

Essay 1

Due date: Wednesday 3/6/13 by 11:59 pm via Safe Assignments

Length: 4-5 pages

Format: MLA format (double spaced, one inch margins, Times New Roman font, including an original title and a header that provides your name, instructor name, class title, and due date)

Assignment: For this essay, you will need to write a 4-5 page interpretation and analysis of either *Giovanni's Room*, *On the Road*, or a comparison/contrast of the two. You may use one of the discussion questions as a prompt, or you may develop your own argument independently. For this essay, “your specific goal with an interpretive claim isn’t so much to offer the *best* interpretation as it is to offer a *provocative* perspective—one that is insightful, well supported, and unique in the sense it’s presented from your individual point of view” (“Writing about Literature” 206). You may develop a thesis statement by asking a question about a plot point and then exploring your answers, you may develop a thesis by asking questions about what a character represents in a literary text, or you may develop a thesis by asking questions about the dominant themes within a text and developing an insightful idea from those questions.

Once you have developed an insightful and arguable thesis statement, you will then have to support that thesis by providing specific examples from the text paired with a logical and clearly explained argument. Also, feel free to use additional materials from class or from your own outside research to support your claim.

Tips: Begin thinking about your paper now. With each text we read and discuss in class, consider what possible paper ideas you might have. If you have an insight or interpretation, make note of it as a possibility for your essay.

Also, make plenty of notes in your text or in a clearly labeled notebook. Write down the page numbers of relevant quotes, label themes in the margins, etc. This will help you to find and develop the support you need to include to make your argument convincing.

If you have any questions about the assignment or would like to discuss ideas, please talk to me. You may visit my office hours, email, talk to me after class, or make an appointment to meet with me.