

Time to Write Paper #1

Well, I've been trying to make some time to prepare for this paper, but it's been a little out of reach due to my other classes. This week I had my first exams: Organic Chemistry on Tuesday, Differential Equations on Wednesday, and Physics Mechanics earlier today (Thursday). Much of my time over the last couple of weeks has been put toward preparing for these incredibly challenging classes, as one might expect... Hey, is anyone else here taking any of these courses? No? Why am I taking ENGL13B, you might be asking? Because it's a required course for some Engineering transfer students, that's why! I happen to think that's pretty neat, but it is a little hard to wedge it into my schedule sometimes, what with all the vector calculations, homogeneous equations, and methyl benzoate nitration reactions going on. (I'm making this stuff sound way too important...)

Anywho, with this jam-packed week of exams behind me, and a three day weekend coming up, I should have ample time to work on my paper over the next few days, and to read more of Jane Eyre by Charlotte Brontë. I'm a little shy of 200 pages in and have been stuck there for about two weeks, which is really a bummer because I am quite enjoying the story and also despise long time intervals between reading sessions.

As for my topic, I have chosen to elaborate on prompt #9, particularly Wordsworth's idea that "All good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling." I would like to be a little more ambitious and come up with my own original topic, but I have had barely enough time to give the assigned readings the focus they deserve, so it makes sense to go with a topic that is closely related to our readings. Wordsworth is also an interesting fellow and quite articulate (forgive me for stating the obvious). I would like to devote some more of the time I have for this class toward his works and ideas.

As a sidenote, another topic I found interesting came from prompt #10: significant differences between first and later generations of Romantic poets on the nature and function of poetry. If I had more time I might opt to write a paper analyzing these changing opinions, as I'm sure that there is a lot of information to be gleaned from the necessary research and additional readings.

I will update this post with my thesis statement and other developments (relating only to my paper, of course) throughout the weekend. Check back soon!

Re: Time to Write Paper #1

Just wanted to make a quick comment on how odd it seems that a Lit class is required for Engineering majors.

Actually, I probably could have been a little more accurate: it seems that the requirement is not specific for engineering majors, but more a school-wide sort of thing. I am required to take ENGL1A, ENGL1B, and one extra English class of my choosing from ENGL10A, ENGL10B, ENGL13A, ENGL13B (this class) or ENGL33. It's not a bad way to go, though. I can appreciate that the school expects its students have an understanding of and appreciation for these things.

By the way, it's a hotshot school that will hopefully (probably) accept me. (If they don't then I will get to take this course for fun! Which it is, except for the work.)

Re: Time to Write Paper #1

But in reality all you've been doing is calculating how far a car would go during a bodacious sneeze (ignoring the amount of Windex required to clean the windshield afterwards)

Yes, although I believe "bodacious" was omitted from the final test. Which is unfortunate, because that would have been both hilarious and literally accurate (if a bit redundant). I think my answer for a sneeze with duration of exactly 0.5sec at 56mph was 46ft traveled (rounded down to the nearest whole number, although I think centimeters is more appropriate for this sort of thing). I haven't yet taken measurements to determine how much time passes during my average sneeze, but Physics is opening up such a whole new world to me that I am considering doing it!

On a sidenote, if things get a little too crazy this semester, would you mind dropping me a few hints about what's on the next test? Of course, I don't need the help, but it might help me sleep just a little better at night when I have spent the entire day writing about a bunch of overly wistful- and sensitive-English blokes.

On a second sidenote, I've been thinking about sending you a message about this since I recognized your name on the class roster: could we have the [Enter] key double as the [=] key instead of what it currently does which is clear the current entry (it's a fantastic calculator, by the way—use it all the time).

....

(Am I actually getting points in this class for writing this stuff?)

Re: Week 5

sometimes people need reassurance that the things they are thinking and feeling arent strictly isolated to themselves

I think that this is a good point. As it was mentioned somewhere in our book (pg ???), the draw of the Romantic-era poets was that they wrote things the everyday person found compelling and important: it was something to which they could relate. People responded to Wordsworth and Coleridge because they could more strongly identify with what they were reading (literacy rate is perhaps another factor to consider—one of the benefits to being the citizen of a country which had attained empire status).

I know there have been times in my life where situations have made me question whether I was the only person to think a certain way. It's usually refreshing and calming to know that there are others out there who can share my pain and/or frustrations.

Well put, but at the same time it's discomfoting to think that someone else can write and share your ideas just as well as you can. Although the common man at the time probably wasn't so concerned about this one....

Re: Overwhelmed

Honestly, my plan was to sit down Saturday while my husband takes the kids to the park and look at the links on some of the suggestions. I was hoping that by reading some of the

links something would make me say "I can definitely write on that topic." Some of the suggested topics ask you to critique something. Others ask you to compare work. Others still ask you to interpret a piece or pieces. With my limited experienced in English Literature (a few weeks now) I do not feel that I am qualified to take on most of these topics.

Not all of us are English majors, Cyndi. I consider myself a very effective writer, but poetry is very unfamiliar to me. I would suggest that you try to imagine the time in which all of this was occurring: things were not the same they are now (or even 50 years later, which we are going to cover later in the class), and the readings we are assigned each week offer a number of clues about these differences.

It's just the rough draft, too. We still have a couple of weeks to polish things up.

Re: 1st paper

I have been considering a comparrison of Percy Shelly's "Mont Blanc" and Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey."

I also think that this is a really neat idea topic for a paper. Shelly's way of writing about nature was certainly less "romantic" than Wordsworth's (as in the word, not the period of time we are discussing). I say this even though Dr. Nigro mentions on the seventh slide of this week's lecture notes that he was the most "romantic" of the Romantics--I mean it in the more general use of the word: love, idealism, chivalry, etc. Shelly's version of nature is harsh, especially when compared to the scene at Tintern Abbey.

Had I compared the two poems earlier I probably would have written my paper on this idea, or something similar to it.

Re: Time to Write Paper #1

Well, I changed my mind and decided to do a comparison between Wordsworth's and Shelley's interpretations of nature. I am focusing mostly on "Tinturn Abbey" and "Mont Blanc", but will also incorporate some aspects of "The Thorn" and "Ode to the West Wind".

Here is my thesis, which will probably be polished up a bit before I submit sometime tomorrow:

Wordsworth viewed nature as forgiving and complementary to man's existence, whereas Shelley was less chivalrous, and saw it as an unprejudiced force which acted independently of the needs of its creatures.

Re: Time to Write Paper #1

Shelley was less chivalrous

Hmmm... why don't we change "chivalrous" to "fanciful".