Critical Thinking in Action

Individual Literary Activity Project

Objective: Scholars and teachers who study literature write in a variety of ways, utilizing numerous approaches and multiple types of writing. This project asks students to choose their own approach to writing about literature, purposefully and thoughtfully selecting or creating a type of real world writing or communication that will demonstrate their understanding of the unique ways that scholars and teachers think about literary texts.

Grading: Projects will be graded based on the extent to which they 1) demonstrate critical thinking, analysis, and literary activity, including articulation of an original idea/interpretation and/or inquiry into a innovative research question and 2) articulate the nature of this work within the rationale and analysis/proposal documents. Please also see the additional grading expectations sheet for more details.

Analysis Connection: Typically, students use the work they've done to create a project based on the information they have gathered and the analysis they completed in regards to a book(s) and topic of importance in children's/YA literature. This is not required, but if you wish to begin a new topic, please meet with me. You may also sign up for additional conferences to discuss how you analysis might transfer into a project.

Recommended Genres: Although having choices can lead to creativity, some students struggle in deciding what kind of project to create. For help choosing a type of project to create please see the recommended project types handout, which includes suggested projects that students have had success with in the past as well as other similar choices you may select if you are interested in more freedom and creativity for your project. Whatever you choose, begin by analyzing at least three examples of the type of writing you've selected to use as models for your own writing choices.

Rationale: Your rationale should explain your writing choices by answering each of the following questions. While you may use sentences/paragraphs to do so, I also recommend bulleted lists, outlines, or other formats, which can help focus on main points and summarize key ideas.

Strong rationales offer specific examples from the project for each of the four questions, which typically means quoting your own project to provide evidence that you have achieved the specific objective. There is not length requirement for the rationale, but fully explaining all four sections usually takes more than a single page.

1. **Research**—List at least one secondary sources from your annotated bibliography that was especially useful in the project. This section focuses on the critical articles and other sources written by experts related to your topic that you included in your annotated bibliography—explain how learning more from these sources affect what you created.

2. **Writing/Production Choices**— List at least two examples of the type of project you created that you used as models for your work (including title/author/link as available). Your project should be as close of a match as realistically possible to the style, format, and conventions of a real-world type of writing.

3. **Interpretation Depth/Critical Thinking**— This section asks you to describe critical thinking, including the skills that you had to implement and those that a reader/user of your project might build. List or describe these skill and the implicit ideologies, analysis of authorial choices, or patterns across texts that you examine, as well as the connections you draw that show your depth of understanding.

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