

Critical Analysis 2 Exam: SFE 11518-1 19V

Section 1: Close Reading or Explication, 50%

Answer **BOTH** question 1 **AND** question 2. Each question in section 1 is worth 25% of the exam, while the essay (section 2) is worth 50%. Divide your time accordingly – each question in section one should be roughly equivalent to half an essay: **2-3 paragraphs**.

Janet E. Gardner and Joanne Diaz explain close reading or explication in *Reading and Writing About Literature: A Portable Guide*:

When you write this sort of paper, you will examine a piece of literature very closely, paying special attention to such elements of the language as sentence structure, style, imagery, figurative language (such as similes and metaphors), word choice, and perhaps even grammar and punctuation. The job of an explication is twofold: **to point out** particular, salient elements of style and **to explain the purpose and effect** of these elements in the text.

When assigned an explication or a close-reading, you might be tempted to simply walk through a text line by line, pointing out interesting features of style as they occur. A paper written this way, though, can devolve into little more than summary or restatement of the literature in more prosaic language. **A better idea is to isolate the various features of the literature on which you will focus and then deal separately with the specifics and implications of each.**

Keep this advice in mind when answering the following questions:

Question 1.

Perform a close reading of **one** of the provided poems. Remember to use MLA style in text references and provide a Works Cited. (25%)

Question 2.

Read the opening paragraphs of “Hybrid Aversion: Wolves, dogs and the humans who love to keep them apart”, which function as an introduction to the essay. Identify what the author’s main argument is, and discuss the techniques she uses to introduce her ideas and to convince the reader of her own point of view. Remember to use MLA style in text references and provide a Works Cited. (25%)

Remember to answer both question 1 **AND** question 2.

KEY

Good answers will, as specified above, “**point out** particular, salient elements of style and **to explain the purpose and effect** of these elements in the text”. If both of these levels are not included, the answer is inadequate. They will also be structured around the specifics and implications of the literary features discussed, rather than going through the work line by line. Language and grammar are important. A level answers will display thorough and insightful analysis of the texts. When discussing Migratory, the student should be clear that the poem is told from the perspective of the bird’s instinct for migration (or words to that effect). When discussing the Ern Malley poem, it is helpful to be aware that this poem was part of a literary hoax. Excellent discussions of Hybrid Analysis will be able to distill the main argument and then discuss the techniques the author uses to support it.

Section 2: Essay 50%

Answer **ONE** essay question

The essay needs to have a title, an introduction including a thesis statement, and a conclusion. It needs to make a convincing argument, and quote directly from the novel. I have provided a number of selections of text you can choose from – please make use of at least two of these, but you are welcome to use more. I ask that you **do not quote the entire block of text**, but choose a relevant section of it – remember to introduce each quotation and integrate it correctly into your paragraph. Remember to use MLA in text references. Also provide a Works Cited in which you correctly refer to the novel itself. The essay should be at least five paragraphs long. It can be longer, but does not need to be – I am more interested in quality than quantity.

1. How does language shape Ovid’s identity, and how does this change throughout the narrative? Discuss with reference to a selection of the following quotations and your understanding of the novel as a whole.

Or

2. ‘The child’ is a central figure in *An Imaginary Life*. The novel opens with a description of Ovid’s own childhood, and refers to it again at several points in the narrative. Make an argument about the ways in which the concept of ‘childhood’ is important to the novel. (50%)

KEY

As specified above: The essay needs to have a title, an introduction including a thesis statement, and a conclusion. It needs to make a convincing argument, and quote directly from the novel. I have provided a number of selections of text you can choose from – please make

use of at least two of these, but you are welcome to use more. I ask that you **do not quote the entire block of text**, but choose a relevant section of it – remember to introduce each quotation and integrate it correctly into your paragraph. Remember to use MLA in text references.

Language, structure, and depth of analysis are all important. Good essays will use the provided quotations in intelligent ways, which display a broader understanding of the novel as a whole, and contribute to a coherent argument.