**English 3.8 91479 STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS**

**Develop an informed understanding of literature and/or language using critical texts**

**Level** 3 **Credits** 4

**Achievement Criteria Let’s get Critical**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Achievement** | **Achievement with Merit** | **Achievement with Excellence** |
| * Develop an informed understanding of literature and/or language using critical texts. | * Develop an informed and convincing understanding of literature and/or language using critical texts. | * Develop an informed and perceptive understanding of literature and/or language using critical texts. |

This achievement standard involves developing an informed understanding of literature and/or language using critical texts.

**TASK: A Research essay on a text based on a study of critical essays**During the study of a written text, you will have engaged with a range of issues. To get you started in this assessment, you will have to **form a hypothesis** around an issue or issues that have interested you. Your hypothesis is a supposition that **needs further investigation**. Once you have made a hypothesis you will investigate **a range of critical texts**, and select **at least two** to analyse further and from which to contest your hypothesis. You will present your discussion on your findings in the form of **a written essay**.

**EXPLANATION of the criteria** in the mark schedule

***Develop an informed and perceptive understanding***involves

* developing a coherent reading, critique, and interpretation
* which includes **judgements**, commentary,
* and details and/or examples;
* demonstrating understandings that are discerning; and,
* demonstrating understandings that are sophisticated and insightful and/or original.
* Your understandings will be presented in a written form

***Critical texts***may includelinguistic or literary theory, criticism, and/or analysis. They may be written, oral, and/or visual texts. Texts are student selected.

***Using critical texts***is a process thatinvolves:

1. developing a hypothesis or theory to frame an investigation

eg Iago sabotages Othello's relationship with Desdemona because he is jealous of him

The use of Campbell’s monomyth theories are essential to an understanding of the Life of Pi.

Feminist theory is the only valid way to understand the themes of The Bean Trees.

1. selecting critical texts. Use databases such as

* EPIC <http://www.tki.org.nz/epic2> (the password and log-in details are confidential to our school, so please don’t share with anyone).
* Google Advanced <http://www.google.co.nz/advanced_search>
* and Google Scholar <http://scholar.google.co.nz/>
* as well as teacher handouts
* In books (look in libraries)

1. selecting information and evaluating its reliability and usefulness in relation to the investigation.

Complete a chart such as the one below to assist you in building your information.

1. synthesising information from primary source(s) and critical texts (for example, using readings from different critics to interpret Iago’s motivation/ using feminist theory to interpret Cordelia’s representation).

**WRITING THE ESSAY: POINTS TO NOTE**

* 1. Clearly express your own point of view and argument
  2. support your development of main ideas with relevant details and quoted

examples sustained with quoted references from critical texts studied in support of your main text

* 1. structure your essay with a logically developed introduction, body and

conclusion, supported with relevant details and quoted examples

* 1. observe the conventions of the critical literary essay ( -use APA referencing system)
  2. craft final copy to publication standards

**INTRODUCTION**

a)  Introduce your text - author, basic plot, critical reception.

b)  Introduce basic elements of your critical lens – this may be feminism, Marxism, psychological interpretations or something else. (eg.  Feminist critics are concerned with stereotyping, gender roles, equal rights, power structures, influence on audience) and discuss how critics have interpreted your text in terms of these ideas. In the main essay, you could discuss two articles using the feminist lens or, two critiques with different approaches, can be discussed in terms of what each adds to understanding.

**OR** explain what the key differences are of the two articles you are using. These might be articles written several centuries apart or just two modern critics with opposing viewpoints(eg Bradley sees Othello as… whereas Leavis feels….) and discuss in what ways the different critical articles you have read contribute to your understanding of the text

Overall the point is to show you have researched different ideas and can discuss these as well as relate them to your understanding of the text.

The introduction **briefly** outlines this structure /plan of attack which is expanded in the body of the essay

d) Develop and clearly state your  **Hypothesis** = what you hope to discover in your interpretation of the text using the lens (eg.  a deeper understanding of character motivations, a critique of the author's underlying biases, etc.)

**BODY**

d) Build a discussion of the critical pieces so you show analysis of the articles AND the primary studied text.  Make sure you make specific reference to your research that helped you understand key aspects. Develop several paragraphs as you build a full discussion interweaving the ideas you have with the ideas presented by the critics. **Evaluate**, **comment** and **draw conclusions** the whole way through your essay.

**CONCLUSION**

e)  Draw interpretive conclusions about the text **as a whole** and possibly about the critical approach and make sure you relate this back to your hypothesis.

**OTHER REQUIREMENTS**:

1. You **MUST** provide evidence of the process in the form of a log. The log consists of notes, quotations,/evidence and details of sources where found.
2. You **MUST** provide a bibliography using APA referencing. Ensure each template uses this format to determine what text you have used. The guidelines and examples below come from <http://www.waikato.ac.nz/library/study/guides/apa.shtml#format>

For a book:

Author, A. (Year). *Title of the work.* Place name: Publisher.

For a chapter in a book:

Author, A. (Year). Chapter title. In A. Editor (Eds.), Title of the book (pp.xx-xx). Place name: Publisher

For a website:

Author, A., & Author, B. (Year). Title of webpage. [Description of form] Retrieved from http://

**TO SUMMARISE**

The process:

1. Study the primary source eg a written text such as ‘Othello’ / The Great Gatsby.
2. Determine a thesis – some examples will be provided.
3. Choose an element of the text to explore – this could be a character issue/theme issue/structural or style or genre issue.
4. Define and create ‘sub-questions’ that will provide focus and clarity.
5. Read secondary critical texts that provide information on thesis.
6. **Find your own evidence that supports/refutes critical readings – this must be your own opinion based on your knowledge of the text and can also include other readings or sources. Note all must be correctly referenced using the APA system. Don’t be afraid to put forward YOUR ideas and comments. See quote below ☺**
7. Complete templates for each text – in each critical reading find details that answer the ‘sub-questions’
8. Draft a report – the focus of the report is on evaluating the worth of the secondary texts in terms of helping you clarify your understanding of the text – do they help you prove your thesis?
9. Submit essay for assessment on the Monday of Week 3, Term 2 or another date set by your teacher.
10. There will be a restricted resubmission period possible for this assessment – but only for students who have completed course work and submitted a full essay.

NOTE - “Be yourself; everyone else is already taken.” ― [Oscar Wilde](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/3565.Oscar_Wilde)

By this we mean – do not be afraid to have your own opinions and argue for them. But as with all scientific research, there is no value in vague, unsubstantiated ideas, you do need evidence to support what you are saying. Careful, balanced argument will be rewarded. Copying out someone else’s article will not be useful.

**SAMPLE LOG TEMPLATE**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| My thesis is …  What this means to me…  The key words in my thesis are… |  |  |
| What I already know about this topic from reading the text | Three questions that I will use critical readings to answer (use the key words of the thesis to formulate questions) | Where I intend to find answers |
|  |  |  |
| My Thesis Statement: | Summary/notes |  |
| Critic 1 (use APA referencing model to create bibliography <http://www.waikato.ac.nz/library/study/guides/apa.shtml>)  Name:  Reference data: |  |  |
| What does this reading have to say about my thesis?  Does it answer any of my sub-questions?  Does it support/refute this thesis?  What is his/her angle? (make sure you quote).  Is this reading saying different things to other readings? Why? |  |  |
| **My Evidence:**  What evidence can I find from the text itself?  Do I agree/ disagree with this critic’s points? Why?  Why is this reading different from any other?  Back up with evidence and quotes from the play. |  |  |
| My Thesis Statement: |  |  |
| **Critic 2** (use APA referencing model to create bibliography <http://www.waikato.ac.nz/library/study/guides/apa.shtml>)  Name:  Reference data: |  |  |
| What does this reading have to say about my thesis?  Does it support/refute this thesis?  Does it answer any of my sub-questions?  What is his/her angle? (make sure you quote).  Is this reading saying different things to other readings? Why? |  |  |
| **My Evidence:**  What evidence can I find from the play itself?  Do I agree/ disagree with this critic’s points?  Why? Back up with evidence and quotes from the play. |  |  |