

Due to Friday, January 31st in class, printed.

Description. The first paper asks you to delve imaginatively, critically, even personally into a British literary text from the Romantic period. First, select a text that interests you (ideally from the syllabus or at least the text book, though other things may be cleared with me). Ask yourself: how does it work? what world does it create, does it speak to? what does it say to or about that population? How does it engage with its period, especially the literary trends or social issues thereof? Pay attention to all the formal elements—imagery, character development, prosody, etc—and the rhetoric, style, historical references (based on the period headnotes and any available footnotes, not necessarily outside research), vocabulary, and syntax to make sure you're fully and accurately reading it. Next, react to it: what do you *think* about what it says? How does it *still speak* to you and your world? How do you *feel* about the characters' or speaker's behaviors, attitudes, philosophies? Consider what *you* might have to say to various audiences: modern-day students or citizens, for instance, or the text's original narrator, speaker, character, or implied audience. **Finally, choose one of the following approaches and write a short piece that engages creatively and deeply with the text:**

- 1) Write a parallel creative text with a short informative introduction/dedication. In other words, in a poem, story, novel chapter, or essay **constructed similarly to the one you've chosen**, take on your original text's issues, strategies, beliefs, circumstances, attitudes, language or imagery, either situated in (and updated to) the modern day or as a contributing voice to the original conversation. Then, in a 1-3 page dedication to your original writer, or informative introductory letter to me, explain what you are attempting and how it reflects your thoughtful engagement with the text. (note: three or four very short poems will equal one longer one)
- 2) Create a **new piece of literary* art** (graphic novel, poem, song, story, film etc...*"literary" for our purposes here means rooted in language and/or narrative*) that is deeply informed by **the issues that characterize** your chosen text, with a short informative introduction as described in #1. How could you sequel-ize the original text or adapt it to a different art form? How could you update the author's goals or the text's issues to address modern day concerns? How would it affect a modern character to be grounded in the older text? Previous examples have included graphic novels and silent films about "The Mortal Immortal," sometimes even from Bertha's point of view, short stories that tell Margaret's (*The Ruined Cottage*) downfall from her perspective, modern-day poems that reflect on the desire of a person to immerse himself in nature's sublimity despite the pull of depression (and anti-depressives) that forever interrupt and disrupt his inspiration (per Keats). Again, in a 1-3 page introduction—usually directed to me—explain your efforts and how your work reflects your thoughtful engagement with the text.

Evaluation. A successful paper will be

- Accurate, clear, and thorough enough in its understanding of the original text not to take things (terribly) out of context
- Sophisticated and insightful in its response to the text (surprising, original, and very interesting)
- Respectful of the original text's integrity (with accurate readings or adaptations of form, style, attitude, tone, etc.)
- Well supported (or at least obviously supportable): support for your position may come from the primary text and/or other (modern? historical?) examples (
- Consistent in approach (observant of genre and form)
- Well written stylistically, with mature syntax and vocabulary and very few surface mistakes
- PROBABLY between 4 and 6 pages long, total—some room for flexibility here based (especially) on depth, style, and genre