

**Lesley University**  
**CLITR1100.06**  
**Research Paper**  
Spring 2010  
Deets

For this paper, you will analyze one of the longer works we read this semester: either *Things Fall Apart*, or *A Doll's House*. In your paper, you will analyze a longer work in terms of a theme you have chosen, making use of specific evidence. As evidence, you might focus upon a particular scene, line of dialogue, or image; whatever you choose as evidence, be sure that it is always the *centerpiece* of each body paragraph, in that you must present and interpret the text itself.

**Choosing Scholarship, Generating a Theme, and Drafting a Working Thesis:**

*For April 7th:*

- 1) Skim all four of the scholarly articles listed on [www.shanadeets.com](http://www.shanadeets.com) under "For My Students."
- 2) Choose an article that sparks your interest and possible paper ideas for you, and type up a direct quotation from the text of the scholarly article which is particularly striking or succinct.
- 3) Allow this quotation, or your own interest or focus to guide you to choose a possible theme on which your paper will focus.
- 4) Draft a working thesis which makes reference as specifically as possible to the chosen theme, characters, or which identifies your chosen approach to the book or play.

**Ways of Thinking about Theme:**

Choose a moment in the longer work which strikes you most. Is the moment striking because the author has illustrated a turning point or moment of recognition for a character? Or does one character act as a kind of catalyst for change in another character? Does the author offer a direct insight, perhaps an insight into the human condition that will stay with you after this class? How does the author *achieve* this striking moment in this work: through dialogue, imagery, the dynamic between two characters, through a proverb or a story within the story?

Then, consider how this moment broadens out into the workings of the rest of this work. How does this moment appear in other elements of the book's arc? How does this moment relate to the character's overall development? How does this moment illustrate something about the culture in which the character struggles? How does this moment foreshadow a larger problem, resolution, or ultimate fate for one of the characters? Consider the work as a whole, and allow this striking moment to illuminate the possible meanings of other parts of the book.

## **Content, Formatting, and Structure:**

You should first refer to the handout on the website entitled “Lesley Checklist for Fiction Paper.” Note that the guidelines in it can be slightly adapted to writing about the play, since most of the expectations listed apply to formal writing overall, as well as language and argument construction.

In terms of the **structure and length** of this particular paper, I expect that the paper will be 5 pages long. Note that in terms of my expectations for a *developed* paragraph which fully explores *one* piece of evidence, my general rule is that 1 page = 1.5 paragraphs, a rule which has worked well in gleaning good work and developed ideas from my students for the last eight years. Given this expectation, you eventually outline a 7 paragraph essay:

Introduction, 5 body paragraphs, and Conclusion.

\*In class, I will deliver a short lecture on how to construct a body paragraph outline for your paper, offering a sample outline which we generate together on that day in class.\*

### **Content:**

Good writing is clear, original, persuasive, and expressive. To that end, I will be looking to see that you are not just reiterating the plot or what was discussed in class, but rather you are following the sparks and the striking moments which have endured within your own mind as we read these works. I will also hope to see that you are: identifying patterns, returning to the text to glean details and evidence, and fully interpreting these under the microscope of a cogent body paragraph.

I also expect that you will *integrate scholarship* somewhere in your paper, and in a way that sheds light on your own arguments.

**Feel free to email me with questions at [deetspapers@gmail.com](mailto:deetspapers@gmail.com).**