

Engl 1413. A1 – Fall 2020
Second Assignment – Poetry Explication
Due: Thursday, Oct. 29

Formatting:

1. With the exception of the length of the paper, the same formatting rules you were expected to follow in the first assignment apply to this second assignment. Refresh your memory by using the “First Assignment” link from the course webpage.
2. For this assignment, you must number the pages of your paper, in the top right corner, AFTER the first one. As has been done with this assignment sheet. In other words, no page number on page one (which is the page that has your title and name on it), but page 2, 3, etc. must be numbered in the top right corner.
3. Refer to all titles using MLA style. That means poem titles and essay titles should be enclosed in quotation marks, and book titles should be italicized. Any bibliography or list of references should be ordered according to MLA style.
4. You can write a paper as long or as short as it needs to be in order to complete this assignment. More is not automatically better.
5. It shouldn't need to be said, and maybe with this class it doesn't, but I'll say it anyway: this is an English class in which writing matters greatly. So make sure you are writing complete sentences, always, and in fully developed paragraphs.
6. By the end of your first sentence, it must be clear to your reader which poem you are writing about. Handling this requirement imaginatively will greatly impress at least one important reader of your paper.

Subject:

For this assignment you are required to explicate just one of the poems below. We explicated a couple of sonnets in class, and that is what you are required to do for one of the poems below.

By pulling phrases out of each poem you are bound to find something about that poem on the internet. Doing so, when the assignment is an explication, is at least a bit lazy. So I encourage you to resist the temptation, but I realize that Oscar Wilde spoke for most of us when he said “I can resist anything, except temptation.”

In any event, here are two very important things to keep in mind:

1. I'm a lot older than I look, and I've been teaching assignments like this for a long time, so I'm not half bad at spotting “help” in students' papers. And, I'm probably as proficient as you are at searching things out online. So, if you put into your paper something you

read online, even if you try to put it into your own words, I'll probably recognize that. And *that* is plagiarism, unless you cite your source. It's also worth remembering that there are only three poems to choose from and there are twenty six of you working on the assignment. Ask yourself if you *really* think you are going to be the only one who finds and reads whatever online source you use to "help" you understand the poem. If you do want to use source(s), cite them. You can lean on them if you absolutely must. But I hope instead you'll decide to learn—it's hard, I know, but you can do it—to walk unaided. Or, less metaphorically, to read, think, and write for yourself.

2. Recall the classes when we explicated the poems: explicating chiefly involves showing your work. If you just offer me an interpretation and show me how a couple of lines fit that interpretation, the paper will earn a very—perhaps even a very, very—low grade. That's why these poems are short, so that you can walk me through every line: and should it be necessary or useful, every word. In short: **show your work!**

You'll benefit from taking a look at your returned and marked first assignment. I can do that too, and will. If I see you making the same mistakes this time I'll assume you're not trying to improve and I'll grade your second paper accordingly.

The poems are on the pages following, with one poem per page so that if you want to you can print that page and scribble on the poem to help you understand it.

1.
Queen Virtue's court, which some call Stella's face,
Prepar'd by Nature's choicest furniture,
Hath his front built of alabaster pure;
Gold is the covering of that stately place.
The door, by which, sometimes, comes forth her grace,
Red porphyry is, which lock of pearl makes sure;
Whose porches rich (which name of cheeks endure)
Marble, mix'd red, and white, do interlace.
The windows now, thro' which this heav'nly guest
Looks o'er the world, and can find nothing such,
Which dare claim from those lights the name of best,
Of touch they are, that, without touch, doth touch,
Which Cupid's self, from Beauty's mind did draw:
Of touch they are, and, poor I! am their straw.

2.

I NEVER saw my Lady lay apart

Her cornet black, in cold nor yet in heat,

Sith first she knew my grief was grown so great ;

Which other fancies driveth from my heart,

That to myself I do the thought reserve,

The which unawares did wound my woful breast ;

But on her face mine eyes might never rest.

Yet since she knew I did her love and serve,

Her golden tresses clad alway with black,

Her smiling looks that hid thus evermore,

And that restrains which I desire so sore.

So doth this cornet govern me alack !

In summer, sun, in winter's breath, a frost ;

Whereby the light of her fair looks I lost.

3.

I

LOVE, Reason, Hate, did once bespeak

Three mates to play at barley-break :

Love, Folly took ; and Reason, Fancy ;

And Hate consorts with Pride ; so dance they :

Love coupled last, and so it fell,

That Love and Folly were in hell.

2

They break, and Love would Reason meet ;

But Hate was nimbler on her feet :

Fancy looks for Pride, and thither

Hies, and they two hug together :

Yet this new coupling still doth tell

That Love and Folly were in hell.

3

The rest do break again, and Pride

Hath now got Reason on her side :

Hate and Fancy meet, and stand

Untoucht by Love in Folly's hand :

Folly was dull, but Love ran well ;

So Love and Folly were in hell.