response to the following question. In evaluating your response, I will consider not only the critical significance of your generalizations but also how well you support the argument with specifics from the texts. Use the paper provided to you, and please stay within the margins so that I have room for comments and calculations. Please write neatly enough so that I can read your brilliant (!) answer, and proofread carefully before submitting the exam for credit.

SAMPLE QUESTION:

Discussing both Hrothgar and Beowulf, make an argument about the ideal of "kingship" in *Beowulf*: What must a good king both be and do? How do Hrothgar and Beowulf satisfy these expectations?

SAMPLE RESPONSE:

In the Middle Ages and Renaissance, political and cultural theorists posited that the good king possessed on the one hand wisdom (*sapientia*) and the ability to reflect and, on the other, bravery (*fortitudo*), the ability to act when necessary. Hrothgar is by all accounts a wise king and ring-giver; his long life and experiences have made him a figure of great respect. But he lacks the fortitude and power to act against the marauding Grendel and to exact the *wergild* that is due to his people for Grendel's murderous attacks. Beowulf, the hero from across the seas, has the courage and ability to act against Grendel, but he is something of a proud and reckless young man. Hrothgar himself warns the young man about the dangers of pride. We catch glimpses of Beowulf's developing maturation as, for example, when he graciously refuses the kingship that Hygd offers him upon Hygelac's death. The final, apparently disconnected third section, which features Beowulf's battle with the dragon and his ultimate death, shows the hero himself as old king. He is now wise, but, importantly, he is still the man of action who will rise to protect his people even at risk to his own life.





## OLD ENGLISH RIDDLES

The following Old English riddles are preserved in the Exeter Book, copied ca. 979:

### **RIDDLE #7**

My clothes are silent as I walk the earth  
or stir the waters. Sometimes that which  
makes me beautiful raises me high  
above men's heads, and powerful clouds  
hold me, carry me far and wide.  
The loveliness spread on my back rustles  
and sings, bright, clear songs,  
and loud, whenever I leave lakes  
and earth, floating in the air like a spirit.

### **RIDDLE #25**

I am a strange creature, for I satisfy women,  
a service to the neighbours! No one suffers  
at my hands except for my slayer.  
I grow very tall, erect in a bed,  
I'm hairy underneath. From time to time  
a beautiful girl, the brave daughter  
of some churl, dares to hold me,  
grips my russet skin, robs me of my head  
and puts me in the pantry. At once that girl  
with plaited hair who has confined me  
remembers our meeting. Her eye moistens.

## **RIDDLE #26**

An enemy robbed me of life, stole  
my strength, then soaked me in water, dipping me  
in and out. He set me in the sun,  
and all the hair I had had was gone,  
dried to nothing. A knife's hard edge  
ground away my last impurity,  
and fingers folded me, and a bird's delight  
spread black drops all over me, walking  
up and down, stopping to swallow  
tree-dye wet with water, then walking  
again. Later, a man covered me  
with sheltering boards, stretched skin around me,  
and dressed me in gold; a smith's glowing  
work was wound across me. Now let  
these decorations, this crimson dye,  
and all this glorious labor celebrate  
the Lord, far and near! (—Not punish  
the dull, like a penance!) If men will use me,  
their souls will be safer, surer of Heaven;  
their hearts bolder, more joyful; their minds  
wiser and more knowing. Their friends, their families,  
will be truer, better, more just, more worthy,  
more perfect in their faith. Prosperity and honor  
and grace will come to them; kindness and mercy  
will circle them around, and love will hold them  
tightly in its arms. What am I, so useful  
to men? My name is a great one, holy  
in itself, famous for the help it can bring.

## **RIDDLE #32**

Our world is lovely in different ways,  
hung with beauty and works of hands.  
I saw a strange machine, made  
for motion, slide against the sand,  
shrieking as it went. It walked swiftly  
on its only foot, this odd-shaped monster,  
traveled in an open country without  
seeing, without arms, or hands,  
with many ribs, and its mouth in the middle.  
Its work is useful, and welcome, for it loads  
its belly with food, and brings abundance  
to men, to poor and to rich, paying  
its tribute year after year. Solve  
this riddle, if you can, and unravel its name.

**RIDDLE #47**

A worm ate words. I thought that wonderfully  
strange—a miracle—when they told me a crawling  
insect had swallowed noble songs,  
a night-time thief had stolen writing  
so famous, so weighty. But the bug was foolish  
still, though its belly was full of thought.

## GUIDELINES FOR RECOMMENDATION LETTERS

I am always happy to write recommendation letters for qualified students who are applying for employment, scholarships and grants, or further schooling. A few guidelines, however:

1. I cannot fairly write a recommendation for you without proper acquaintance. In order for me to write a letter, you must have completed a course with me and earned a grade of at least a *B* or have been acquainted with me in some other capacity (for example, as a member of The Sam Houston State University Writers' Forum, which I sponsor) for at least a full semester.
2. Please make the request formally, letting me know very clearly what you are applying for (a particular scholarship or a particular field of study at a particular institution). Provide the names and addresses of the contact(s) to whom I should send the letter.
3. You must give me at least a couple of weeks and preferably more time to complete the letter. Often I am working under pressures of class or professional deadlines, so it is not possible for me to get letters out at the last minute. Plan your applications well in advance.
4. I can write a very good letter based on your performance in my class or my observation of you in some other capacity. But the more that I know about your other accomplishments and interests, the better the letter. Please send me a current curriculum vitae (note the spelling of that document) or, at least, a list of such accomplishments and interests, especially those that suit you well for the job, scholarship, or educational program for which you are applying.
5. If the institution or organization to which you are applying requires a cover sheet, please get that to me in due time. As a matter of form, sign the waiver that insures confidentiality. If I agree to write you a letter, it will be a good one, and I will e-mail you a copy of the letter. So you need not worry about my sabotaging your application with a damaging or less-than-enthusiastic recommendation. However, if you do not sign the confidentiality waiver, those on the receiving end might think that your referees have been less than honest.
6. If the institution requires a hard copy, please provide pre-addressed envelopes with postage.



## **YOUR PROFESSOR**

Paul W. Child earned his PhD in 1992 from the University of Notre Dame and joined the faculty at Sam Houston State University in the fall of 1993 after failing as ditch-digger, rock musician, night auditor in a motel, and business manager for a building restoration contractor. His academic specialty is Restoration and 18<sup>th</sup>-century British literature, and he has scholarly interests in medical literature and the social history of medicine. He has published work on Jonathan Swift, author of *Gulliver's Travels* and "A Modest Proposal"; George Cheyne, doctor to the stars and lesser luminaries in 18<sup>th</sup>-century London and Bath; and the teaching of medical literature. Dr. Child teaches a wide array of classes at Sam Houston State.