**Final Paper English 170**

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of the final essay to examine a common element in three texts from three different authors from the quarter thereby further illuminating the nuances of that element as it relates to the human condition. You will form a relevant and original thesis based on an analysis of multiple texts and support that thesis through your close analysis of the texts.

**ASSIGNMENT**

I have included the other options from the university. If you want to write an essay about a choice other than theme, please see me, so I can help you narrow your focus.

Write a three to five page essay (minimum of 1000 words) that analyzes a commonality between three texts from three different authors from the quarter. Choose one of the following commonalities--theme, archetype or analytical lens--and track it through the texts (or, in the case of the third choice, view elements of the text through the lens). Your essay should address how your close examination of the texts illuminates a deeper understanding of the element you've chosen and its relationship to the human experience. What, for example, do we learn about love from reading multiple texts in which love plays a central role? You will likely need to further focus your topic to elements that are comparable. For example, if you're looking at parental love in one text, it might not be relevant or comparable to consider romantic love from another text.

Your ideas should be original and should be supported by the text. This is not a research paper. Please use only the texts and your own ideas about the text. Should you pull from the lecture, be clear about crediting the lecturer. Learning how to "talk the talk" does count: accurate use of the terminology should be applied when and where appropriate. Be sure to title your essay.

**HELPUL DEFINITIONS AND EXAMPLES**

The information below is intended to give you some ideas that may be helpful when choosing your common element. Please note that there is a lot of cross over in these categories. While choosing a topic it is important to remember that you will have to focus your essay further as you begin to write. You should return to the three texts, reread them with your element in mind, and also review your notes from lectures and breakouts.

***Theme***

Works often have more than one theme. Sometimes themes can be expressed in one word, such as love, death, or betrayal. Sometimes themes express relationships, such as “the individual in conflict with society.” And sometimes they carry attitudes or opinions, such as “death is a rebirth,” “war is meaningless.” Consideration of a theme generally includes seeing the theme in light of its opposite and considering the space in between. Thus, if you're analyzing at the theme of death, you might also look at the life that springs up after a death.

***Archetype***

Archetypes are related to themes in that they are considered universal themes which are so central to the human experience everyone can relate to them. Archetypes can be types of characters such as a mother figure or villain, or they can be experiences characters go through, such as a journey or initiation. Below are several common archetypes (literarydevices.net):

* ***The Hero***: a character who predominantly exhibits goodness and struggles against evil in order to restore harmony and justice to society.
* ***The Mother Figure***: Such a character may be represented as Fairy Mother who guides and directs a child, Mother Earth who contacts people and offers spiritual and emotional nourishment, and Stepmother who treats their stepchildren roughly.
* ***The Innocent Youth***: a character inexperienced with many weaknesses who seeks safety with others; others like him/her because of the trust he or she shows in other people. Usually, the experience of coming of age comes in the later parts of the narratives.
* ***The Mentor***: His or her task is to protect the main character. It is through the wise advice and training of a mentor that the main character achieves success in the world.
* ***Doppelganger***: a duplicate or shadow of a character that represents another side of the character's personality.
* ***The Scapegoat***: a character that takes the blame of everything bad that happens.
* ***The Villain***: A character whose main function is to go to any extent to oppose the hero or whom the hero must annihilate in order to bring justice.
* ***The Journey***: The main character takes a journey that may be physical or emotional to understand his or her personality and the nature of the world.
* ***The Initiation***: The main character undergoes experiences that lead him/her towards maturity.
* ***Good Versus Evil***: The clash of forces that represent goodness with those that represent evil.
* ***The Fall***: The main character falls from grace in consequence of his or her own action.

***Analytical Lens***

The analytical lenses often applied to literature include psychological, socio/political, spiritual, queer and feminist lenses. Looking at a piece through an analytical lens means considering the events and characters in light of that focus. For example, if you look at a text through a psychological lens, you might pay close attention to the psychology of siblings, of parenting, or of abuse. If you look at it through a feminist lens, you would likely start by considering the role of women in the texts and their relationship to empowerment. If you look through a spiritual lens, you're likely to consider the role of the mystery and wonder, birth and death and the ways in which these things illuminate humanity's relationship to the unknown.