

ENGL 117 How to read stories

Trimester 2 2009

18 Points

TRIMESTER DATES

Teaching dates: 13 July to 16 October 2009

Study week: 19 to 23 October 2009

NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

Staff	Email	Phone	Room	
Linda Hardy	linda.hardy@vuw.ac.nz	463 6806	VZ 812	(Course co-ordinator)
James Meffan	james.meffan@vuw.ac.nz	463 6807	VZ 903	(Course co-ordinator)
Brian Opie	brian.opie@vuw.ac.nz	463 6812	VZ 804	
Mark Williams	mark.williams@vuw.ac.nz	463 6810	VZ 911	

CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Lectures

Mon, Tue, Thu 4.10–5.00 pm McLaurin LT 101

Tutorial times to be arranged

COURSE DELIVERY

ENGL 117 will be taught by a combination of one-hour lectures and tutorials. There will be three lectures and one tutorial per week. Students should prepare for both lectures and tutorials by reading set texts prior to the classes in which they are discussed. Preparatory reading will be specified in class.

COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

All additional information and information on changes will be conveyed to students via Blackboard.

COURSE CONTENT

This course aims to provide students with some essential tools for the study of narrative. The primary focus is literary fiction, but examples will be drawn from a variety of genres and media for comparative purposes. Students will be introduced to distinctive aspects of narrative form and provided with a basic critical vocabulary for the accurate analysis of narrative texts.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of the course, students should:

- have gained an understanding of narrative form through a range of critical and narrative texts;
- be familiar with important narratological terms and concepts;

- c) have developed the skills of critically focussed reading through close analysis;
- d) understand the relationship between narrative form and content;
- e) understand what is distinctive about the ways different media produce narratives;
- f) be able to explicate the relationship between the formal features and content of selected narratives;
- g) be able to accurately analyse narratives in a range of media and genres.

EXPECTED WORKLOAD

You should expect to spend, on average, about **8 hours per week** on work for this paper (*apart* from time in class). **Please note that this is a rough guideline only.** Some students may have to put in more time than others. The time commitment will be greatest in the weeks immediately prior to submission dates.

READINGS

H. Porter Abbott, *The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative*, 2nd edition (Cambridge UP)

Ian McEwen, *Atonement* (Vintage)

Further readings will be posted on Blackboard in the Course Documents folder.

ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

Assessment is 100% internal, consisting of:

- three short critical exercises 15% each; 45% total;
- critical analysis essay 35%;
- final test 20%.

All assignment topics will be posted on Blackboard in the Assignments folder well in advance of the due dates.

1. Critical Exercise 1: 15% (see below for topic)

Due date: **Friday 24 July (5 pm).**

2. Critical Exercise 2: 15%

Due date: **Friday 7 August (5 pm).**

3. Critical Exercise 3: 15%

Due date: **Friday 21 August (5 pm).**

4. Critical Analysis Essay: 35%

Due date: **Friday 2 October (5 pm).**

5. Class Test: 20%

Held in class on **Thursday 15 October**

Critical Exercise 1 (limit 600 words; due Friday 24 July)

Preparatory reading: Abbott, Chapters 1 & 2.

Would you or would you not consider the following examples to be narrative? Use Abbott's discussion in chapters 1 and 2 to explain your assessment.

a. "Right: *bourride*.... Buy and prepare a number of thick pieces of white fish equivalent to the number of guests at table; the fish may be John Dory (engagingly known in French as St-Pierre, from the visible residue on either side of the fish's peculiarly friendly-looking-head – or is that just me? – of the thumbprint of St Peter the fisherman) or brill or monkfish or indeed almost anything, with the proviso that if it is to qualify as a *bourride sétoise*, the stew must be composed of monkfish exclusively. (A famous village feud occurred after an argument about *bourride sétoise* between fractious in-laws; tempers were raised, insults exchanged, rolling-pins brandished, cookbooks consulted, opinions vindicated and hotly rebuffed, and a three-decades-long severing of relations was instituted. Now that's a recipe.)"

b. "Most astronomers believe the Universe began in a Big Bang about 14 billion years ago. At that time, the entire Universe was inside a bubble that was thousands of times smaller than a pinhead. It was hotter and denser than anything we can imagine.

"Then it suddenly exploded. The Universe that we know was born. Time, space and matter all began with the Big Bang. In a fraction of a second, the Universe grew from smaller than a single atom to bigger than a galaxy. And it kept on growing at a fantastic rate. It is still expanding today.

"As the Universe expanded and cooled, energy changed into particles of matter and antimatter. These two opposite types of particles largely destroyed each other. But some matter survived. More stable particles called protons and neutrons started to form when the Universe was one second old."

c. " *SCENE I. Elsinore. A platform before the castle.*

FRANCISCO at his post. Enter to him BERNARDO

BERNARDO

Who's there?

FRANCISCO

Nay, answer me: stand, and unfold yourself.

BERNARDO

Long live the king!

FRANCISCO

Bernardo?

BERNARDO

He.

FRANCISCO

You come most carefully upon your hour.

BERNARDO

'Tis now struck twelve; get thee to bed, Francisco.

FRANCISCO

For this relief much thanks: 'tis bitter cold,
And I am sick at heart."

d. "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife.

"However little known the feelings or views of such a man may be on his first entering a neighbourhood, this truth is so well fixed in the minds of the surrounding families, that he is considered as the rightful property of some one or other of their daughters."

PENALTIES AND EXTENSIONS

If work is handed in late, then one grade is subtracted and no comments are offered.

If you require an extension, you must complete an extension request form (available on your course Blackboard site) prior to the assignment due date. This must be accompanied by relevant documentation (e.g. a doctor's certificate) where appropriate. Extension requests must be submitted to the Course Co-ordinator. Tutors cannot grant extensions.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

In order to satisfy the paper's requirements, you must:

- attend **70% of tutorials** (i.e., 8 of the 11 tutorials);
- complete all of the internal assessment pieces by **Friday 16 October** at the very latest (unless you are granted an extension by one of the course co-ordinators);
- sit the class test.

Failure to satisfy the mandatory requirements will result in a fail grade.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

GENERAL UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND STATUTES

You should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the Victoria University Calendar or go to the Academic Policy and Student Policy sections on: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy>

The AVC (Academic) website also provides information in a number of areas including Academic Grievances, Student and Staff conduct, Meeting the needs of students with impairments, and student support/VUWSA student advocates. This website can be accessed at:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcacademic/Publications.aspx>

COURSE PROGRAMME

Lecturers: James Meffan (JM); Linda Hardy (LH); Mark Williams (MW); Brian Opie (BO)

Week	Date	Lecture	Lecturer	Readings
Week 1	Mon 13 Jul	Introduction	(JM)	Chapter 1 Narrative and life
	Tue 14 Jul	What is narrative?	(JM)	Chapter 2 Defining narrative
	Thu 16 Jul	What isn't?	(JM)	Chapter 3 The borders of narrative
Week 2	Mon 20 Jul	Story and discourse (1)	(JM)	
	Tue 21 Jul	Story and discourse (2)	(LH)	
	Thu 23 Jul	Narrativity and literariness	(LH)	
ASSIGNMENT 1 Due – 24 Jul 5pm				

Week 3	Mon 27 Jul	Narration (1)	(LH)	Chapter 4 The rhetoric of narrative
	Tue 28 Jul	Narration (2)	(LH)	
	Thu 30 Jul	Voice (1)	(LH)	Chapter 5 Closure Chapter 6 Narration
Week 4	Mon 3 Aug	Focalisation	(LH)	
	Tue 4 Aug	Closure	(MW)	
	Thu 6 Aug	Narrative delinquencies	(MW)	
ASSIGNMENT 2 Due – 7 Aug 5pm				
Week 5	Mon 10 Aug	Voice (2)	(MW)	Chapter 7 Interpreting narrative
	Tue 11 Aug	The rhetoric of narrative	(BO)	Chapter 8 Three ways to interpret narrative
	Thu 13 Aug	Intentional Reading (1)	(LH)	
Week 6	Mon 17 Aug	Intentional reading (2)	(LH)	
	Tue 18 Aug	Symptomatic reading (1)	(LH)	
	Thu 20 Aug	Symptomatic reading (2)	(LH)	
ASSIGNMENT 3 Due – 21 Aug 5pm				
Mid Trimester Break – 24 August – 4 September				
Week 7	Mon 7 Sep	The medium matters	(BO)	Chapter 9 Adaptation across media
	Tue 8 Sep	Analysing film narratives	(TBA)	
	Thu 10 Sep	Narrative and media	(TBA)	
Week 8	Mon 14 Sep	From page to (digital) screen	(BO)	Chapter 10 Character and self in narrative
	Tue 15 Sep	Is the real world really real?	(BO)	Chapter 11 Narrative and truth Chapter 12 Narrative worlds
	Thu 17 Sep	Character, self and story	(BO)	
Week 9	Mon 21 Sep	Fiction and reality	(BO)	
	Tue 22 Sep	Fiction and meaning	(BO)	
	Thu 24 Sep	Space, time and narrative	(BO)	
Week 10	Mon 28 Sep	Multiple worlds	(BO)	Chapter 13 Narrative contestation
	Tue 29 Sep	Is truth stranger than fiction?	(BO)	Chapter 14 Narrative negotiation
	Thu 1 Oct	Interpretation vs reading	(JM)	
Critical Analysis Essay Due – 2 Oct 5pm				
Week 11	Mon 5 Oct	Design and intention	(JM)	
	Tue 6 Oct	Judgement and authority	(JM)	
	Thu 8 Oct	Literature and politics	(JM)	
Week 12	Mon 12 Oct	The moral of the story	(JM)	
	Tue 13 Oct	The death of the author	(JM)	
	Thu 15 Oct	Final Class Test		
Weeks 13-16	19 October - 14 November		Examination Period	