Dark Romanticism/Gothicism—Hawthorne and Poe

Final Essay Options

Dearinger—Fall 2019

Read over the options below, and choose (1) as your focus for your final analytical essay on this unit. If you have other ideas for a topic for your essay, just talk with me and get your idea approved before moving forward. Choose a story that you enjoyed reading (and would not mind re-reading again a few times ☺) and about which you feel you have something important to say!

**Option 1 Focus Texts: “Young Goodman Brown,” “The Birthmark,” or “The Tell-Tale Heart”**

Prompt: Using (1) of the stories listed above, analyze the author’s use of symbolism to address an overarching theme of the text. In other words, what symbols are used throughout the story that add to your understanding of the larger meaning or message of the story? You will need to address three (3) different symbols in your essay, so make sure that you have enough ideas to write about in the story that you choose.

**Option 2 Focus Texts: “The Tell-Tale Heart,” “The Cask of Amontillado,” or “The Raven”**

Prompt: Using (1) of the texts listed above, analyze the use of three (3) Gothic literary elements and their use towards developing a larger theme of the text. For example, examine how three separate Gothic features help to present Poe’s larger meaning or purpose in “The Tell-Tale Heart.” Use the list of Gothic elements on the back of this page to help you get started.

**Option 3 Focus Texts: “Young Goodman Brown” or “The Birthmark”**

Prompt: Using (1) of the texts listed above, analyze the role of the female character in the story. Present an argument for the purpose of the female character, how her character develops (or fails to show any development) and how she contributes to the overarching themes of the story. You will need three distinct ideas about this character, so make sure you choose one that you have a lot to say about!

**Option 4 Focus Texts: “Young Goodman Brown,” “The Tell-Tale Heart, “ or “The Cask of Amontillado”**

Prompt: Using (1) of the texts listed above, analyze the use of chiaroscuro (the treatment and/or distribution of light vs. dark) throughout the story. You will need to have three separate ideas about how and why the author uses light and darkness at specific moments in the story, and you’ll need to provide examples from the text to support your ideas.

**\*\*If you have another idea for a topic of literary analysis,**

**please talk with me so I can approve it for you!\*\***