

Research Essay:

This essay should be 7-9 pages, typed, double-spaced, with a Works Cited page that lists sources in MLA format.

Essay 2:

Look at **three different versions** of a fairy tale or quest story. I encourage you to choose versions we have not covered in class; additionally, please note that any film, artistic, or textual renderings of the story will serve as an acceptable “version” for you to analyze. (For example, you could look at the movie *Star Wars*, the *Family Guy* spoof episode of *Star Wars*, and the LEGO *Star Wars* video game ... or you could look at the Grimm’s “The Shoes that Were Danced to Pieces,” the Russian story of “The Secret Ball,” and the recent Barbie movie *The 12 Dancing Princesses*.)

Once you have chosen and studied the different versions, write a **thesis-driven essay** that makes some sort of interesting observation about all three pieces. (Ex. Do they all have something in common? Have they changed over time in some sort of interesting way? Does the story shift, depending on the audience? Do they all have one important theme or image in common, despite their differences?) Try to come to one interesting conclusion about the three pieces that will hold together your discussion.

In the paper you should do three things (not necessarily in this order):

- 1) Analyze/contrast the different versions of the story you have chosen. What sorts of different messages, symbols, and beliefs are being presented? What has been changed? What stays the same? (Note: while doing this, please try to avoid repetition; try to keep plot summaries brief.)
- 2) Briefly explore how the messages, symbols, or systems of belief that are embedded within each version might reflect the time and culture in which the tale appeared. What does each tale say about the people who loved it, who valued it, who passed it on?
- 3) Incorporate some “literary criticism” into your discussion. What do experts, critics, and scholars have to say about this story? Try to include **two or more quotes** from reliable outside analyses in your essay. (Sources may be from scholarly books, journals, or web pages. They may address one or all of the stories, or they might concern themselves with fairy tales/heroic quests in general.)

Note: This essay requires you to do two types of research:

- 1) You will research “**primary sources**” (You must find three different versions of the tale.)
- 2) You will research “**secondary sources**” (You must find critics who talk about the tales in a scholarly, historical, or analytical way.)

Good luck, and have fun!