
English 10

Introduction to Fiction

Texts

- X. J. Kennedy & Dana Gioia, *An Introduction to Fiction*, 11th ed., Longman, 2010
- Ernest Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises*, Scribner, 1926

Required Materials

- Notebook, blue or black ink pens, paper
- 2 large (8 ½ x 11") Exam Bluebooks

Course Description

This course is divided into two nearly-equal halves. The first half of the course is spent building competency as readers in the literary genre of fiction. We do this very systematically by studying the elements of fiction in our Kennedy/Gioia text (plot, character, setting, theme, etc.). In the process, we'll sample a wide variety of short stories in English and develop fluency in the terminology of fiction studies. We'll take a midterm exam around this point.

During the second half of the course, we'll apply what we've learned by writing analytical papers that demonstrate the depth and breadth of our learning. We'll devote ourselves to a brief but intensive case study of a widely-acknowledged master of the modern short story, Flannery O'Connor. Then we'll broaden our study by examining the cultural context that produces fiction, including notable non-English samples (in translation). Our study will culminate in a book-length work by the most famous fiction writer of the 20th century, Ernest Hemingway. Then we'll take a final exam.

Assignments

- *Short Analysis Paper*—a 2-4 page paper that analyzes the function of one element of fiction within a single story chosen from Kennedy/Gioia's "Stories for Further Reading," Chapter 12. 100 points possible.
- *Long Analysis Paper*—a 4-6 page paper that explores a story in-depth by one of the authors in Kennedy/Gioia Chapter 11. 200 points possible.
- *Midterm Exam*—a short answer and/or short essay examination on major concepts, terminology, and theory covered in the first half of our course. 100 points possible.
- *Final Exam*—a short answer and/or short essay examination on major concepts, terminology, and theory covered in the second half of our course. 100 points possible.
- *Quizzes*—4 quizzes, 10 points each, on terms and concepts from our reading. 40 points possible. *There are no make-ups for missed quizzes.*

- *Journal*—a small collection of exploratory writings and in-class assignments, both assigned and self-generated, that reflect upon our reading. 60 points possible.
- *Participation*—I will keep track of your in-class efforts, rewarding mature, thoughtful, complete responses and taking note of absences, gaps in preparedness, and incomplete or immature work. 100 points possible.

Grades

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|---------|----|---------|----|
| 669-700 | A+ | 478-509 | C+ |
| 637-668 | A | 447-477 | C |
| 605-636 | A- | 415-446 | D+ |
| 574-604 | B+ | 383-414 | D |
| 542-573 | B | 351-382 | D- |
| 510-541 | B- | 0-350 | F |

Policies

Classroom Behavior Expectations: Please set your cell phones on “silent” while you are in class. For obvious educational reasons (not to mention common courtesy) you may not play games, listen to music, or text message during our class session. If you receive an emergency call during class, please walk outside to take the call. Also, please limit your private conversations during our class sessions. Food is prohibited; however, water is OK. I expect you to bring your personal copies of our texts to class with you to every class session, as well as a notebook, pens, and paper. I also expect you to be a fully engaged, active participant in this class while you are enrolled in it.

Participation: This is a very important part of this class. I really expect you to be reading and thinking actively, critically, and creatively. This is not a class in which you can cruise along in neutral gear for long. I will call on you regularly and keep track of your responses. When you’re in class, be prepared, focused, on task. As part of your participation in this class, you will read aloud on a regular basis, both from our texts and from your Journal. When called upon to read, speak loudly and clearly.

Academic Integrity: Representing someone else’s work as your own, whether accidental or intentional, will result in a grade of 0 on that assignment and possible disciplinary action under the guidelines of De Anza College’s statement on academic integrity (www.deanza.edu/studenthandbook/academic-integrity.html).

Paper Business: You must have regular access to the internet to be successful in this class, including a working email address. Paper topics will be announced and described on my web site well in advance of the due dates. Check the web site regularly for details. Late papers will receive a 5-point deduction per day. There are no rewrites for poorly-written papers; do it right the first time. This is a Sophomore level college literature course; competency in reading, thinking, and writing at that level is assumed.

Turnitin.com: You will submit your out-of-class papers for this class to this web site. When you visit the site, click on the “Support” menu in the top banner of the main page. Then click on “Student Training” for site registration and basic instructions. The “Student Quickstart Training” video provides an excellent introduction. Our course ID number and

password can be found on the first paper assignment instructions on my De Anza web site. You will need both of these in order to register.

After you have set up your account, click the “Resources” menu in the top banner. Under “Preventing Plagiarism” you’ll find an excellent white paper explaining the different types of plagiarism commonly seen in student papers. I will hold you responsible for the information found there. Among other things, Turnitin.com will search the web for language matches with your paper once you upload it, issuing an “originality report,” which reveals the percentage of language your paper shares with other similar writings found on the internet. A certain low-level amount of shared language is possible, considering brief quotes, etc., within your papers. But whether intentional or accidental, if your originality report on any given paper that you submit to this class climbs above 25%, you will receive an ‘F’ on that assignment.

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Fiction (noun): 1) The class of literature comprising works of imaginative narration; 2) works of this class, i.e. novels or short stories; 3) something feigned, invented, or imagined; a made-up story.

--Dictionary.com

Fiction is the truth inside the lie.

--Stephen King

Fiction is art and art is the triumph over chaos... to celebrate a world that lies spread out around us like a bewildering and stupendous dream.

--John Cheever

Writing fiction is the act of weaving a series of lies to arrive at a greater truth.

--Khaled Hosseini

Like a vivid daydream, fiction simultaneously takes us out of our reality and holds us firmly in it. To live imaginatively inside a story as it unfolds, word by word, sentence by sentence, is to join the author in a collaborative game of make believe that expands the mind, softens the heart, and enriches the spirit.

--Dave Denny