ENGLISH 200B, British Literature after 1800
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:30-12:50, HH280
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Welcome to English 200B, a survey of British literature after 1800. In this course we will study four novels, one from the 18th century, two from the 19th, and one from the 20th. We will also work on our essay writing skills, especially constructing an argument from evidence.

I expect that you come to class ready to participate and having done the assigned reading. I hope you can come with warmth and gladness in your hearts, alertness in your eyes, and generosity on your tongues, but I will settle for ready and able.

Texts: I have ordered the following books through the bookstore:


The English Department uses The Little, Brown Compact Handbook, Third Canadian Edition as its standard for all stylistic, grammatical and documentation choices. You are required to have, or to have access to, a copy for reference.

Policies: The Faculty of Arts requires that I inform you that “all students registered in the courses of the Faculty of Arts are expected to know what constitutes an academic offence, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for their academic actions. When the commission of an offence is established, disciplinary penalties will be imposed in accord with Policy #71 (Student Academic Discipline). For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students are directed to consult the summary of Policy #71 which is supplied in the Undergraduate Calendar (p. 1:11). If you need help in learning how to avoid offences such as plagiarism, cheating, and double submission, or if you need clarification of aspects of the discipline policy, ask your course instructor for guidance. Other resources regarding the discipline policy are your academic advisor and the Undergraduate Associate Dean.”

The section in your Handbook (pp. 555-562) on avoiding plagiarism will be helpful to you. The Associate Dean also offers advice at http://watarts.uwaterloo.ca/~sager/plagiarism.html.

Missed assignments: If you miss one test, then your other four will count. If you miss another for a legitimate medical reason, we will arrange for you to make it up. If you have a legitimate medical reason for having to hand in the essay late, I will accept it. Otherwise, it must be handed in by the end of the last class.

Assignments:
Tests: We will have five tests, one on each of Castle, Picture and Sea, and two on Jane Eyre. Of the five, your four best will count at a rate of 20% of the term mark, for a total of 80%. The tests will work as follows: I will give you the questions for the test at least one class prior to the test, and probably before that. They will be questions we work on in discussion and lecture, and they will be designed to elicit argumentative, essay-style answers on the test. You will pick one question to answer on your test.

Your answer will be an argument based on specific pieces of evidence from the text. It will have an opening paragraph in which you

- state the topic of your answer
- outline the argument you are going to pursue. You should have three or four main points to make.
- conclude with a statement impressing me with the significance of your argument to our understanding of the meaning, power or affect of the novel you are discussing.

You will be allowed to have notes with you. The notes must and must only include the evidence – quotations, scenes, characters, page numbers and the like – that might be useful to your answer. There must be no statements of argument, no sentences, no outline, nothing like that in the notes: just evidence, although it can be organized into. You will hand in the notes with the test paper.

In addition to the first paragraph, your answer will have a paragraph for each major point you are making (three or four) and a concluding paragraph in which you summarize your findings and state their significance to my enjoyment or understanding of the novel. Each of the three or four paragraphs must have a beginning, a middle and an end. It must have a point to make and evidence to support the point. It must be clearly linked to the overall argument; use the first and last sentences for this.

To prepare for these tests, you should collect your evidence, craft your argument, and write it out. After that, you might re-write the list of evidence, arranging it to conform to the structure of the argument. Before the test, read over the answer you have written. Come to the test with the evidence in hand.

The tests will be in class. You will have one hour to do what you will. I will grade them as follows:

Quality of argument: 30%
Structure of argument, including paragraphing: 10%
Quality and use of evidence: 50%
Sentence structure, word choice, grammar: 10%

Word Paper: For one of the works we study, identify a key word. Track it in the work, as you read, and note its surroundings, its meanings, its importance. Look up the word in the Oxford English Dictionary, the long version: it's available on-line through the 'electronic reference' section of the library's webpage, and in print in the library (it is 20 volumes long; that's how you know you've got the right one). Look at the definitions over the years (you can tell the dates of
the first known use of the definition from the quotations used to give examples) and find the ones which might pertain to your word and help you understand what the author is doing with it. Write a paper, about four pages long, in which you show the importance of the word to the novel. Use the support of the dictionary where it is useful to you.

This paper should take the same form as your tests. It will have an opening paragraph in which you say why that the word is important, in which you briefly state the range of meanings it has, and in which you say why this map of its usage helps us to understand the novel, how it works or what it means, better than before. It should have paragraphs like the tests, and be written in complete sentences. It will be graded as follows:

Thoroughness and accuracy of data collection from novel: 20%
Quality of argument: 20%
Structure of argument: 10%
Use of evidence from novel and dictionary to support argument: 40%
Spelling and grammar (one mark off for each error up to 10): 10%

This paper is due any time before the end of the last class.

Schedule:

January 7: Syllabus review
January 9: Castle of Otranto: introduction and first paragraph
January 14: Castle of Otranto: two prefaces, Ch. 1
January 16: Castle of Otranto: Chs. 2 and 3
January 21: Castle of Otranto: Chs. 4 and 5
January 23: Castle of Otranto: TEST
January 28: Jane Eyre: Chs. 1-4
January 30: Jane Eyre: Chs. 5-10
February 4: Jane Eyre: Chs. 11-15
February 6: Jane Eyre: Chs. 16-21; Appendix C
February 11: Jane Eyre: TEST
February 13: Jane Eyre: Chs. 22-28; Appendix D
break: February 17-21
February 25: Jane Eyre: Chs. 29-38
February 27: Jane Eyre: Appendixes E and F
March 4: Jane Eyre: TEST
March 6: The Picture of Dorian Gray: Chs. 1-9
March 11: The Picture of Dorian Gray: Chs. 10-20
March 13: The Picture of Dorian Gray: Appendixes
March 18: The Picture of Dorian Gray: TEST
March 20: The Wide Sargasso Sea
March 25: The Wide Sargasso Sea
March 27: The Wide Sargasso Sea
April 1: The Wide Sargasso Sea: TEST
April 3: make-up class if necessary; last day on which word essay can be handed in