

**Assignment Template:**

**All materials handed in for grade MUST have the following information either in a header or on a separate cover sheet.**

Your name

Your student ID #

Course Name

Instructor's Name

Assignment Title

Your Subtitle (where applicable, as on the Remix or Essay Outline and Essay assignments)

Date Submitted:

RESEARCH ESSAY
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**Learning Outcomes:**

- ARGUE a thesis;
- APPLY your close reading and analytical skills;
- COMPARE literary theories;
- IDENTIFY and DEFINE core concepts and terms;
- APPLY core concepts and terms;
- COMMUNICATE your ideas in appropriate scholarly language and using appropriate scholarly tools;
- ENGAGE IN DIALOGUE with the critical field.

**HELPFUL RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES:**

PPT: Asking Research Questions based on Quotations:

<http://blogs.unbc.ca/eng1381/files/2010/01/Asking-Research-Questions-ppt.pdf>

Tip Sheet: Asking Research Questions:

<http://blogs.unbc.ca/eng1381/files/2010/01/Asking-Research-Questions.pdf>

Instructions
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**General Instructions:**

LENGTH: 2000 words

Format: standard MLA, 12-pt font, Times New Roman, DOUBLE-SPACED

1. CHOOSE TWO (2) authors on the course syllabus;
2. COMPARE their theories on the basis of VALID and SIGNIFICANT bases of comparison;
3. CONDUCT significant and relevant SECONDARY RESEARCH that includes readings on BOTH of the theorists and, in the case of Topic Two, the selected text;
4. ARGUE a clear, well-articulated and significant THESIS;

5. SUPPORT your argument with DETAILED REFERENCES to both primary and secondary texts;
6. Include a WORKS CITED page in proper MLA form.

You may use your Reading Journals and Concept Maps as a starting point for your analysis but you must develop those ideas significantly and avoid duplicating that material.

Essay Topics
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### TOPIC ONE: Core Questions

Choose one of the Core Questions distributed at the beginning of the course and use it as the basis of your research question. How does each of your chosen theorists address that question? Do they agree or disagree? Why or why not? Do not simply describe the theories, but explore how the comparison illuminates our understanding of the nature and purpose of literature and art.

### TOPIC TWO: Applying the Theories

Choose ONE (1) of the following THREE (3) texts and analyse it using the concepts provided by your two chosen theorists. Do not simply conduct two separate analyses, but use the text as a means of comparing the theorists and illuminating their understanding of the nature and purpose of literature and art. What is the relationship between the theories' core definitions and commitments and the analysis of the text under scrutiny? What is the significance of the differences and similarities that arise in this analysis?

#### Text One:

Ars Poetica, Archibald MacLeish

A poem should be palpable and mute  
As a globed fruit,

Dumb  
As old medallions to the thumb,

Silent as the sleeve-worn stone  
Of casement ledges where the moss has grown—

A poem should be wordless  
As the flight of birds.

\*

A poem should be motionless in time  
As the moon climbs,

Leaving, as the moon releases  
Twig by twig the night-entangled trees,

Leaving, as the moon behind the winter leaves,  
Memory by memory the mind—

A poem should be motionless in time  
As the moon climbs.

\*

A poem should be equal to:  
Not true.

For all the history of grief  
An empty doorway and a maple leaf.

For love  
The leaning grasses and two lights above the sea—

A poem should not mean  
But be.

(from *The Broadview Anthology of Poetry*. Herbert Rosengarten and Amanda Goldrick-Jones eds. Peterborough ON: Broadview Press, 1993. 493. If you use another source for the poem, be sure to cite it correctly)

Text Two: Sonnet 116, William Shakespeare

Let me not to the marriage of true minds  
Admit impediments. Love is not love  
Which alters when it alteration finds,  
Or bends with the remover to remove.  
O no! it is an ever-fixed mark  
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;  
It is the star to every wand'ring bark,  
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.  
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks  
Within his bending sickle's compass come;  
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,  
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.  
If this be error and upon me prov'd,  
I never writ, nor no man ever lov'd.

(from *The Norton Anthology of English Literature, Volume I*. Stephen Greenblatt, Ed. W.W. Norton & Company, 2012, p. 1162.)

**Selections continue next page**

Text Three: “A Modest Proposal” by Jonathan Swift

Available at Archive.org: <https://archive.org/details/DeanJonathanSwiftAModestProposal1729>

Or in most anthologies of early British literature. Be sure to cite the copy that you use.

**FORMAT: YOU WILL HAND IN FOR GRADE**

1. The Information Template at the top of this document;
2. A 2000-word essay in proper MLA format:
  - **HARDCOPY**;
  - Typed;
  - Times New Roman 12-pt font;
  - **DOUBLE-SPACED**;
  - Page numbers in upper right-hand corner;
  - Staple in upper left-hand corner;
3. **WORKS CITED** in proper MLA format.

**Assessment**

- Clear, analytical research question of the appropriate scope for the assignment;
- Clear, analytical thesis with evident relevance to the study of literary theory;
- Appropriate use of research to represent the critical field;
- Coherent synthesis and articulation of key elements, terms etc.;
- Appropriate illustration of concepts;
- Evidence of application of conceptual tools, definitions etc. to the topic;
- Concision, clear language, paragraph and sentence structure;
- Tidiness, care for presentation;
- Accurate MLA citation and documentation;
- Evidence of deep engagement and intellectual curiosity.