

ENGL 1406, Sections FW01 & FW02

Fall-Winter, 2021 – 22

**Paper limit: 5 pp.**

**Due: 8:00 PM, last day of class (Apr. 7 or Apr. 12)**

Second-term paper Instructions

Be sure to proofread, revise, and edit your work before you submit it. **If I write “proofread” on a paper three times, I will simply stop reading it, and I will fail it.**

Have a meaningful title that communicates your topic to your reader. And remember, *The Rest is Silence*, is Scott Fotheringham’s title. Create your own.

Indent the first line of each new paragraph. Do not introduce an extra space between paragraphs. This will probably require you to go to “Format” in the menu at the top of the page, then to choose “Paragraph” from the drop down menu that will appear. On the menu box that appears, in the “Spacing” area, you’ll need to set the “Before” and “After” boxes at 0. While there, set your line spacing at double!

So:

1. Indent each new paragraph
2. Do not introduce or allow an extra space between paragraph
3. Set your line spacing at “Double.”

Put a page number at the top right from p. 2 onward.

Format titles and references in accordance with MLA style. Failure to do so will result in significant grade reduction.

When quotation marks are called for, use them. Do not use inverted commas, or what you might think of as apostrophes.

Include page numbers for references and for quotations.

Follow the rule of “assertion – evidence. Assertion – evidence. Assertion – evidence.” If you make a statement of fact, follow it immediately with the evidence that supports it; that evidence

might be a quotation, or it might be a citation. For example: “In *Beowulf*, there are many allusions to the fact that life is only loaned to people” is the assertion that needs then to be followed by at least a couple of quotations that show your reader that idea in the text, or by at least a couple of citations directing your reader to exactly where in the text the idea is expressed. *At least a couple* are needed because I wrote that there are “many” references. If I were to write “In *Beowulf* we are told that life is only loaned to us” I could follow it with only one quotation or citation. But, using “many” for the example, my text might read as follows:

In *Beowulf*, there are many allusions to the fact that life is only loaned to people. For example, at ll 572 – 3 we read “Wyrð often spares / an undoomed man, when his courage endures!” and at l. 1622 we read explicitly of “this loaned world.” In the first example, the word “undoomed” alludes to that idea that such a man is fated, in this case fated to live, while in the second example we are led to understand that the whole material world, our entire experience of life, is merely “loaned” to us, assumably by either “wyrð,” the Old English word for “fate,” or by God.

Although it takes several words to do it, what the preceding example boils down to is simply an assertion and the evidence that supports it: assertion – evidence. Remember, English, like all university disciplines, is empirical: that means it is based on real-world evidence, not feelings, not unfounded ideas, not unfounded beliefs. Evidence. In short, **if you say something, prove it.**

Be sure to place the period in the correct place, after the citation, when you include a citation [the (p 24)-looking thing either after a quotation or in lieu of one]. Even if what you quote ends with a period, do not use that period. Place a new period after the citation. Each sentence should have only one period, the one **after the citation.**

The text continues to exist, unchanged, even after you finish reading the story and after you close the book. So use the present tense to refer to the story you’re discussing.

Remember to **write the introduction LAST.**

There is a **five-page limit** on this paper. I will stop reading at the bottom of page 5.

And again: Be sure to proofread, revise, and edit your work before you submit it. **If I write “proofread” on a paper three times, I will simply stop reading it, and I will fail it.**

THE FOLLOWING IS MORE IN THE CATEGORY OF ADVICE THAN REQUIREMENT, BUT DO YOU WANT TO BECOME A BETTER WRITER OR NOT?

The past tense of *lead* is l-e-d, even though the past tense of *read* is r-e-a-d.

Until you can show me the word “tragedic” used in a reputable text, do *not* use the word “comedic.” The word you want is “comic.”

The word “backstory” strikes me as the lazy person’s way of writing or saying “background story,” which, in turn, is simply an inflation of “background.” So, for your second paper in Engl 1406, the rule is: use “background,” not “backstory.”

Do not use the word “said” in place of the definite article, or a pronoun like “this.” As a reminder, “the” is the definite article. For example, do not write anything like “The man conquers said force,” or “There are several examples of said kind.” You’re not on a TV cop show, so don’t write as though you are. People in real life don’t actually talk like that. (“Bleed out” is another cop show-generated phrase that ought to be left out of your writing, while I’m on the topic of expressions that make you sound phoney.)

Avoid writing about how something “relates” to something else. It’s a painfully weak concept. Any two things, no matter how different, can be made to “relate to” each other.

As a final foray into the most basic building blocks of writing, I’m tempted to outlaw the use of “-ing” words anywhere in your writing, so egregious has been the misuse I’ve seen in the first set of essays. I’m not referring to words like “bring,” “sing,” or “ding-a-ling.” I’m referring to words like “being” when used in the place of “is” (e.g. “The most significant being the difference between the two,” rather than “The most significant is the difference between the two,” or using -ing words as main verbs when -ing words can’t carry that weight: e.g. “Meaning that no matter what you cannot escape your fate.” This example should be: “This means that no matter what you cannot escape you fate.)

Do not expect citations alone to do the work needed to show your reader how familiar you are with the text (in other Majors you’ll encounter the term “your material,” i.e. “demonstrate familiarity with your material,” or “demonstrate knowledge of your material.” It most often means the same thing: a text or texts. When it does mean some other material, i.e. physical,

object, the demand on you is still the same: you must demonstrate a familiarity with it, whatever “it” happens to be). Use quotations first, and then intersperse citations and quotations in what comes across as a balanced form.

MOSTLY VOCABULARY

## **Quotations**

A quotation doesn’t become a quotation until you use it as such. Before that it is a line, a sentence, a passage, etc. Think of it like the metal used to make a car. You wouldn’t call a pile of metal a car, but that metal can be bent and shaped into one. Same deal with a passage (raw metal) and a quotation (finished car).

“Quotation is the noun form; “quote” is a verb. So, I can *quote* a line from a poem, but the line I recite is a *quotation*.

## **Hyphens**

It’s odd, but if you were to write “first-hand experience” you’d hyphenate “first-hand,” but if you write it as you have, with “first hand” coming after “experienced,” then the correct spelling has no hyphen. I don’t know why this is the rule, I only know it is.

## **Author – Narrator**

Don’t confuse the author with the narrator. This is never a good idea.

## **Speaker vs Narrator**

In writing about poetry or drama we use “the speaker,” but in writing about prose we more typically use “the narrator.”

## **I or me, etc.**

The trick to knowing when to use “I” or “me,” or “him” or “he,” etc., is to ask yourself how you’d say what you’re trying to say without the second entity. E.g. “When mom and I go to the store” vs “When mom and me go to the store”: drop mom, and ask yourself if you’d say “When I

go to the store” or “When me go to the store.” The same can be done with “When him and his father tried” vs “When he and his father tried.” Which would you say: “When him tried” or “When he tried”?

### **Proofreading, again—because it’s really, really important**

Proofread your work before you let me see it. When you find a mistake, you can fix it; when I find a mistake, I grade it, and if I find a proofreading mistake your grade only moves one way.

I write proofread when I see a mistake the author could reasonably be expected to see and correct through proofreading and revising the work prior to submission. If I write “proofread” as many as three times on your second-term paper, I’ll stop reading and grade the paper at zero.

Possible Topics:

Discuss the significance of the title, *The Rest is Silence*

Use at least two external sources to discuss plastic pollution in *The Rest is Silence*