Welcome to English 122!

I want to get the conversation rolling with some quotes from a few of the texts we shall be reading for this class. These quotes highlight self-conscious narrators who discover something about themselves and their values as they wrestle with their growing and distressing sense of mortality.

“I thought that being extremely smart would take care of it. But I see I have been found out.” Margaret Edson, *Wit*

And

“We are the bright new stars born of a screaming black hole, the nascent suns burst from the darkness, from the grasping void of space that folds and swallows—a darkness that would devour anyone not as strong as we. But we are oddities, shadows, talk show subjects. We capture everyone’s imagination.” – Dave Eggars, *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius*

And

“A wise reader reads the book of genius not with his {her} heart, not so much with his {her} brain, but with the spine.” –Vladimir Nabokov, “Good Readers and Good Writers”

As writers/narrators ourselves, we will explore various narrative voices in our readings not only for the sheer delight of the language, but also for inspiration. We will ask questions about narrators: their reliability, their self-awareness and the challenges narrators present to us, the readers, when they spin their stories. We will have to ask ourselves such questions as: What makes a “good reader”? How does an intrusive narrator affect our experience of authenticity? What is authenticity?

In this class we are going to continue the conversation you had in English 121. We will use *Remix* for our text along with reading two plays and a memoir-novel. So in addition to our study of narrators and narrative voices in the readings, I will also be emphasizing
the role of culture in our individual beliefs and practices. Much of your research will connect cultural and historical themes to the texts. Consider yourself a cultural analyst. You will be writing in a variety of styles including personal, analytic and finally in an ambitious hybrid blend of research, analysis and personal essay. Many of the writing assignments will ask you to approach topics in untraditional ways or ways new to you.

**Required Texts:**
*Wit,* by Margaret Edson, Dramatist’s Playservice, Inc. (Very Inexpensive)
*Proof,* by David Auburn. Dramatist’s Play Service (CLC is putting Proof on, so we will be seeing it.)*A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius,* Dave Eggars, Vintage books, 2001 (Please order it through Amazon Books or other reputable online companies for a good price).

**Recommended:** *The Everyday Writer* by Angela Lundsford: (in our bookstore)

**Materials:** a journal section in your binder, a flash drive, and sturdy folders for holding many handouts.

**The Catalogue Version of English 122:** Catalogue Description Gen ED IAI Number: CI 901R
This class will be a writing course using literature and essays to further the work done in English 121 or 120 by giving the students more experience as academic writers, readers, researchers and critical thinkers. To help students construct their own meaning while engaging with the texts of others, they will develop the ability to collect, evaluate and incorporate varied sources in thoughtfully written analyses and arguments. Students’ work should demonstrate the ability to position themselves within the context of academic and societal conversations, using a variety of texts, which may include literature, arguments on various issues, news articles, films, advertisements and websites.

**How This Class Works:**
This Honors class will work differently from the regular English 122 class in approach. As in the other English 122 classes, we will be reading some challenging material—essays, stories, a memoir, and two plays—but we will also be exploring these works in more rigorous, creative ways. I am hoping you will find the experience challenging but also rewarding. The writing and research assignments fulfill the English 122 requirements; they also demand some serious thinking and questioning of ideas and cultural assumptions about life, death, art and ethics. This course utilizes anthropology, psychology, and history to do this. I also want to provide space for you to use the creative and intellectual abilities that as honors students I know you possess. This course content lends itself to some potentially interesting research and writing assignments. Effective research, in fact, will be integral to giving context to the material we will be reading, so we will be using research not only to enhance our understanding of the subject matter, but also as an experimental writing tool.
Writing and Thinking:

I will be asking you to write reflectively as well as critically about literature. Sometimes you will get writing assignments from me that will ask you to respond purely to the style and language of a text. Other times I will ask you to connect the writer’s style to its ideas. All of the assignments are to induce original thinking and original writing from you. It’s easier to write a safe paper; I am not looking for safe papers. Sometimes you will find aspects of a work with incongruities or elements that it would be easier to dismiss. I’d rather you grapple with the puzzling aspects you encounter. Ultimately, I am hoping that you will see that writing an analytical paper is not so very different from writing a personal essay. Just as in the essays and the other non-fiction we will read, you will perhaps see that the lines between fiction and non-fiction get blurred when metaphors, precise language are used to create freshly expressed arguments...

Research:

As a course requirement, I will ask you to conduct research on topics that emerge in our course units. This conducted research, first usually around week 4, will benefit everyone as you share it with the rest of the class your group. The research will help us shed light on topics by providing important historical contexts and we will see how ideas evolve through different centuries. You will also doing other research, research for your final paper and research as well for one of your essay assignments on community. You may want to do research on an idea from one of our texts that you may develop in your culminating final writing project. For this project: the writing challenge will be in integrating the research into your essay in a way that adds further dimensions to your arguments.

Grade Components:

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<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Percentage of Final Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Journals</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essays (15% per essay)</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Proposal</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<td>Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>Final Research Essay</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<td>Participation (Group and Att.)</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflections/ Synthesis Papers</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
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Grading Scale:
A: 90 – 100
B 80 – 89
C 70 - 79
D 60 - 69
F 59 and below
Important Dates:
Last day to drop the course and receive the full refund: 2/7/2013
Last Date to Withdraw with Grade: 4/10/2013
Last class day:
Holidays:
   Martin Luther King Day: 1/22
   Spring Break: 3/25 – 3/31
   Semester Ends: 5/17
Final Exam for Class: Thursday 5/16 12:30 -2:20

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory for academic success and is defined by full class presence. You are allowed six absences, excused or unexcused. After six, there will be a grade reduction. Lateness, defined by a full 10 minutes, will count as a half absence. Chronic lateness will not work for this class. Absence does not excuse you from submitting an assignment or essay. It is always better to come to class, even if you have not completed an assignment because that way you are not compounding your problem.

Summary Response Paper/Reflections: You will write a 1.5 page paper that accurately summarizes the thesis, claims, and evidence of a selected reading and provides a well-reasoned response to the author’s argument. (More specifics will come later.)

Reading Journals: Three Levels of Thinking: (2 Pages)

Journals: Think of them as reflective and analytical responses; They are responses to stories, essays, articles, film and require a very specific formatting, (unless you are otherwise directed). The journal requires three separate paragraphs. I am requiring you to write one developed paragraph for each section (5 -10 complete sentences) Again, this is 2 pages. Please briefly quote from the text to provide evidence. Notice details. As Vladimir Nabokov says, “In reading, one should notice and fondle details.” – Good Readers and Good Writers

Level 1: Record your initial responses (your visceral, gut level impressions, opinions, associations regarding the story or article. Questions you might answer: What stands out to you as you are reading? What is troubling, puzzling, inspiring about a particular scene? What language took you by surprise or pleasure? What stood out in structure or the ending?

Level 2: Interpret the characters, dialogue, or conflict within the essay or story or article by focusing primarily on one character, one scene or conflict between characters or ideas presented. Be very specific. Don’t try to cover the entire reading. You will be able to do a better job by taking one element and zero in on that.

Level 3: How does the reading connect to past or present social, psychological, historical or cultural issues present in our world? What ideas does the reading explore? What complexities are apparent? How does the reading problematize cultural issues?

Annotated Bibliography: This annotated bibliography will encourage you to take your time researching sources. This bibliography will summarize and assess the significance
of five sources and will also explain where and how you intend to integrate your source material into your essay. Each annotation will be in 2 full paragraphs: one that summarizes your source in terms of its primary content and relevancy to your topic. The second paragraph will evaluate the source’s effectiveness. (More information will be given later as the research paper is assigned).

Research Essay Proposal: You will be writing a 1.5 typed formal research proposal that outlines your topic, research questions, and the kinds of sources that you will be integrating into your essay and the relevance of your topic for you and in terms of the course and the ideas that it will develop. Should a topic be unrelated to the course and its concerns and themes, I will be able to ascertain what you need to do to find a suitable topic and research approach.

Research Project: Using one of the literary texts, Wit, Proof, or A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius as an exploratory project for your thinking, experiences, and more specifically you will be writing a culminating and experimental research paper of 12 pages plus that will tie in all the concepts and approaches to writing that we explored in the course. You will have the opportunity to present this paper for the final day class in an informal, roundtable format.

Paper Guidelines: All essay assignments must be typed using standard MLA format (left-hand heading including name, class, date, my name and paper assignment). Double space throughout, Always create a careful and thoughtful centered title. Make sure you have 1 and1/4” margins on all sides. No title pages are necessary. Please use the standard fonts of Arial or New Times Roman. (Unless it is for stylistic purposes related to your final project).

Late Essays: You will be able to revise some of your essays for a higher grade providing you turned your essay in on time. I strongly encourage you to turn in your essays on time because late papers will drop a grade every week that it is late for three week period until the grade drops to 0. It is foolish, as I said before, to make matters worse by not coming to class because of a late paper. Then you are missing two classes: the one you missed and the next one (the assignments, work, and participation.)

Missed Class: It is essential that you find out what you need to do for the next class. Check with me or a buddy in the class.

Readings and Quizzes: We will be doing some challenging reading by writers experimenting with structure and style. In some cases the content will also be challenging, even if the structure seems traditional. You may need to read a particular essay twice or even more to understand the writer’s arguments. Try to accept the difficulty of the language or argument without giving up. The class discussions will help make the readings understandable, and you will be surprised how the writers will become comprehensible. So just trust in the process and know that the writer is trying to say something important and is doing so in a way to make a point. With a little help and teamwork, we will piece together the meaning together. Never think you are too
stupid. I am deliberately challenging you. For the stories, plays and the memoir, I may
give reading quizzes to make sure you are keeping up with the reading, if I have doubts.

**Group Work**: The goal of group work is to help you with your writing and thinking. It is
critical to your participation grade, so clearly attendance affects it.

**Class Policies**: I expect and require your attention and polite behavior during class. This
means that you will need to come to class on time and without disruption. I am
sympathetic with the various reasons you might be late once in a while, But chronic
lateness of ten minutes or more is unacceptable, and your grade will drop. Electronics
need to be put away at all times (unless for a project I permit them). This includes all
music paraphernalia including ear buds. Lap tops are permitted but only if they are
used appropriately. Facebook or other social network sites are not permitted (again
unless specified for assignment). If I find you are using a social network or any other
inappropriate site, you will not be able to use your laptop.

**Class Etiquette**: I require you to be respectful towards me and the others in the class,
even if you are disagreeing with the comments someone might be making by listening,
avoiding ridicule, avoiding distracting behaviors, or anything that could be taken as
offensive, The best way to have a successful class is to be engaged with other students
and the matters at hand.

**Disappearing From Class**: I simply cannot excuse long, unexplained absence. If you are
an athlete or performer who must be gone for several weeks, or must attend a long trip
with family, or need to visit a friend in crisis for two weeks or more, you must talk to me
prior to your taking leave. If you approach me before you leave, then we can make
arrangements or I can then advise you if you can stay enrolled in the class. If you
reappear after having not talked to me, I still might drop you or not allow you to
continue. This is a studio class, and I am unwilling to bend the rules even for
exceptional students who don’t attend. We will need to have a conversation about your
attendance before you miss. If there are problems that challenge your attendance,
simply drop the course.

**Resources Available to Students**:  
**Writing Center**: located on Floor 1 of the Grayslake Campus Library. The extension is
2452. It is free of charge and is an excellent resource for anyone looking for help with
composing, thinking, and grammar and formulating a thesis statement. Students who
regularly visit the writing center tend to improve their writing skills and their grade.
There are also writing centers at Lakeshore and Southlake sites. Lakeshore: #2179,
Southlake: # 6544.

**Office for Students with Disabilities**: If you are a student with a documented disability
and may need academic accommodations such as extended time and/or a note taker,
please present documentation to the Office for Student Disabilities in L112 at the
Grayslake Campus. To schedule a call, please call: Voice: 847) 543-2055, TTY: 223 –
0134.
Crisis Intervention: The Counseling, Advising, and Transfer Center in C110 can help students who are experiencing an overwhelming inability to cope with traumatic events, inner conflicts and or life situations. If you need assistance, please contact them at (847) 543-2060.

Policy On Academic Integrity: College Policy states: “The very nature of higher education requires that students adhere to accepted standards of academic integrity. Therefore the College of Lake County has adopted the Students Rights and Responsibilities Policy (403) and a Statement of Student Integrity. These may be found in the Student’s Handbook. Among the violations of academic integrity listed and defined are: cheating, plagiarism, falsification and fabrication, unauthorized complicity, abuse of academic materials, complicity in academic dishonesty, falsification and proxy of records and official documents, personal misrepresentation and proxy and rights and bribes, favors and threats. It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of behaviors that constitute academic dishonesty. Pursuant to due process guarantees contained in the Student Right and Responsibilities Policy and Procedures on Student Academic Integrity, the minimum punishment for the first offense for a student found in violation of the standards of academic and integrity is failure in the assignment. In addition, a disciplinary record will be established and kept on file in the office of the Vice President for Student Development.” Plagiarism is, by far, the most common violation of academic integrity in composition classes, and I encourage you to ask me for advice on citing sources whenever a question arises. It is very easy for me to detect plagiarisms with the technological advances available to our faculty. My advice: Don’t lift (steal) anything, and if you have appropriated many key ideas of authors, give them credit in your citations.

Formal Course Outcomes (Gen ED IAI Number: C1 901 R)

*Use writing as a tool for intellectual discovery and for explaining the context and scope of a text /issue
*Recognize and analyze the often unstated assumptions about ourselves, others, and the world that derive from personal experience
*Demonstrate an understanding of the ways writing can be employed to further critical thinking and show, through writing, results of such critical thinking, which may include: questioning of sources information and facts: identifying validity and fallacies in the arguments presented in sources: providing a reasonably laid out chain of evidence to support a claim, stating, considering, and answering counter-arguments.
*Demonstrate the ability of a clear rhetorical stance.
*Read and analyze a variety of texts, including visual media (such as film, ads, websites, cartoons, charts, etc.) in their social, historical and rhetorical contexts, critiquing the texts’ historical contexts, and critiquing the texts’ rhetorical strategies.
*Demonstrate the ability to formulate clear and interesting research questions and theses that are arguable; investigate those questions using multiple and varied types of sources.

*Evaluate all sources used and show an understanding of their rhetorical context and how that affects the information/ideas presented.

*Compose well-reasoned and researched academic arguments that include: integrated sources, appropriate documentation, and employment of the writing process of drafting, considering instructor feedback and revising.

*Practice varied academic rhetorical styles that observe the conventions of Standardized English.

*Demonstrate the ability to edit writing so that essays exhibit a minimum of grammar/punctuation errors to convey meaning clearly.

I sincerely hope you enjoy your semester.