Deborah Lapp English 1B – Reedley College 59183 TTh, 59185W--Spring 2017

Introduction to Literature (prereq Engl 1A or 1AH)

**Fathers, Mothers, & Others: Exploring Relationships through Literature**

Office: CCI 212 638-3641 ext. 3416

Office hours: T 11-1 in CCI-212 and by arrangement [deborah.lapp@reedleycollege.edu](mailto:deborah.lapp@reedleycollege.edu)

*The wonderful thing about books is that they allow us to* ***enter imaginatively*** *into someone else’s life. And when we do that, we learn to sympathize with other people. But the real surprise is that we also learn truths about ourselves, about* ***our own lives****, that somehow we hadn’t been able to see before.*

--Katherine Paterson (b. 1932)

**Important dates:**

Feb 4 (SAT): Literary Arts fundraiser, party and booksale in the library (must be 21)

Feb 7 (Tues): Carole Firstman 7PM Forum Hall–donation (no Tues AM class;Wed short)

Mar 10 (F): last day to drop a class

Mar 16 (Thurs): TC BOYLE 7PM Cafeteria (no class Thurs; Wed short)

Apr 10-14: Spring Break

Final: Tues. May 16th 9-11 (W 5/17 for evening class)

Required: *The Norton Introduction to Literature* (12th ed.) by Kelly J. Mays

Origins of the Universe and What It All Means by Carole Firstman

Tortilla Curtain OR The Harder They Come by TC Boyle

A spiral notebook for this class only

Access to a computer and Canvas

The goal of this course is to tap you into the depths of human experience, to reveal the mysteries of the soul, to explore infinite and eternal truths, to empathize with others from different cultures, conditions, and lives; to laugh, to cry, and, of course, to gain you three transferable units. We will read, discuss, and write about literature--an inclusive variety of genres, a multicultural variety of authors, a diverse variety of origins, an eclectic variety of styles. We will explore various critical responses to the literature. In keeping with the theme for this semester, we will focus on how literature lets us enter imaginatively into others’ lives.

It’s MOST IMPORTANT that you resist the temptation to google the pieces we read. Believe me, I’ve heard what scholars and amateurs HAVE said about these works; but, if we only repeat what others have said, how will new ideas ever emerge? When you meet someone for the first time, do you ask other people what they think of this person, or do you trust your own wisdom and authentic response? This class is about your authentic response to literature. You may have covered some of these works in other courses. If so, try to see something new in them.

We’ll keep an extensive notebook of responses for a grade at the end of the 16th week. Besides the grade, which is based on the depth and originality of what you have to say and how elegantly you say it, the responses serve several purposes: to prepare for discussion, to read around for responses, to clarify our thinking, and to prepare for more formal writing, especially the argument paper in the 16th week. Your audience is your peers; impress each other with your insight.

You’ll compose four formal essays (20% each) for evaluation, one of which is your final. Those, with your response grade (20% also), comprise your grade for the course. Your essays will be typed, double-spaced, proofread, and thorough in MLA style. Besides an exploration of examples of literary criticism, which I will provide, none of the papers requires research beyond the literature, so your works cited will simply be a list of the literary works you have chosen to discuss. Please don’t think about plagiarizing a paper; it’s against the law and will result in disgrace and a grade of F. I hope you see that plagiarizing—or even looking up what others have said is counterproductive to this course.

It is so important to be in class, as it is primarily a discussion class. If you can’t come to class, call or email to get the assignment, but I promise it won’t be nearly as enriching or fun as covering the reading in class. I may drop you if you miss more than 2 classes (2 tardies equals an absence, so don’t be tardy—think about it: the class starts at 9:30AM(TTH) or 6PM (W). Think of it as a 9:15AM (or 5:45PM) class, and you’ll always find parking and never be late).

If you have a verified need for an academic accommodation or materials in alternate media (i.e., Braille, large print, electronic text, etc.) per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, please contact me as soon as possible.

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate critical thinking skills and experience with literature through a variety of linked reading, writing, and discussion activities.
2. Demonstrate connections between literary works of the same or different genres.
3. Make connections between the situations of literature and your own experience.

We can look forward to some exciting literary events: several important authors and artists will be in town, and I arranged our schedule for you to take advantage of the opportunities. The readings are mandatory, so do what you need now to make sure you can make it.

Syllabus by Weeks (subject to change and elaboration)

**Weeks 1-4** **Fathers**

**memoir**

**Start reading *Origins of the Universe and What It All Menas***

**by Carole Firstman for February 7th reading**

**poetry**

Examples: “Sine qua Non,” “Those Winter Sundays,” “Digging,” “Daddy,” “Do Not Go Gentle...”“My Papa’s Waltz,” “Home Burial,” “Letter to My Father at 40,000 Feet,” “Victims,”

Poetry Explication due Week 4

Feb 4 (Sat): Literary Arts fundraiser, party and book sale in the library (must be 21)

Feb 7 (Tues): Carole Firstman 7PM Forum Hall–donation (no Tues AM class; Wed short)

**Weeks 5-11** **Mothers**

**fiction**

**Start reading *Tortilla Curtain* by TC Boyle for March 16th reading**

**short fiction**

Examples: “Wildwood,” “Puppy,”“To Be of Use,” “Boys and Girls,” “Doe Season,” “Girl,” “Good Country People,” “I Stand Here Ironing,” “Hills Like White Elephants,” “Everything that Rises Must Converge,” “Roman Fever.”

Mar 10 (F): last day to drop a class without a grade

Mar 16 (Thurs): TC BOYLE 7PM Cafeteria (no class Thurs; Wed short)

Fiction Comparative Analysis due Week 12

**Weeks 12-17 Others**

“How to Watch Your Brother Die,” “The *Chicago Defender* Goes to Little Rock,” “On the Subway,”“Cathedral,” *Tortilla Curtain*

Critical Responses to Literature

**drama**

**Week 13 *Fences* (in theaters now!)**

Apr 10-14: Spring Break

Critical Response to Literature due Week 14

**Week 15-17 *Merchant of Venice***  <http://nfs.sparknotes.com/merchant/>

Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions; fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, heal'd by the same means, warm'd and cool'd by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? And if you wrong us, do we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that.

[*The Merchant Of Venice Act 3, scene 1, 58–68*](http://www.enotes.com/merchant-text/act-iii-scene-i#mer-3-1-51)

Response Journal due Week 16

**Final: Tues. May 16th 9-11 (W 5/17 for evening class)**

Critical response questions about Merchant of Venice

What do we learn about ourselves from entering imaginatively into the life of Shylock and the other characters in Merchant of Venice?

Choose one other work from this semester and apply the same question: What do we learn about ourselves from entering imaginatively into the life or lives on the page?