

LIT 114

Five-page Essay

You have two options for this assignment. Regardless of which option you choose, **develop a single, clearly defined topic**. Possible topic choices include writing about character development or how characters are made interesting through characterization, the use of foreshadowing or symbolism, the five elements of a good story, the importance of music or dialog, theme, character types, and many others. Also, your essay will be a minimum of five full pages, double-spaced, size 12 print—use Calibri or another easy to read, standard font)—do not include information from outside sources, and don't repeat term definitions. Also, remember that you are responding to the story the film(s) present(s). Refer to characters by name (spelling counts), and do not refer to actors or directors. Anything short of five full pages will receive marked deductions in grade. In addition, writing at the college level is more successful if done in a way that includes contact with professors and the Writing Center. Regardless of which option you choose, be serious in your approach. Try to discover something new about the films. **Do not simply repeat what you heard in class discussions or saw on a DVD's special features (I watch them too) unless you want a low score! Assume that your reader is familiar with appropriate terms and with the films.**

Option One

Write a paper comparing two films **we have watched this semester**—this can be a film we watched in class or one from the independent viewing list, or write a similar paper comparing a film we have watched **this semester** to its original literary source. For example, read the book (*Rocket Boys*) that inspired *October Sky* and compare it to the film version—differences will always be noted. No matter which option you choose, use appropriate terms associated with LIT 114, and include elements **such as** theme, plot, and characters as you have read in your text **as they relate to your topic**. Re-read Chapter 12 as a guide in dealing with a film as a whole, rather than as isolated parts. However, you may also compare isolated parts that inform your reader concerning overall differences between the pieces. When you are finished, your reader should have a clear idea of how the two works share similarities as well as how they differ as pieces of literature. Remember: When making a comparison, the two elements compared must hold a fairly close degree of likeness. For example, it probably would not be profitable to compare *The Usual Suspects* to *The Princess Bride*; however, a comparison could be made between Keyser Soze from *The Usual Suspects* and The Dread Pirate Roberts from *The Princess Bride*.

Option Two

Conduct an in-depth analysis of one of the films we have watched—this can be a film we watched in class or one from the independent viewing list. After choosing a single, well focused topic, thoroughly examine the interplay of plot, characters, theme, or other literary elements **appropriate to the topic you choose** to inform your reader concerning your scholarly reactions to the film you choose. Assume your reader is knowledgeable concerning the plot of the film,

and don't waste space in your paper providing a general summary of the film—a general summary will receive a grade of F. However, you may present **brief** summaries of scenes from the film if a summary will help clarify a point you are trying to make. Otherwise, simply point your reader to an appropriate scene in the film and present your own words in a way that will display your understanding of material we will cover this semester (such as appropriate literary terms) and that will allow your reader to appreciate your point of view. Present a serious and reasoned presentation of your ideas using appropriate literary terms, and avoid being silly or overly humorous in your approach. This does not prevent you from demonstrating your sense of humor if such presentation is warranted at times. However, remember that you are writing an academic paper rather than a standup routine.

Plagiarism on this essay will earn you an F for the semester. Any essay short of four full pages will receive an automatic F, and essays short of five full pages will be reduced in grade.

Due Date: April 5, 2012.

Required reading:

“Writing a Film Analysis”—the link is on my Web site.

Re-read this assignment sheet multiple times prior to writing your essay.