

HON 200: The Transcendental and Romantic Self
Scott Ellis, elliss3@southernct.edu
Spring 2023
Assignments

1. Weekly Reading Reactions (RR) or Quizzes:

Quizzes: I would prefer to ask you to complete short reading reactions, but I may switch to quizzes if the RRs are unproductive, or (gulp) if the responses are plagiarized or seem written by a chatbot. Please do your own work and we can avoid quizzes.

Each week, you will respond to questions I pose about the readings. Since we will discuss these questions and your responses in class, you must type and print out your responses. I will collect them at the end of Monday's class. Hint: Make sure you have access to a printer! (If you are absent, you can submit the RR to the "Reading Reactions" link on the left, but if you are in class, you must bring a printed copy.) For these initial RRs, I am not looking for "perfect" answers or a complete understanding of the material, some of which are challenging and will require extensive discussion to comprehend it clearly. Instead, I only ask that you try your best. Since you will use these RRs for your final Commonplace Book project, I suggest that you save these RRs so that you can access them later. **Note: You do not need to complete a Reading Reaction if you are in the group presenting that week.**

Format: Type your name at the top, number and copy each question along with your response, and skip a line between each question.

Grading: For each RR, you will receive a Satisfactory (S), Unsatisfactory (U), or Zero. If you complete all components for each RR and you type and print it before class, then it will earn an S. If you skip any components, do not complete a component fully, do not print it and submit it in class (unless you are absent), or if it shows minimal effort, then it will earn a U. If you submit it late but within one week, then it will earn a U. If you do not bring it to class and do not submit it within a week, then it will earn a Zero.

2. Digital Story and Timeline:

Although I have created a syllabus with readings and a weekly schedule, this document does not necessarily match the learning and ideas—the course "story," one could say—that students take away from the course. For this project, you will create the story of our course by exploring the specific parts of the course texts that you find the most engaging. Using sutori.com (you can find examples and tutorials below), you will create a story/timeline for the readings and ideas in our course. Each week, small groups will add to the course story and help to lead discussion about the text(s) for that week. In subsequent weeks, different groups will then add to the story by addressing different texts and ideas. Thus, by the end of the semester, you all will have created a narrative about the course—what passages, ideas, and connections most matter to you—that one cannot find by simply reading a syllabus.

Each student will work in small groups to add two or three entries to this course story during the semester. We will discuss the groups in class. Each entry will contain the following components:

Components:

1. Key passages with questions: Each group member will select at least one textual passage to present to the class and discuss. On your story/timeline, insert the quotation(s)—or a part of the quotation if it is long—followed by at least two discussion questions for the class. These questions should help us all understand the passage, the text, and/or its connection to themes from the course. Try to avoid asking personal reception questions (“What do you think about the idea in this quotation?”). We may discuss such responses in class, but the purpose of your questions is to get your peers to think about the ideas in the text rather than how we might respond to them. You should also avoid “factual” or easy questions by creating those that will require careful thought and analysis from your peers. During discussion, you will read the entire passage and ask one or both questions to your classmates. Make sure you cite the page number of the passages. Each student can select more than one passage if you’d like to do so.

2. Your thoughts about the questions: After posing the questions above, write your own analysis. How do you answer your own questions? What insight might you offer to readers of your story? Each answer to each question should be at least 100 words long, but you can write more if you need to. **Upload the questions, your responses to each, and your self- and peer-assessment (you can put them all in one document) to the appropriate Digital Timeline folder on Blackboard**

3. Connection to other texts and ideas we have discussed, including direct quotations: As a group, you should identify any connections that your text has to other texts (or ideas) we have read and discussed as a class. Make sure you cite the page number of the passages from your text and the connection text.

4. [For your second addition to the story during the second half of the semester only] Summary of secondary research. As a group, you will find and read a work of scholarship that elucidates the text we are reading for that week. Using one of the databases available through Buley Library (MLA, JSTOR, or Project Muse; and no, Google is not a database you will use for this research), each group will find, read, and summarize an article that helps us all to understand the text. Each group member will collaborate to write the summary, which should be 150 words maximum. The article that you select must be at least 12 pages long, and each group must check with me in advance to make sure it is a suitable article. Make sure you cite your source in proper MLA style. Each group member must then identify and post on the story at least one significant quotation from the article. If there is time, you will discuss these quotations with the class.

5. Optional: You can add Images, other texts, and other materials you find on the Web, as long as you cite where you found them. Note: This project is not designed for you to show off your ability to search the Web for images, texts, quotes, etc. Instead, it is designed for you to engage

closely and carefully with the texts and ideas of our course. I therefore recommend that you focus your time and energy on careful analysis and critical thinking rather than trying to add dazzling visuals and extra materials.

Self-Assessment and Peer Work Summary:

Within one week of your group's facilitation of class discussion, each group member must submit to Blackboard a document with two components:

1. A self-assessment for your work on this project. Use the "Grading Scorecard" language to evaluate your work for this project and explain in detail the grade you are giving yourself. How much time and energy did you put into it? Did you take the lead with any part of it (research, writing, layout, quotation selection, etc.)? How do you rate your efforts during the class discussion?

2. Peer Work Summary: Give each member of your group—including yourself—a grade on their work for this project and, if necessary, a reason for the grade. If a group member (including yourself) put significant effort on the project, please note it. If a group member (including yourself) did not work as hard as the others, note that as well. Often, there are reasons why group members excel or underperform; that is normal. This Peer Work Summary is not designed for you to undercut your peer group members. Instead, it is a chance for everyone in your group to offer an honest assessment of their own efforts and the efforts of their peers.

Sutori.com:

Here are tutorials and examples of using Sutori to create stories/timelines. Please note that the examples come from high school students; your projects will be more complex and involved:

Tutorial: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZOd1eVK_4Gk

Tutorial: <https://dh-wordpress.ramapo.edu/tool-guides/timelines-with-sutori/>

Example: <https://www.sutori.com/en/story/the-civil-rights-movement--L22ZV6HzYkYow6BHdm5EvC3P>

3. Commonplace Book:

Each week for the Reading Reaction sheet, I have asked you to locate 1-3 quotations from the texts you read for that week that you find interesting or significant to the text, to our class topic, or to yourself. At the end of the semester, I will ask you to combine these quotations into a "Commonplace Book," a form of creative reading and writing that has been used since Antiquity in many cultures. In this Commonplace Book, you will paste all the quotations from all your RRs, giving you a unique and personalized document of key passages from our course readings. At the end of the semester, you will submit this Commonplace Book to Blackboard, but you will also include at the beginning a "Preface" that introduces your Book. Looking over your selected passages, what do you notice? Are there consistent themes or ideas? Do these quotations speak more to the individual texts, the course topic, or to you? What quotations

stand out to you as the most significant or interesting? What did you learn from these quotations and texts? This “Preface” should be at least 250 words, but feel free to write more if you’d like.

Final Course Self-Assessment:

After the final quotation from your Commonplace Book, skip a line and complete a self-assessment for your work during the entire semester by using the grading “Scorecard” language and explaining your rationale for this grade. Evaluate your work for each of the following components:

- Reading Reactions: How many received a S, a U, or a zero?
- Digital Story and Timeline: What grade did you earn for each?
- Commonplace Book: How would you assess your work on this final project?
- Class Preparation and Participation: How much time and energy did you spend preparing for class? Did your participation enrich class discussion? (Please note that there are many ways to participate in class, including large group discussions, small group discussions, selection of significant passages, etc.)
- Absences: How many classes did you miss?

Grades:

The grading process for this course might be different from the process in other courses you have taken. Essentially, you are going to grade yourself for your work in the course. Yes, you read that last sentence correctly. As I will explain more in our discussion, I have found that traditional approaches to grading—in which I assign letter or number grades to each assignment large and small—direct your attention to the grade rather than to the content of the class. Since my goal for you is to help you create stronger reading and writing skills and develop a clearer understanding of Romanticism and the “Self,” I will use a different approach to my evaluation of each student’s work in the course.

Three times during the semester, you will complete a detailed written self-evaluation of your progress in the course. I will give you more specific instructions about this self-evaluation as the semester rolls along, but essentially you will assess your own work, your completion of the assignments, and your response to and development from my feedback and that of your class peers.

Of course, I reserve the right to decide on the mid-term and final grade for each student if your self-evaluation is significantly different from my own evaluation. Thus, a student who skips Reading Reactions, misses Story/timeline requirements, never uses my feedback, does not participate in class discussions, or submits sub-par work consistently, will not earn a Gold, Silver, or Bronze, regardless of the self-assessment. This is not a course where you can do nothing and still earn a good grade. On the other hand—and research shows this is much more prevalent in such grading approaches—we may hold a discussion in which I think we should raise your self-grade.

“Scorecard” Grade Levels: Use the following guidelines for assessing your own work. I will determine and use the spectrum of each grade (B-, B, B+, for instance) to indicate your level of understanding of course materials and ideas.

- “Gold” (A range)—
 - You earn a Satisfactory on every Reading Reaction;
 - You complete both story entries, and you complete them by the due date and time;
 - You complete all requirements for each story entry;
 - Your Commonplace Book is complete and the Preface shows careful thought and attention to the quotations and the theme of the course;
 - You complete all of the readings and come prepared to class to discuss them;
 - You engage with your peers in class multiple times during class;
 - Your work shows maximum effort (ideas are clear and well developed, writing is proofread and error free, etc.);
 - Your work shows nearly complete understanding of the concepts from class;
 - Your work clearly builds from professor and peer feedback;
 - For the final assessment: you miss no more than two classes over the entire semester.

- “Silver” (B range)—
 - You earn a Satisfactory on almost every Reading Reaction;
 - You complete both story entries, and you complete them by the due date and time;
 - You complete all requirements for each story entry;
 - Your Commonplace Book is complete and the Preface shows above average thought and attention to the quotations and the theme of the course;
 - You complete nearly all of the readings and come prepared to class to discuss them;
 - You engage with your peers in class multiple times during the semester;
 - Your work shows strong effort (ideas are clear and well developed, writing is proofread and nearly error free, etc.);
 - Your work shows above average understanding of the concepts from class;
 - Your work clearly builds from professor and peer feedback;
 - For the final assessment: you miss no more than two classes over the entire semester.

- “Bronze” (C range)—
 - You earn a Satisfactory on most Reading Reactions;
 - You complete both story entries;
 - You complete most requirements for each story entry;
 - Your Commonplace Book is complete and the Preface shows adequate thought and attention to the quotations and the theme of the course;
 - You complete the majority of the readings and come prepared to class to discuss them;
 - You occasionally engage with your peers in class;
 - Your work shows decent effort (ideas are relatively clear and developed, writing may contain some errors, but these errors do not undermine the ideas you are trying to communicate, etc.);
 - Your work shows average understanding of the concepts from class;
 - Your work occasionally builds from professor and peer feedback;

- For the final assessment: you miss no more than three classes over the entire semester.

- “Still in Training” (D range)—
 - You did not reach the level of engagement and understanding to land in the “Bronze” range, but you still completed enough work to pass this course;
 - You earn a Satisfactory on approximately half of the Reading Reactions;
 - You complete one of the story entries;
 - You complete a few of the readings and occasionally come prepared to class to discuss them;
 - You do not usually engage with your peers in class over the course of each week;
 - Your work shows sub-par effort (ideas are not always clear, writing is not up to college-level standard, etc.);
 - Your work shows incomplete understanding of the concepts from class;
 - Your work rarely builds from professor and peer feedback;
 - For the final assessment: you miss no more than four classes over the entire semester.

- “Out for the season” (F): You did not complete most of the work; you usually earn zeros or Unsatisfactory on RRs; you did not complete one or more either story project completely; for the final assessment: you miss five or more classes.

[[[**3. Grangerized text:**

I will introduce this assignment during the semester, but essentially you will annotate one of our course texts by adding commentary, connections to other texts and ideas, photos, letters, historical material, and any other information that will help you and others grasp the text.

]]]