

Course Assessment: Must-Reads of Contemporary English Literature

In this course we are going to discuss samples and extracts from well-known British and American contemporary writers. We will discuss one author per week. In order to participate actively in the discussions and profit from them it is ESSENTIAL that you have read the text sample of the writer that is being discussed each week and that you have spent at least a few minutes reflecting about the text in your online journal. While reading the text samples, highlight interesting passages and note questions and comments in the margin.

Every student will present a writer and one of his/her novels. This is best done in pairs or groups of three where each group member reads a different novel by the same writer. We will then compare the presented novel(s) with the text sample by the same writer.

Reading takes time – therefore we will not have any written papers or homework except for the 10-minute entries into your reading journals and the presentation handouts. Please take the reading assignments and response writing very seriously; they are essential to the success of our course.

Look at the following assessment criteria and ask yourself what grade you want to earn. It is your own responsibility to show me how well you have reached the individual goals listed below.

<p>Regular class participation: <u>Coming to class prepared, having read and annotated the assigned texts. (Always bring a printout of your latest journal entry to class.)</u> Active participation in discussions and during presentations, Effort and work-attitude, Time-management, Team-spirit</p>	/40	
<p>Reading skills and critical questioning of the sample texts: <u>Regular reading diary/journal</u> (of sample texts and one novel) Understanding beyond the plot level (themes, values, attitudes) Finding relevant information/problem solving capacity All entries are on time!!!</p>	/30	
<p>Presentation:¹ <u>Good knowledge of the book and writer you present,</u> Choice of typical and characteristic text samples, Presenting the relevant features and themes, Pointing out links to other works discussed in the course, Arousing your peers' interest and eliciting their reactions and questions, Speaking freely and fluently, Language and vocabulary <u>Well-structured, complete handout,</u></p>	/30	
	Total:	

¹ Note that presentation dates cannot be postponed at short notice. This would interfere with the course setup and your peers would not be prepared to discuss your author. If you are absent or cannot do your presentation on the assigned day I will present the author and book myself. **You have to write a well-structured paper** answering the questions usually covered in the presentation. Hand in this paper together with the required presentation handouts within a week of your return to school.

Presentation

Present a Writer of your Choice

The main goals of your presentation are to inform your peers about a well-known writer and his/her work.

- Make your presentation interesting for your classmates.
- Keep plot summaries as short as possible.
- Use visual aids to help your classmates follow the different plots. (plot diagrams, setting maps, character portraits, pictures...)
- Introduce the main characters vividly (you might act out a key scene...)

Concentrate mainly on similarities and typical features of the author.

- **common themes**
- **character traits that reappear in several works**
- **typical settings**
- **style and tone**
- **symbols?**

Present only relevant facts from the author's biography.

Presentation handout:

Prepare a 4-page handout that can be copied/printed on one sheet of paper (2 pages per sheet and double sided) Your handout must include

- info about all the above mentioned points
- short plot summaries of the novel(s) you have read (you can copy good summaries from the internet as long as you quote the sources)
- and one or two text extracts that show some of the typical features that you have identified. (Present and discuss these text passages in the presentation and point out in what way they are typical and interesting.)

!!! Upload your presentation handout to Moodle at least one day before your presentation!!!
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Choosing a writer and a novel:

Work in pairs or threes.

Choose one of the writers and novels on epep.at (follow the link on Moodle).

Read your novel by and enter a reflection into your journal.