

**ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**ENG 353:**  
**AFRICAN AMERICAN LITERATURE: BEGINNINGS TO THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE**

**Course Syllabus and Schedule - Fall 2017**

ENG 353 SLN # 91715 TTH 12:00 PM-1:15 PM

ENG 353 SLN # 83699 TTH 4:30 PM– 5:45 PM

AFR 353 SLN # 79971 TTH 4:30 PM– 5:45 PM

Instructor: Dr. Lynette D. Myles  
Office: LL 303A through T Aug 29; RBH (Ross Blakely Hall) \_\_\_\_ beginning TH Sep 7  
Office Hours: TTH 10:00-11:00 AM; W 12:00-1:00 PM, and by appointment  
Contact: lynette.myles@asu.edu or 480-965-\_\_\_\_\_

**Course Description**

In this course, you will read, analyze, and discuss a variety of literary works written by African Americans. Beginning with slave narratives, and working our way through Reconstruction literature to the Harlem Renaissance, the course will provide a survey of slave narratives, novels, poetry, and essays in the nineteenth and twentieth-centuries. Particular attention will be devoted to the creation of an African American literary tradition and the cultural context of that tradition. Besides considering the content of literary works, you will examine how the issues of gender, race, and class affect the production and meaning of these works. In this course, you will examine the development of African American literature in three units: The Literature of Slavery and Freedom, the Literature of the Reconstruction, and the Harlem Renaissance. Further, the course will identify the principal authors and characteristics of each of these periods and read representative texts.

**Course Learning Outcomes**

Upon the successful completion of the course, you will be able to

- identify major works, themes, conventions, and concerns of African American literature and African American writers.
- explore historical events, literary works, and political movements in relation to African Americans and African American literature (Slavery to the Reconstruction, and the Harlem Renaissance).
- analyze race, class, and politics at work in each text.
- discuss the relationship of African American culture and American culture as a whole.
- advance and sharpen critical communication skills through reading, discussions, and writing.

**Course Required Texts and Readings**

Texts are at ASU bookstore. As you must cite from primary texts in your formal papers, using e-books will be an issue. Also, you will not be allowed to use e-books and online materials for the essay part of the final exam. As I will be making specific references to the readings, you are required to bring your book and/or reading material to each class.

- Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*

- Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* <http://docsouth.unc.edu/fpn/jacobs/jacobs.html> (Read online; copy and paste link or, click the link in syllabus on Bb.)
- Frances E. W. Harper, *Iola Leroy* from Henry Louis Gates, Jr., ed., *Three Classic African American Novels*
- Charles W. Chesnutt, *The Marrow of Tradition* from Henry Louis Gates, Jr., ed., *Three Classic African American Novels*
- Jean Toomer, Selected parts from *Cane*
- Nella Larsen, *Quicksand* and *Passing* (We're reading *Quicksand*)
- Selected assigned essays.

*Note:* The major works not assigned but referred to in an introductory and discussions are cited by author's name for each class. Students are responsible for material covered in class from those works. Subsequent exam questions will refer to them. This is another reason for not missing class.

#### **Additional Course Requirements and Links:**

- An ASU E-mail account
- An ASURITE ID to access my.asu.edu

Course Blackboard: <http://www.my.asu.edu>

Student Code of Conduct: <http://www.asu.edu/studentlife/judicial>

#### **Course Class Format**

This class is a student-centered learning environment. Unlike some approaches to learning in which the professor largely determines the content of course lectures and discussions, a student-centered approach views learning as a process of intense exchange and a negotiation of each other's different beliefs, social locations, and ways of knowing. Student-centered courses are not lecture-based, and so they depend on student dialogue and the professor's relentless facilitating, questioning, and mediating of student ideas. However, I will provide small talks to address the historical and cultural contexts of the writers and their works. Be prepared to spend much time carefully reading, considering, discussing, and writing about the texts in the course.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Your final grade in this course will reflect my assessment of the quality and extent of your overall knowledge of African American literature, based primarily upon the following:

#### **1. Attendance and Participation (20%):**

Attendance is an important part of your grade and is recorded at the beginning of each class.

- You are allowed four absences. If you miss five classes, your final course grade will be lowered by one letter grade (e.g. a B would become a C). On the sixth absence, you will fail the course.
- Students who are late are responsible for seeing to it that their names are recorded at the end of class.
- Being more than 10 minutes late on three occasions will count as an absence.

- If you must leave 10 minutes early, please inform me in advance in person or by e-mail. If you continually leave early, or are not prepared to participate, you may lose credit for that day's activities. Leaving more than 15 minutes early, you will be counted absent.
- If you miss class, it is your responsibility to find out what you have missed from your peers. Please do not email me and ask what you miss in class.

### **Class Participation:**

A main requirement for this course is an intense engagement with the readings, not only in writing but in class discussion as well. Because class discussion is an opportunity to practice the critical skills that we will be developing in the course, attendance and active participation---which entails listening and responding to one another---at every class session are expected.

Effective participation requires both preparation and collaboration. Below you will find strategies for discussion preparation. Also, you will find study guide questions and literary terms on Bb to help guide your reading and of what may be discussed in class. Literary terms can be found on Blackboard in TOOLS.

To help you prepare for class, here are some other useful guidelines for class discussions:

- a. Once you have spoken twice in a discussion, please wait until everyone else has had a chance to speak before saying something else again.
- b. Try to avoid getting into long interchanges with only one other student. Consider a one-to-one discussion with the student outside of class.
- c. It helps to write down your major idea about the reading before coming to class. That way you're certain of having something to say and of not forgetting how you wanted to express it.
- d. Always come with the passage marked that you know you will need to cite to prove your major idea about the reading. Be able to say exactly what it is about the reading that makes you think as you do.
- e. Class participation grades are assigned at midterm and end of course. See grid on Bb on how grades are given.

Finally, students must be able to support the claims they make about the texts with evidence from those texts, you must bring your reading materials to every class in **printed form**. Besides, you need your texts in class as I will be making particular references to parts of the text. Please do not come and sit in class without having your texts with you.

**PLEASE DO NOT ASK TO MAKE UP IN-CLASS WORK, IF YOU HAVE BEEN ABSENT.**

## **2. Reading:**

### **Reading Hints and Strategies:**

You will need to not only read the assigned materials, but also to analyze them. While you are reading, consider the following:

**For Slave Narratives and Novels:**

Use Study Guide questions: For most of the major works, I have provided Study Guide questions that act as a guide so you understand the text and help you in reading for a deeper meaning. Also, the questions can be quite useful for journal entries and for possible paper topics. You are not required to write out answers to these questions.

Also, for the primary works here are a few questions to get you thinking:

- Are there passages that are particularly interesting to you? Are there passages that are confusing or that you think require more explanation? What are they? (Mark them so you can find in class.)
- What stance does the narrator take toward the reader? Who do you think is the writer assuming his/her audience is?
- What additional questions does the reading raise for you?
- Does one reading help you understand another reading better? How?
- What would you like to talk about in the class discussion?

**For Essays:**<sup>1</sup>

Consider the following questions:

- What is the major argument?
  - Is it persuasive? Why or why not?
- What kind of document is it? What is the occasion?
- Who is the intended audience? What does the essay tell you about the status of African American in its time? Status of women?
- What kind of sources/evidence does the author use to support his/her argument? How does the author interpret it?
- Does one reading help you understand another reading better? How?
- What are the contradictions or points of tension, if any? Can you explain those contradictions? (Mark the passages that seem to be contradicting other passages.)
- Are there passages that are particularly interesting to you? Are there passages that are confusing or that you think require more explanation? What are they? (Mark them so you can find in class.)
- What additional questions does the reading raise for you?
- What would you like to talk about in the class discussion?

**3. Writing:**

Because writing is a means of discovery and a pathway to understanding, it is the most important activity in the class next to reading. Indeed, you should think of your writing as a mode of reading that will help you begin understanding the literature at hand.

- **Critical Responses (25%)**<sup>2</sup>: Eight weeks of class you will turn in a one-page critical interpretation or analysis of a work assigned for that week. These responses are due on Thursdays except the

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Dana E. Weiner.

<sup>2</sup> See "Strategies for responding to the reading" at the end of syllabus.

last one scheduled Tuesday, 11/21. Ten assignments will be listed in class schedule. You are required to complete eight. Four are required by all and will be labeled as such. On your own, you will select four using the scheduled dates listed. You will regularly be called on to read from your essay in order to promote discussion. Readings should provide a careful and focused response to a question at issue you see arising from assignment. These readings will be graded primarily on the thoroughness and intelligence with which you grapple with issues at hand in the text. By this I mean, entries show significant evidence of critical thinking and reflection, about what you're reading and NOT summaries or "stories." Critical Responses are worth 10 points each. Readings should follow these guidelines.

- Your critical response should show an implicit or explicit question you're responding to. This question should, if possible, flow out of the reading as a problem implied by or raised by your reflections, but it can also be a completely separate question that interests you about the texts we are engaging.
  - As a guide for the kinds of questions I would like you to investigate, review the Study Guide questions (if provided) on Blackboard. The questions can also be quite useful for preparing to have something to say in class.
  - Your critical response should be written clearly, grammatically correct, and with correct spelling. It should be no more than one page in length and anywhere from 300-500 words in length. Quotes are not counted in word minimum. You may single space and as necessary to get the reading on to one page. Use 12 inch Times New Roman font. Number your pages in top right corner if more than one page is used.
  - Your typed copy of the critical response should be turned in at the beginning of the class on the day it is due, and you should have on hand an extra copy for reference in class and for your own records.
- **Formal Essay(s):** You are required to write one short paper: (4-5 pages) and/or a longer paper (10 pages) if you opt to use the lengthier assignment for your final course project. Papers are submitted in class and a copy MUST be posted in the assignment link on Blackboard by the time class starts.
- **Short Essay (25%):** You will write one short essay (4 pages) not counting quotations on Douglass or Jacobs. The assignment and grading criteria is at the end of this syllabus.
  - **Longer Essay:** This assignment is for those who choose to write a longer paper for the final course project.

**All writing for this class must be written for this class.** Resubmitting a paper from another class or elsewhere constitutes academic dishonesty.

**Late Writing Projects:** Note you will lose a half letter grade from your final essay each class period your paper is past the assignment deadline. For example, if your essay is an "A" paper, your grade will be lowered a half letter grade according to the number of

class days late. For example, if your paper earns an “A” grade and is late one class period, a grade of B+ will be posted.

**Essay Grading:** When an assignment is given, the grading criteria will be provided in how papers are graded. After a paper is graded, I will return with comments either in class or through My Grades on Bb. If returned on Bb, you must click and download the file document to see grading remarks. If you have issues in finding, you SHOULD email me so that I may get your graded essay to you immediately. Graded papers are generally returned in two weeks depending on the assignment.

**I DO NOT ACCEPT WORK VIA E-MAIL. NO EXCEPTIONS.**

4. **Final Course Project (30%):** For your final project you may do ONE of the following. Both options are worth 100 points.

- 1) Write a **comprehensive final exam** that will be based on all readings and lectures. The exam will be a mixture of short answer, identifications, and 1-2 in-class essays.
- 2) Write a **final essay** on a topic of your choosing. I will provide paper guidelines and topics for your essays. You should begin thinking about the essay early in the term. The essay will be due by the end of the final exam period.

**I DO NOT ACCEPT WORK VIA E-MAIL. NO EXCEPTIONS.**

## Grading Criteria

**Grading for Writing Assignments** will follow English Department standards, which are based on content, organization, expression, and mechanics. I use the +/- grading system for writing assignments.

To compute final paper grades, the following values are assigned to the standard letter grades of A through E:

A	95-100
A-	93-94
B+	88-92
B	85-87
B-	82-84
C+	78-81
C	75-77
C-	72-74
D+	66-71
D	63-65
D-	59-62

### Breakdown of Final Course Grades:

Attendance and Participation (includes in-class writing and activities)	20%
Critical Reading Responses	25%

Mid-Term Short Essay	25%
Final Course Project	30%
Total	100%

**Note: Grades are weighted.** Critical reading responses, a short essay, and a course project are a significant part of your grade, so they need to be completed and submitted on time to avoid high grade loss. Do not downplay the critical reading responses to such an extent that you miss doing a lot of them or they will have a significant negative impact on your final course grade. **This understanding is critical to your success in this class.**

**Checking Weighted Grades:** Click "My Grades" in our Blackboard's Course Menu sidebar; then tab "View Grades." You will see your grade and points for each assignment graded to date. To compute final course grades, the following values are assigned to the standard letter grades of A through E:

- A..... 95-100
- A-..... 93 and less than 95
- B+..... 88 and less than 93
- B.....85 and less than 88
- B-..... 82 and less than 85
- C+..... 78 and less than 82
- C..... 75 and less than 78
- C-..... 72 and less than 75
- D+..... 66 and less than 72
- D.....63 and less than 66
- E.....62 and below

A grade of I (Incomplete) will not be offered in this course except under extreme conditions and with advisement from the Department of English.

## **COURSE POLICIES**

### **Blackboard**

Blackboard is used for communications, assignments, course material, grades, and resource links. You should check course Blackboard and email frequently for notices and coursework.

### **Cancelled Classes/Office Hours/Appointments**

If you come to class and I am not here by the time 15 minutes have elapsed (from when class is to start), please assume that class is cancelled and check your email for further instructions. When possible, I will try to email you all, before class.

### **Email:**

This class requires that students check their ASU email account and MyASU regularly, as they will frequently use for class communications. I will open email from ASU addresses. If you prefer to check your email from another account, you can set these accounts in MyASU. Go to HELP page, then click Service Center, then to "email forward."

### **Course Workload and Grades:**

The classroom is not the appropriate time for complaining about the class, the workload, your grade, etc. This includes before class, after it ends, and during any break we might take. If you have a problem, you should come to my office hours or schedule a time to discuss it with me in private.

### **Technological Distractions:**

Please refrain from any unauthorized usages of technology during our class sessions. In this usage, “unauthorized” means unrelated to the tangible learning activity or activities taking place during the class period. Please turnoff and put all hand-held electronic devices away before class begins. This also means do not wear headphones, ear buds, etc. in class. I prefer that you do not use laptops and iPads to take notes. However, if you must do so, laptops may be used when I’m lecturing, during group discussion, and nothing else. Failure to abide by these guidelines may have a negative impact on a student’s participation grade. On the second offense, you will not be allowed to use your laptop or iPad in class.

You should not and will not receive calls during class. Cell phones must be set to silent before class begins. Text messaging during class is not permitted and will not be tolerated; it is an action that will constitute absence. Phones must be kept out of sight until class ends.

### **Classroom Etiquette:**

While I want us to constantly challenge ourselves and others during the class, I think it is important to maintain a genial, courteous, cooperative learning atmosphere in the classroom for all.

- First and foremost, I expect that you respect me and your fellow students. There should be no talking when I am addressing the class, when another student has the floor, or when we are viewing a power point presentation or video.
- Be on time to class.
- You should be involved in whatever the class is doing. In other words, if you must absolutely do work for another class, read a newspaper, do a crossword, or nap, etc., then don’t come to class.
- You should not and will not receive calls during class. Please do not leave the class to take a call. Cell phones must be set to silent before class begins. Text messaging during class is not permitted and will not be tolerated; it is an action that will constitute absence. **Phones must be kept out of sight until class ends.**
- Do not begin to “pack things up” until it is absolutely clear that class is officially over.
- Finally, failure to abide by these guidelines may have a negative impact on a student’s participation grade.

### **Public Nature of the Class:**

Be aware that our class will be composed of diverse members; it is your responsibility to use appropriate language in class and in writing and to respect the opinions and cultures of others, per university guidelines. Everyone should feel comfortable speaking in class.



**Sexual Violence and Harassment Based on Sex:**

Title IX is a federal law that provides that no person be excluded on the basis of sex from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. Both Title IX and university policy make clear that sexual violence and harassment based on sex is prohibited. An individual who believes they have been subjected to sexual violence or harassed on the basis of sex can seek support, including counseling and academic support, from the university. If you or someone you know has been harassed on the basis of sex or sexually assaulted, you can find information and resources at <https://eoss.asu.edu/wellness/sexualassault>.

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:**

Qualified students with disabilities who will require disability accommodations in this class are encouraged to make their requests to me at the beginning of the semester either during office hours or by appointment. **Note:** Prior to receiving disability accommodations, verification of eligibility from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) is required. Disability information is confidential.

**Establishing Eligibility for Disability Accommodations:** Students who feel they will need disability accommodations in this class but have not registered with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) should contact DRC immediately. Their office is located on the first floor of the Matthews Center Building. DRC staff can also be reached at: 480-965-1234 (V), 480-965-9000 (TTY). For additional information, visit: <https://eoss.asu.edu/wellness/sexualassault>. Their hours are 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

**Additional Student Support**

- Writing Center <https://tutoring.asu.edu/student-services/writing-centers>
- Student Counseling Center <https://eoss.asu.edu/counseling>

**Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism is stealing. Whenever you borrow a phrase, sentence, paragraph—or even an idea stated in your own words—from any outside source without giving credit to that source, you have plagiarized.

Academic honesty is expected of all students in all examinations, papers, laboratory work, academic transactions and records. Plagiarizing will result in an “XE”—failure for the course. For more information, see <http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity>.

**Disposition of Papers/Grade Appeals:**

Students should keep *all* graded assignments for this course until the term is officially over and final grades are posted. If students believe their final grade is inaccurate or unfair, they must present all graded work in order for the grievance committee to review their case. Students should not solely rely on the documents remaining electronically available on Blackboard, if submitted there, but should also maintain their own digital copies.

**Course Evaluation:**

Students are expected to complete the course evaluation. The feedback provides valuable information to the instructor and the college and is used to improve student learning. Students are notified when the online evaluation form is available.

**Problem Solving:**

I encourage you to see me during office hours, email me, or make an appointment (if you cannot attend my scheduled office hours) if you wish to discuss issues connected with this class and/or your performance. Please discuss concerns with me while we still have options. I tend to be generous with students who take the initiative to consult with me about concerns while they are still “situations” and “not yet crises,” and less generous with those who permit things to slide until a crisis is unavoidable.

**Note:** “Regarding terminology in this course: in both written and verbal, it not permissible to use the terms *colored* and [Negro]. *Colored people* is an offensive, derogatory, archaic term that was meant to linguistically create an inferiority about non-white peoples, and does not mean the same thing as people of color. Likewise, the term “Negro” is archaic and will not be used. In “Tools” on Blackboard, you will find terms and history to use to identify people of African descent.

The use of the term “the white man” should be not be used. “The use of the term demonstrates a relatively unsophisticated, uncritical understanding of the historical systems of race, and at this point, in an upper-division course on race, you should possess a much more complex understanding of racial systems. You may refer to any number of things, including, empire, colonization, , capitalism, white supremacy, etc., all of which are much more specific white privilege and critical.”<sup>3</sup>

Any use of either of these terms will result in points deduction in the specific written assignment in which it occurs, or your participation grade, respectively. The only exception to the above policy is when you are using or referring to a direct quote from an author, in which case the quote should be properly cited to determine its origin.

**Further Values and Requisites:**

- Bring your honest efforts, your questions and concerns, a sense of humor, and the curiosity to explore new territory. Your commitment to our work and to each other will make our course vibrant, pleasurable and successful.
- Please remember to respect the opinions of others, especially when they disagree with your own. Learn to listen – be careful not to monopolize discussions. Everyone should feel comfortable sharing his or her ideas in class.
- I encourage you to make use of my office hours. I enjoy the opportunity to get to know you better.

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<sup>3</sup> Adapted from Lisa Guerrero.

## ENG 353: TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE FALL 2017

**Note:** This schedule should be regarded as a tentative guide to the assignments. I reserve the right to make changes as necessary throughout the semester. Because good in-depth discussion is more important than keeping up with the schedule, you should not be disturbed if some selections are omitted or if we appear to fall behind. Please remember to check your ASU email and Blackboard often, even if you are absent.

The date that something is listed on the schedule is the date you should have that work finished. All written assignments are due by the time class starts unless otherwise stated. **You must always bring your textbook and reading materials to class.**

### Important Dates

Aug 17	First day of ASU classes
Aug 23	Last Day Add/drop deadline without College Approval
Oct 7-10	Fall Break
Nov 1	Course Withdrawal Deadline
Dec 1	Complete Session Withdrawal Deadline
Dec 1	Last Day of Classes
Dec 5-7	Final Exams

### WEEK 1 Introductions and Dispelling the Myths

TH 17 Aug **First Day of Class.** Introduction to the course. Review course requirements and guidelines.  
Marlon Riggs, *Ethnic Notions* (film screening)

### WEEK 2 "What is African American Literature?"

T 22 Aug What is African American Literature?  
*Reading:* Toni Morrison, "Unspeakable Things Unspoken: The Afro-American Presence in American Literature" (1989) (Find link to the reading on Bb in Week 2; bring copy to class.)  
(Defining African American literature)

**Due: Syllabus Acknowledgement statement** (Bring copy to class.)

**Due: Pre-course survey** (Bring copy to class.)

### Unit One: The Literature of Slavery and Freedom 1746-1865: Portraying Slavery

TH 24 Aug *Reading:* Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* (1845), Preface and Introduction.  
*Reading:* First 1/3  
(Introduction to Slave Narrative. William L. Andrews)  
**Introduce Critical Reading Response**

### WEEK 3

T 29 Aug      *Reading:* Douglass, second 1/3  
("Resisting Objectification, Claiming a Voice as Subject" References to bell hooks, *Talking Back*, June Jordan, Robert Hayden, Patricia Williams)

TH 31 Aug      *Reading:* Douglass, finish text.

**DUE: One-page critical response 1. REQUIRED OF ALL.**

### WEEK 4      EARLY AFRICAN AMERICAN FEMALE SLAVE NARRATORS and THE BLACK FEMALE SLAVE EXPERIENCE

T 5 Sep      [Harriet Jacobs, \*Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl\*](#), (1861) (Online)  
*Reading:* "Preface by the Author" and "Introduction by the "Editor"  
*Reading:* "Childhood through "Sketches of Neighboring Slaveholders"

(The Female Slave Experience. References to: Frances Smith Foster, Deborah Gray White, *Ain't I a Woman?* bell hooks, *Ain't I A Woman: black women and feminism*)

TH 7 Sep      Jacobs, [\*Incidents\*](#), (Read online)  
*Reading:* "A Perilous Passage in the Slave Girl's Life" through "The Flight"

### WEEK 5      SLAVERY, RACE, AND GENDER: "RESISTING OBJECTIFICATION"

T 12 Sep      Jacobs, [\*Incidents\*](#), (Read online)  
*Reading:* "Months of Peril" through "Northward Bound"  
("Resisting Objectification, Claiming a Voice as Subject" References to bell hooks, *Talking Back*, Harryette Mullen, Patricia Williams)

TH 14 Sep      *Reading:* Jacobs, [\*Incidents\*](#), (Read online ) "Incidents in the Philadelphia" to the end.

**DUE: One-page critical response 2. REQUIRED OF ALL.**

### WEEK 6      Unit Two: LITERATURE OF THE RECONSTRUCTION 1865-1919

T 19 Sep      *Reading:* Frances E. W. Harper, *Iola Leroy*, (1892) from *Three Classic African American Novels*,  
Pp. 227-296  
("Historical Contexts")

TH 21 Sep      *Reading:* Harper, *Iola Leroy*, Pp. 297-347

**(DUE: One-page critical response 3**

### WEEK 7

T 26 Sep      *Reading:* Harper, *Iola Leroy*, Pp. 348-416

("The Mulatto, Tragic or Triumphant" References made to Shirley Samuels, *Culture of Sentiment*)

TH 28 Sep      *Reading:* Harper, *Iola Leroy*, Pp. 417-end  
**DUE: Mid-Course Survey on Blackboard via Bb.**

**DUE: DUE: One-page critical response 4**

**WEEK 8                      BLACK POLITICAL THOUGHT and LITERATURE OF THE RECONSTRUCTION**

T 3 Oct              *Reading:* Booker T. Washington, "The Atlanta Exposition Address" (1895) (PDF)  
*Reading:* W.E.B. DuBois, From *The Souls of Black Folk*, "Of Mr. Booker T. Washington and Others" (1903) (PDF)  
("Historical Contexts")

TH 5 Oct              *Reading:* Charles W. Chesnutt, *The Marrow of Tradition*, (1901) from *Three Classic African American Novels* Pp. 467-536

**DUE: SHORT ESSAY FROM ALL.**

**WEEK 9                      FALL BREAK**

T 10 Oct              No class

TH 12 Oct              *Reading:* Chesnutt, Pp. 537-607

**DUE: One-page critical response 5**

**WEEK 10**

T 17 Oct              *Reading:* Chesnutt, Pp. 608-676

TH 19 Oct              *Reading:* Chesnutt, Pp. 677-end  
**Homework:** Film Screening: Documentary "Making a Way Out of No Way" YouTube

**DUE: One-page critical response 6**

**WEEK 11                      Unit Three: The HARLEM RENAISSANCE 1919-1940**

T 24 Oct              Claude McKay, Selected Poetry  
("What is the 'The Harlem Renaissance'?)

TH 26 Oct              *Reading:* Alain Locke, "The New Negro" (1925) (Handout)  
*Reading:* Langston Hughes, "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain" (1926) (Handout)

**WEEK 12**

T 31 Oct      *Reading:* Jean Toomer, *From Cane* (1923) from Section I: “Karintha,” “Becky,” “Carma,” and “Esther”

TH 2 Nov      *Reading:* Toomer, “Cotton Song,” “Song of the Son”; from Section II: “Seventh Street” “Rhobert,”

**DUE: One-page critical response 7 REQUIRED OF ALL.**

**WEEK 13**

T 7 Nov      *Reading:* Toomer, from Section III: “Kabnis”

**TH 9 Nov      HARLEM RENAISSANCE, BLACK WOMEN RELATING RACE AND GENDER**

*Reading:* Nella Larsen, *Quicksand*, (1928) from *Quicksand* and *Passing*, Chapters 1-4

**DUE: One-page critical response 8**

**WEEK 14**

T 14 Nov      *Reading:* *Quicksand*, Chapters 5-11

TH 16 Nov      *Reading:* *Quicksand*, Chapters 12-17  
 (“Locating Safe Space” References to Myles “At the Crossroad of Female Autonomy”)

**DUE: One-page critical response 9 REQUIRED OF ALL**

**WEEK 15**

T 21 Nov      *Reading:* *Quicksand*, Chapters 18-end

**DUE: One-page critical response 10**

TH 23 Nov      **THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY**

**WEEK 16**

T 28 Nov      **Tentative<sup>4</sup>: Required Writing Conference in my office if you choose to write a final paper.** You only need to come to one conference.

**Due: Rough Draft of Final Paper on Bb before conference. You must bring a hard copy to meeting.**

**DUE: Post Course Survey on Blackboard via Bb.**

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<sup>4</sup> Depending upon where we are with the readings, I will let you know a week out if WC will take place on Tuesday Nov. 28 in my office. The Nov 29 date is firm.

**Look for Final Exam Study Guide on Blackboard.**

W 29 Nov **Required Writing Conference in my office if you choose to write a final paper** You only need to come to one writing conference.

**Due: Rough Draft of Final Paper on Bb before conference. You must bring a hard copy to meeting.**

TH 30 Nov **Last Day. Wrap up.** (Attendance taken.)  
(Closing)

**WEEK 17** **FINAL EXAM WEEK**

T 5 Dec **ENG 353 SLN # 91715**

**FINAL PROJECT EXAM is scheduled in this classroom at 12:10-2:00 PM**

You will need two blue (exam) books that can be purchased at ASU bookstore.

**FINAL PROJECT PAPER IS DUE if you choose to write a final paper. It is due 2:00 PM by the time the exam ends** and will be considered late one day late at any point after the exam ends.

You are required to submit to me a hard copy of your paper.

TH 7 Dec **ENG 353 SLN # 83699 / AFR # 79971**

**FINAL PROJECT EXAM is scheduled in this classroom at 2:30-4:20 PM**

You will need two blue (exam) books that can be purchased at ASU bookstore.

**FINAL PROJECT PAPER IS DUE if you choose to write a final paper. It is due by 4:20 PM the time the exam ends** and will be considered late one day late at any point after the exam ends.

You are required to submit to me a hard copy of your paper.

## Strategies for Responding to the Reading

### When analyzing a text:

1. Read or reread the text with specific questions in mind.
2. Collect basic ideas, events, and names. Depending on the complexity of the work, this requires additional review of the work.
3. Think through your personal reaction to the work.
4. Offer a thesis or topic sentence indicating a basic observation or assertion about the text or passage.
5. Identify and consider most important ideas.
6. Return to the text to locate specific evidence and passages related to the major ideas. Cite the passage using MLA format

### When analyzing a passage:

1. Offer a thesis or topic sentence indicating a basic observation or assertion about the text or passage.
2. Offer a context for the passage without offering too much summary.
3. Cite the passage using MLA format.
4. Then follow the passage with some combination of the following elements:
  - Discuss what happens in the passage and why it is significant to the work as a whole.
  - Consider what is said, particularly details of the imagery and the ideas expressed.
  - Assess how it is said, considering how the word choice, the ordering of ideas, sentence structure, etc. contribute to the meaning.
  - Explain what it means, tying your analysis of the passage back to the significance of the text as a whole.
5. Repeat the process of context, quotation, and analysis with additional support for your thesis or topic sentence.

### Sample analysis paragraph

#### Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*:

The negative effect the environment can have on the individual is shown in Morrison's comparison of marigolds in the ground to people in the environment. Early in the novel, Claudia and Frieda are concerned that the marigold seeds they planted that spring never sprouted. At the end of the novel, Claudia reflects on the connection to Pecola's failure:

I talk about how I did not plant the seeds too deeply, how it was the fault of the earth, our land, our town. I even think now that the land of the entire country was hostile to marigolds that year. This soil is bad for certain kinds of flowers. Certain seeds it will not nurture, certain fruit it will not bear, and when the land kills of its own volition, we acquiesce and say the victim had no right to live. (206)



Morrison obviously views the environment as a powerful influence on the individual when she suggests that the earth itself is hostile to the growth of the marigold seeds. In a similar way, people cannot thrive in a hostile environment. Pecola Breedlove is a seed planted in the hostile environment, and, when she is not nurtured in any way, she cannot thrive.

**Sample analysis critical response**

Find a sample on Blackboard.

### Close Reading Assignment Instructions<sup>5</sup> -

Using the assigned poetry, your task is to write a 400-word response in which you (1) argue for the significance of a passage for interpreting the piece, and (2) support your idea with evidence from your analysis of the specific language, literary devices and/or effects on the audience of the passage you have chosen.

1. Be sure to spend a lot of time BEFORE YOU WRITE THE PAPER thinking about and working on the language of your passage. Use a dictionary and be sure you look up important words. Then, ask yourself some questions:

What are the main themes of this passage/poem?

What type of imagery (if any) is being used?

Is the language formal or casual?

Is there a central metaphor or comparison being made?

Are there certain kinds of sounds (including rhymes) that are repeated in the passage? Why?

Who is listening to this passage on the stage? Is that important?

Are any words or ideas repeated? Do they stay the same or develop new meanings as they are repeated?

Are the speakers sincere? How do we know?

2. THEN ask yourself questions such as these:

Why is this passage important for the piece?

What would be missing if this passage were not in the poem?

Does this passage emphasize a central theme or issue in the poem, and if so, how does it contribute to our understanding of that theme or issue?

What does this passage reveal about the character(s) who speak(s) these lines?

Do the characters (or does the character) voice or represent differing points of view on a central question of the play?

Does the passage contain images or metaphors that are interesting in relation to some of the poem's central issues or themes?

How does this passage fit in with the overall structure of the piece as a whole?

3. Once you have decided what most interests you about the passage in relation to the rest of the poem, work on formulating a good thesis statement -- one that (1) argues for a passage's or the entire piece's significance, and (2) suggests the evidence you will use to support that argument. Then support that thesis in a well-developed response.

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<sup>5</sup> Adapted from Dr. Cora Fox.

**Mid-Term Essay**  
**ENG/AFR 353/Myles/Fall 2017**

Final Draft Due to me in the classroom Thursday, 10/4/17 and on Blackboard by the time class begins.

**The Assignment:** Your task is to write a 4-5-page analytical interpretation on Douglass and/or Jacobs not counting quotations. Your essay should be the answer to a question about the author's approach to presenting this "peculiar institution" of slavery: his or her way of giving it. This means you will make an argument about what narrative strategies the author uses (how that author chooses to arrange events in order to tell them, what s/he includes and omit, how individual scenes are juxtaposed, what the sorts of imagery the author characteristically associates with particular characters or events and what that choice of imagery tells us about the author's major focus or concerns, what rhetorical devices the author uses, what characteristic metaphors dominate the author's presentation of the materials and what those metaphors reveal about the author's perspectives on these historical events, etc.). You will not write on all of these. As this is a short essay, you should focus on 1-2 ideas.

Keep in mind that this is not a history paper or book report but a literature essay. For example, for a history course you might write a paper on "Women in Slavery," using Jacobs's text as a resource for information. For a literature course you should instead choose a topic such as "Images of Women in Harriet Jacobs's *Incidents*" or "Metaphors of Slavery and Freedom in Harriet Jacobs's *Incidents*," or "Rhetorical Strategies in Douglass and Harriet Jacobs," etc. In these examples, the focus is on the author as a manipulator of words, ideas, symbols, metaphors, images; on the effect of that manipulation, and on the relation of that manipulation to the central ideas and issues the author is addressing. In effect, think in terms what this book tells us about the choices a particular author makes in presenting this history through narration, tone, and imagery.

- Do not retell the events of the book in any form, except as evidence for clearly presented analysis for which those events serve as evidence. Focus every paragraph on a point in your argument about the text, not on retelling an incident in the text. Check the opening sentences of every paragraph to

make sure you are not using plot summary as a transition. The opening or topic sentence should connect back to the thesis.

- Use textual evidence and examples to support your main points.
- Your essay's title should include the author's name and/or the name of the text you are discussing, and it should provide a good, precise clue to your thesis. The author's name or the title of a book cannot stand alone as your own title.
- Double check for unintentional sentence fragments, fused sentences, and comma splices.
- Check "Criteria for Grades" to be sure your paper conforms to the description of the kind of paper that will receive the grade at which you are aiming.
- Use MLA essay format. All cited sources must be listed in a Works Cited page. Use Times font, 12-point double space. Each page should include page number in the top right corner. Please no cover page. Instead put the following information in the upper left corner of the first page of your paper:

Your Name

ENG 353

Dr. Lynette Myles

Paper # 1

Date Due

- Check "Criteria for Grades" to be sure your paper conforms to the description of the kind of paper that will receive the grade at which you are aiming.

When submitting a copy of your paper on Blackboard, it should be posted as a Microsoft Word document only and that it contains your last name and the name of the assignment (i.e., "Park Paper One"; and NOT "Park-Female Identity in *Quicksand*").

Be warned that I will not accept late papers without you conferring with me or papers copied into the email as text. If you have any questions, be sure to contact me early enough to allow you complete your papers well and on time.

## **Grading Criteria for ENG Essays, Dr. Lynette Myles**

### **The A paper demonstrates these strengths:**

1. Paper states and develops an original, interesting, and compelling argument about the work of literature, not merely retelling the plot.
2. Each paragraph develops the argument further, and each paragraph, as well as the argument as whole, is characterized by effective control of timing and rhythm as well as logic.
3. Paper is characterized by clarity, precision, unity, coherence, sentence variety, and effective emphasis on major points.
4. The introduction is concise; transitions are graceful; the conclusion is forceful. At every level, including that of the title and the individual sentences, the paper shows evidence of attention to detail.
5. Evidence for major points includes quotations that are preceded or followed by discussions of how each quotation proves the point it is being used to support. Details of the plot may be used as evidence, but an impressive range of other kinds of evidence (e.g., discussions of key images, motifs, contradictions, figures of speech, rhythms, etc.) is included as well and fully integrated in discussion.
6. Uses precise word choice and appropriate and effective variation in sentence structure and figures of speech. Is free from serious errors in Standard English and from common stylistic weaknesses (ineffective use of passive voice, inexact word choice, inappropriate shifts in tense and person, wordiness).

### **The B essay exhibits most of these strengths:**

1. Paper states and develops a thoughtful, interesting, and persuasive argument about the work of literature, not merely retelling the plot.
2. Introduction creates interest and contains background information.
3. Each paragraph develops the argument further.
4. The paper is characterized by unity, coherence, sentence variety, attention to detail, and effective emphasis of major points.
5. Evidence for major points includes quotations that are preceded or followed by discussions of how each quotation proves the point it is being used to support. Details of the plot may be used as evidence, but other kinds of evidence (e.g., discussions of key images, motifs, contradictions, figures of speech, rhythms, etc.) are included as well.

6. Paper contains occasional but limited errors in mechanics and punctuation.

**The C paper exhibits these characteristics:**

1. The paper states and develops a thoughtful argument about the work of literature, not merely retelling the plot.
2. Introduction adequately explains the background of the problem, but may lack detail.
3. Quotations are included as evidence, but paper does not present thought-provoking discussions.
4. Has adequate but undistinguished word choice and sentence structure.
5. Contains frequent errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

**The D essay may exhibit some but not all of the following:**

1. The paper shows little sign of an argument about the work of literature; retells the plot.
2. Background details are a random collection of information, unclear, or not related to the topic.
3. Have lapses in clarity.
4. Paper has lapses in organization; shows weakness in introduction, transition, and/or conclusion.
5. Have consistent errors in syntax, agreement, spelling, and/or punctuation.

**The E paper exhibits some of the following weaknesses:**

1. Paper shows no sign of an argument.
2. Lacks unified organization; lacks introduction, transitions, and/or substantive conclusions.
3. Paper contains constant mechanical errors.

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