

Assessment item 2

Major Assignment

Value: 40%

Due date: 04-May-2017

Return date: 25-May-2017

Length: 2000-2500 words

Task

Choose ONE of the following topics:

Topic One:

'Tudor or Elizabethan poets who chose the sonnet form did so to evoke, often in a striking manner, the joys and sorrows of love'.

Discuss this claim with reference to at least four sonnets in the *Norton Anthology*.

Topic Two:

'Sir Toby Belch as the literal embodiment of "the good life", that is bodily pleasure, represents an alternative to the puritanism of Malvolio'.

Discuss how Shakespeare brings out the contrast between these two characters in *Twelfth Night*.

OR

Discuss how a production of *Twelfth Night* (stage or screen) which you have seen brought out the distinction in character between Sir Toby and Malvolio.

Topic Three:

At the outset of her discussion on *King Lear* Patricia Kelly (Reading 5) refers to the debatable question of female identity: Cordelia as 'saint', Gonerill and Regan as 'wicked sisters'?

How do you judge the disposition of the three sisters as the play develops?

OR

Discuss how a production of *King Lear* (stage or screen) which you have seen brought out the characters of the three sisters.

OR

Discuss how your reading of Jane Smiley's *A Thousand Acres* throws light on the characters of *King Lear*. (You can limit your discussion to a selection of characters)

Rationale

This assignment primarily treats the first, third, and fourth outcomes under **Learning Outcomes** above.

Specifically, this essay critically examines a literary text, or a number of texts from the period covered, with the expectation that the following will be treated:

- * an analysis of what is meant in the question in an introductory statement and relating certain ingredients in the statement to the question.
- * selection of appropriate details from the text in support of points in the discussion.
- * supporting the discussion with appropriate references from secondary reading.

Marking criteria

The following matters will be taken into account when marking this assignment:

1. Appropriateness of content, eg. for Topics 1 and 4 - selection of poems suitable for the topic; for Topics 2 and 3 - focus on selected characters
2. Adhering to all elements of the set question and not introducing extraneous matter
3. Support of ideas with reference to the text(s) (eg. quotations) and to secondary reading (several references, and from more than one source)
4. Structuring of discussion in essay into well-constructed paragraphs as set out under **Presentation** (below)
5. Written expression: sentence structures, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation
6. Correct application of the requirements of a referencing system, APA
7. Keeping to the required length (+/- 10%)

Applying these seven points to the grades available:

A grade of HD/DI will indicate excellence in all seven aspects above, a DI weaker on 1-2 points

A CR will be strong on points 1 or 2 and 5, adequate on 3, and weaker on other points

A PS will be adequate on the first two points and 5, but weaker on the others

A FL will be inadequate on points 1-4 and/or very weak on point 5; weaker on other points.

As the comment under FL would indicate, significant shortcomings in 5 are likely to lead to a FL grade irrespective of the quality of the other points.

See also under **Presentation**.

Presentation

Organisation of Content

As with Assignment One, this is a fully-fledged essay, so attention must be paid to its overall structure to ensure that the content is presented in a clear and coherent manner. Note the following:

Introduction:

States intention of essay:

- Sets out a general response to the question
- Will probably include an understanding of terms in the question, eg. sonnet, conceit.

Body:

Elaborates on what writer promises in the introduction:

- Logical order (each paragraph and its point “flows” into the next)
- Elaborates on writer’s argument(s), often with quotations from the text, and occasionally from secondary reading
- Keeps the issues of the question in mind
- Doesn’t introduce extraneous material or ‘tell the story’ - the content is ‘appropriate’.

Conclusion:

Summarises the essay:

- Briefly reviews main points
- A good concluding sentence that leaves the reader feeling persuaded by the strength of the writer’s reasoning
- Writer has not introduced any new ideas in the conclusion.

Other matters on Presentation:

- Quotations (or paraphrases) from the text(s) that are pertinent to the discussion should be short
- Italicise titles of plays, eg. *King Lear*
- Enclose titles of short poems (eg. lyrics) in inverted commas, eg. ‘The Sun Rising’
- Double-space lines on each page.