

**ENG 2003: Introduction to Poetry**  
**Prof. Nina Barnett**  
**Fall 2018**

**Essay #1: due in class on Wed, October 10**

For this essay, choose one of the following options:

1. Present a poem from our course (a poem we've read and discussed so far) in another college course you've taken or are taking now. Before you begin writing, consider why that particular class will benefit from reading and understanding the selected poem; for example, what might a Hospitality Management class learn from Ada Limon's "Instructions for Not Giving Up." or why might students in a Fashion Marketing course benefit from reading Shakespeare's sonnet 130 "[My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun]"?

Write a well-developed essay of approximately 750–1,000 words in which you explain why your poem is a good choice for the class and make a claim about how your poem's central themes or ideas are developed through your choices in tone, speaker, situation, setting, and language. Use 3–4 examples from the poem to prove your point. Connect this poem to several learning outcomes from the college course, and/or connect this poem to several specific skills that are important in students' intended careers.

**or**

2. Expose someone you know well (a parent, a sibling, an employer, a neighbor, a friend) to one poem we've read and discussed in class so far. Write a well-developed essay of approximately 750–1,000 words in which you explain why your poem is a good choice for this particular person in your life and make a claim about how your poem's central themes or ideas are developed through choices in tone, speaker, situation, setting, and language. Use 3–4 examples from the poem to illustrate why this poem would be of benefit to this particular person. For instance, would it give this person a different perspective on a specific event in their life, expose them to a new idea, a specific poetic form?

For this assignment, outside research is not required—in fact, I strongly discourage it. If you choose to use outside materials, be very careful to avoid plagiarism. Add any sources you use to your MLA-formatted Works Cited list. Visit the [Purdue OWL citation page](#) for a style guide.

A successful essay will demonstrate expertise in:

- the fundamentals of essay writing: a clear thesis, an accurate representation of the poem(s), a well-organized structure both between and across paragraphs, sophisticated language, and a polished prose style
- the key terms and concepts we use to analyze poetry: for example, tone, speaker, situation, setting, and language.

- the basic facts about your poem(s) and poet(s), including an understanding of the situation in the poem, the meaning(s) of any unusual words in the poem, a few biographical facts about the poet, and the time period in which the poem was written.

Please remember a few key tips for writing about poems:

**Name the parts of the poem correctly.** Poems often (but not always) come in lines. Words that come before the line breaks are often important words (for example, rhyming words are frequently located at the end of lines). A blank line between two lines of poetry indicates that a new stanza is beginning.

**Include quotations from a poem correctly.** Unless you are quoting a very long section (more than 3–4 lines), you should probably incorporate the poem into your paragraph’s ordinary style. BUT, it’s nonetheless important to indicate where the line breaks were. You do that by inserting a single backslash with one space on either side ( / ) to show the line break. A double backslash ( // ) shows a stanza break.

It looks like this:

With the introduction of the idea of the kiss, Cummings takes us from a dry discussion of grammar to passion: “wholly to be a fool / while Spring is in the world // my blood approves” (5–7).

**Include line numbers—not page numbers—in parentheses after quotations from a poem. This is MLA format for writing about poems.**

### **Technical Requirements**

Your essay should:

- be 750–1,000 words long (3–4 pages)
- be printed, double-spaced, in 12-point Times New Roman font
- show evidence of significant revision, editing, and proofreading
- include correctly formatted in-text citations and a Works Cited page that meets MLA requirements
- be handed in at the beginning of class on **Wed, October 10**

On Wed, October 3 we will be discussing essay drafts.

There will be a late penalty for handing in this essay after October 10. If it’s handed in on October 15, I will deduct one letter grade (so a B becomes a C, for example). After October 15, I will not accept the paper in any form. I can’t accept your paper via email at any time.