

## Essay Three: Research Paper

**Paper Assignment:** Essay Three will consist of a **five-to-seven page research paper**. This essay should thoughtfully examine one assigned literary work in light of **two or more** outside, scholarly sources. You should have a clear, assertive, narrow thesis (position or stance), and you should explicate the literary texts carefully in order to forward and prove the validity of your thesis. In addition, you should incorporate at least two scholarly, credible sources (books or articles) in your argument in order to further clarify or prove your thesis. Your sources should be used merely to support your thesis in some way; they should not dominate the argument of the paper. Please use sources obtained from databases (*MLA International Bibliography*, etc.) or books from Dacus Library. Stay far, far away from random web pages and sparknotes.

**Paper Format:** Sources should be introduced, identified, and evaluated, and should be correctly formatted according to current MLA documentation standards. Your paper must contain a Works Cited list that includes all outside sources used, as well as any sources used from *The Longman Anthology* (listed as works in an anthology).

**Paper Topic:** As was the case with your response papers, you may generate any topic and thesis that interests you, and you may choose to write on any text (or texts) assigned during the course. You may not write on a work you have already addressed in Response Papers One or Two. Try to identify those works you enjoyed reading or those with which you felt a connection intellectually or emotionally. Think not only about the literary works you liked, but the subjects, topics, or interests you have in other academic or extra-curricular areas of your life (for instance, religion, music, science, social history, military history, etc.). You may want to find ways to blend issues and topics that interest you with literary works that explore or comment upon these issues. Or, you may want to delve more deeply into a literary work you particularly enjoyed, letting the work itself suggest a more specific avenue of exploration.

**Here are some possible areas of consideration for a topic:**

- Christian Themes and Imagery in *Beowulf*.
- The depiction of grief and isolation in *The Wanderer*.
- Philip Sidney's theories on the function and potential of literary art.
- The ironic portrayal of Satan as a heroic figure in *Paradise Lost*.
- The depiction of religious struggle in the poetry of John Donne.
- The depiction of colonialism, race, slavery, or gender in *Oroonoko*.

- The exploration of the reality of the human body in Swift's "The Lady's Dressing Room."
- Social critique and humor in *The Beggar's Opera*.
- Images of wise or visionary children in the poems of Blake.
- The value of art as explored in John Keats' "Ode on a Grecian Urn."
- The potential for the literal and symbolic marriage of the British with the foreign in Rudyard Kipling's "Without Benefit of Clergy."
- Political and social critique in the poetry of E. B. Browning.
- Psychological explorations in the poetry of Robert Browning.
- Lewis Carroll and language play.
- How Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" answers the question, "Is individual heroism possible in the modern (and postmodern) world?"

Please feel free to modify, alter, or reject any of these possible topics. Also, please feel free to come up with your own thesis in response to our class discussions of these texts. Please see me if you need help coming up with a suitable topic for your paper.

**Paper Due Date:** Essay Three is due to turnitin.com by **5:00 p.m. on Friday, April 22.**

**Grading Criteria:** Papers will be graded based upon the criteria in the English Department's *Writing/English Rubric*. In addition to the *Rubric*, make sure that your paper adheres to the following criteria: **Content:** The paper responds to the writing assignment given. The response shows an appropriate level of thought and sophistication (ideas are complex and fully amplified), and contains an assertive, specific thesis. **Organization** The focus of interest is clear. The paper is arranged in organized paragraphs which contain transitional sentences connecting them to the thesis and to surrounding body paragraphs. **Evidence:** The author uses relevant and adequate evidence to support the points made in the paper. The author uses direct quotations or cited paraphrases consistently to support key assertions, and these quotations or paraphrases are fully amplified and explained within the context of the author's argument. **Style, Grammar, and Format:** Sentences are varied in length and are grammatically correct. Word choice is appropriate. Paper is punctuated correctly; spelling is correct. The paper is neat and legible, and is within the length limits specified by the paper topic guidelines.