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Collaborative Close Reading

This assignment asks students to:

- Close-read several texts and generate analytical questions and comments
- Annotate texts in collaboration with other students
- Synthesize opinions of the class into one coherent written interpretation
- Reflect on the process of collaboration in written form

Instructions:

For this assignment, you will choose a short passage (no more than 40 lines) from the past two weeks' readings and submit it to me, with a 2-3 sentence explanation of why you chose that passage. Your final paper for this assignment will be a close analysis of this passage.

Passages will be uploaded to Hypothes.is, where they will be accessible for collaborative annotation. Students are each required to provide at least one annotation on each of their classmates' passages.

Grading:

- Annotation: 15% (graded on a done/not done basis)
- Analytic paper: 60% (see attached rubric)
- Reflection paper: 25% (see attached rubric)

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Analytic Paper Rubric

Coherence and Completeness	25%
Does your paper address the text in its entirety? Do you address the points raised by your classmates, in forming your overall argument? Are your observations connected in some way, as opposed to a disjointed series of observations?	
Evidence	20%
Are your claims rooted in evidence taken from the text? When you make a claim, do you explain how specific passages actually prove the point you are making? You should be starting with what you see in the text and then building your argument up from the close-reading you have done.	
Argument	20%
Even for a close-reading paper, you should still have a central argument. A close, line-by-line reading is how you make your argument, but you should still be making a broader claim about your passage, based on what you've shown in your close reading	
Organization	15%
Does the organization of your paper make sense for the claims you are trying to make?	
Grammar and Spelling	10%
Is the writing mechanically sound? You will note that this is a relatively low percentage of your grade—my goal is not to obsess over grammar, and I do not feel that grammar is one of the most important components of good writing. However, if the mechanics of your writing interfere with your reader's ability to understand your arguments, then grammar and spelling suddenly become very important, because they interfere with the higher-order elements of the paper.	
Style	5%
Are your sentences (structure, length) varied? Is it clear and concise? Are your word choices appropriate for the context? Style is often seen as a personal choice or some ineffable quality of writing, but we will work in this class to develop and improve our writing style and to make our writing enjoyable for our readers.	
Introduction and Conclusion	5%
Do you effectively frame your argument? Do your introduction and conclusion do more than simply repeat what you say in the body?	

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Reflection Paper Rubric

Depth of reflection	25%
Do you actually reflect on your writing process? Do you think deeply about the choices you made and the challenges you faced? A superficial or cursory reflection is not sufficient for this assignment.	
Challenges and Take-Aways	25%
What other challenges did you face when completing this assignment? What did you learn in the process? Is there something you would do differently, if you were doing this assignment again? What will you take from this assignment that will help you be a better reader of texts going forward?	
Process	20%
How was your writing process for this assignment? Were there challenges you faced as a result of the multiple stages of engagement with these texts?	
Collaboration	20%
How did your own understanding of the text change as a result of the annotations that your classmates provided? Did providing annotations on their texts help you think about your text any differently?	
Grammar, Spelling, and Style	10%
Even though this is a personal reflection which can be written in a very different style than a more formal, academic paper, it should still be polished and revised, in the same way you would revise any other paper.	