

EXAMINATION

Course code: SFE11018	Course: Critical Analysis 1
Date: 5 Dec	Duration: 5 hours
Permitted aids: English-English dictionary	Lecturer: Øystein Tjentland



Task 1 (15%)

I have provided notes for the answers (indicative, not exhaustive), however, student responses should be in sentences and show they understand what they are writing. The final grade reflects the quality of the answers (regarding language fluency and understanding) as well as structure.

The terms:

The Believing Game: Peter Elbow's term. The ability to temporarily suspend your own convictions when trying to understand arguments and writing summaries

Explication: the process of making clear that which is subtle and implicit. Close-reading.

Metacommentary: A way of commenting on your claims and telling others how-and how not-to think about them. (what I meant to say...) We have worked with templates for using metacommentary to clarify + elaborate

Signal Verbs: tailor verbs to suit the precise action you're describing. We have worked with templates for making a claim (argue, assert), expressing agreement etc

Topic sentence: the focus sentence of a paragraph, expresses the main idea of the paragraph.

Plot: sequence of events in a story, cause and effect.

Conflict: essential in a traditional plot, drives the story forward. Antagonism/friction between characters, ideas etc.

Indirect characterization: the narrator's description of characters through speech, actions etc

Round character: characters who are complex, dynamic, undergo development

3rd person limited perspective: narration of a story limited to the mind of one character

Section 2: (35%)

- a) Morace, Robert A. "From Parallels to Paradise: The Lyrical Structure of Cheever's Fiction". *Critical Insights*, edited by Robert A. Morace, Salem press, 2012
- b) Summary. Avoid list summary to pass. Should be able to see traces of "The Believing Game" - ability to suspend one's beliefs and write a summary which offers context and identifies the general argument. Should be able to see traces of what we have talked about re introducing summaries; signal words + signal verbs that fit the action.

c) As introductions go;

Basic answer:

Hook, transition and thesis.

Grab the reader's attention and introduce the thesis/research question

Elements that stronger students should cover:

Explain the virtue of an effective introduction

Examples of strategies e.g. the anecdote intro, the startling fact intro, the engaging example intro, the delayed drop intro. Maybe also mention faux pas intros e.g. the dawn of man intro, the dictionary intro. I think it natural to mention Morace's introduction.

d) Thesis.

Basic answer: according to Morace it's time to reassess Cheever's novels as they are not as bad as people think.

More advanced answer: The key to establishing a fresh perspective on Cheever's novels is examining why Cheever is seen as a disappointing novelist.

Elements that we have worked with:

- The formula: what's the intention of the text? What does the author do to achieve that? Is he successful?
- Kairos, ethos, logos, pathos
- Identify the overall argument, supporting arguments.
- Identify and describe the elements of an argument (claims, reasons, evidence, acknowledgement and warrants)
- Acknowledgement – recognising the counter argument. (Despite all the negative descriptions of Cheever's novels they possess qualities which urge us to reevaluate...)

Students should also be able to comment on the nature of a strong thesis statement (we have focused on factors such as original, debateable, clear/specific, how it should derive naturally from your topic etc) and perhaps what it should not be (we have focused on vague, general, yes/no-question, bewilderingly opinionated etc)

Section 3: Essay (50%)

Structure:

- Have an introduction with a strong thesis statement
- Have body paragraphs (indented or spaced to indicate) that relate to the thesis statement, in which the student develops her/his points with evidence from the text

provided or the text they must remember (the more specific the examples, the better). And, each point should flow logically from the next.

- Have a conclusion in which the student returns to the thesis statement and summarizes the findings of the body paragraphs.
- The content should come from the course.
- The subject and argument must be relevant to the question.
- The subject must answer the questions asked.
- If terminology is used, these terms should be defined.
- If historical context is important to the answer, the student should explain it.
- Each point must be developed sufficiently with analysis and examples from the text
- Each point should be balanced (of roughly similar length and development).

Language:

- Language should be generally formal and academic
- Syntax, grammar, spelling, capitalization, should be correct
- Transitional words and phrases are used to create allow ideas and sentences to flow

Elements we have worked with:

- The centrality of the textbook *They Say I Say* – entering the conversation/demystifying the academic conversation.
- Strategies for agreeing/disagreeing and agreeing/disagreeing simultaneously.
- Topic sentences
- Strategies for introducing views. We have worked with templates for introducing standard views, templates for introducing an ongoing debate + templates for ‘making what ‘they say’ something ‘you say.’
- Appropriate linking words and transitions.
- Conclusion: bigger picture/broader significance, answer the ‘so what’-question

The literary texts that we have read are:

The Swimmer (John Cheever), The Enormous Radio (Cheever), Hills Like White Elephants (Hemingway), My Son the Fanatic (Hanif Kureishi), Butterflies (Patricia Grace), Talking Turkeys (Benjamin Zephaniah), Popular Mechanics (Carver) and Lamb to the Slaughter (Roald Dahl)

We have talked about various schools of literary criticism and students should (when relevant) utilise that knowledge in the long answer.

Esp. Cultural studies incl. postcolonial criticism and maybe reader-response theories + structuralism.