

ENGL 1302

Pierce

Essay Assignment: Short Story Synthesis



The short stories we have explored in this unit examine human experiences, human tendencies, and human relationships, which aren't necessarily unique to one specific form of identity. For example, the texts explore such common themes as brotherhood, sacrifice, and psychological healing, just to name a few. **You** have your own unique set of experiences and observations which you, too, can connect to one of these texts.

Your assignment is to write an essay in which you describe a personal experience or observation of your own and compare and contrast it to elements of one of the stories from this unit. Think about how this text function as a story that is common to human experience and what aspect of your own autobiography you can compare. Be creative! (To see an illustration of the kind of essay you will write, see the example student essay in the Assignment Resources folder)

Guidelines:

- You must choose only **one** of the short stories
- Your essay needs its own **specific and unique thesis**
- Carefully follow the conventions for **quoting and citing literary texts** according to MLA guidelines
- Use the **present tense** consistently for writing about literature
- Make sure **each body paragraph communicates an identifiable point**
- Be sure to follow a **coherent pattern** consistent with an essay that compares two things (achieving a *balance* between your literary examples and your personal experience narrative so that one doesn't dominate the essay over the other, class notes will be provided)
- Follow the manuscript formatting guidelines specified on the syllabus
- Attach a Works Cited page
- Recommended length: **about 6 paragraphs** (an essay shorter than *5 paragraphs* will receive a deduction in points)

Choose **1 text** from the following list:

“Sonny’s Blues”

“The Ones Who Walk away from Omelas”

“The Things They Carried”

“A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings”