

## RTR on Assignments from Hell: Tuesday, 3.9.11

### *Instructions for the RTR*

In class we will read the instructions and essay question #1 from the exam you see below (a real exam from a 300-level class). Next, DrV will break down the steps students are asked to take in order to complete Question 1. *No knowledge of the background information is needed to do these exercises.* Example is on page 1; the RTR is on page 2.

After that, for the RTR students will list the steps that students would be required to do in order to answer Question #2. In their own copy of the document, students will list under Question 2 the steps needed to complete that question.

### **DrV's example**

**Instructions:** Write an essay answering one of the prompts below. Make sure you have a thesis, and from there, build your argument using specific references to individual readings, material from quizzes, and notes from class. Write ONE essay of approximately 1,500 words each (5 double-spaced pages in a 12-pt. font). Include at least **four direct quotes** in the essay and cite your page numbers. *Most students use one quote per reading. CHOOSE ONE of these below.*

**Question 1:** A 19<sup>th</sup>-century audience went to see a play at the Richards Theater in Richmond, VA. Instead of the expected entertainment, the playgoers have awakened to find themselves the audience of an absurdist or postmodern play (post-1950). You are the director of this absurdist or postmodern play and must prepare the audience for what they are going to see. Choose the play they would have seen (before 1900 from our readings the first part of the semester). Also select an absurdist or postmodern play they've awoken to witness; this play should have a fragmented narrative, shifts in point of view, and manipulations of scenery, time, symbols, or other departures from traditional theatrical conventions. As part of what you tell the audience, compare and analyze the techniques each playwright uses. Evaluate how each play comments on an American social convention, theme, or value. Tell your audience how the structure of each play affects its purpose. Tip: You may want to give your audience an overview of Freytag's pyramid (which you may look up and cite) and its dramatic narrative structure; you could then explain how the earlier play aligns with Freytag's schema and the later play does not. Remember: approximately 1,500 words each (5 double-spaced pages in a 12-pt. font) with at least **four direct quotes** in the essay; cite your page numbers and have a Works Cited page.

#### **This is what a student has to do...the prompt "broken down":**

##### **[from the *Instructions*]**

1. have thesis
2. build argument with specific references to readings, quizzes, & notes
3. 1,50 words
4. four direct quotes with page numbers (one quote per reading)

##### **[from Question 1]**

5. choose play from before 1900
6. choose absurdist or postmodern play with departures from theatrical conventions
7. compare and analyze techniques in both plays
8. explain how structure of plays (both) affect purpose
9. maybe include Freytag's pyramid & explain how earlier play fits and later play doesn't
10. cite page numbers
11. include Works Cited

**RTR: Below Question #2: Underneath Question #2, list the steps needed to answer the question to the best of your ability.**

**Instructions:** Write an essay answering one of the prompts below. Make sure you have a thesis, and from there, build your argument using specific references to individual readings, material from quizzes, and notes from class. Write ONE essay of approximately 1,500 words each (5 double-spaced pages in a 12-pt. font). Include at least **four direct quotes** in the essay and cite your page numbers. *Most students use one quote per reading.* **CHOOSE ONE of these below.**

**Question 2:** Edward Albee, author of *The American Dream*, once said about the play *The American Dream*, "Is the play offensive? I certainly hope so; it was my intention to offend—as well as amuse and entertain." During the second half of the semester, several plays have possibly offended you, and they may or may not have amused or entertained you. Write a warning to a student who will take this class next semester about what may be considered “offensive material” in the second half of this course. Choose one play from the syllabus that might offend (**from after 1900**) and discuss the ways in which it is provocative and how the play parodies, challenges, criticizes, or exposes American values. Compare or contrast the “offensive” play **from after 1900 with one play from the 19<sup>th</sup> century**. As part of your response, evaluate how each play addresses an American problem. Include a discussion of each play’s genre. Remember: approximately 1,500 words each (5 double-spaced pages in a 12-pt. font) with at least **four direct quotes** in the essay; cite your page numbers and have a Works Cited page.

**List the steps needed to answer the question below:**

**Question 6:** This selection is geared towards teacher prep students. Note that there are THREE lesson plans and two attachments (one activity and one assessment) that you will create; this work is the equivalent of a 5-page essay.

*Prompt:*

You've been hired to teach 11<sup>th</sup>-grade English. The curriculum has an American Drama unit, and you get to choose the plays you will teach. Select **three plays**, with at least **one from 1900-1945** and **two from after 1945**.

Create lesson plans for the **three plays**. Each lesson will function like a short essay broken into parts. In other words, you will create the different sections of your plan and explain parts of the plan as indicated below.

Each plan should include the following in separate sections of the document; I recommend you copy and paste this list and use it for each plan, putting your answers in list order. Feel free to reformat the document, and remember to cite ALL materials you take from other sources. Please note that when I say "a paragraph," I mean 4-7 sentences:

1. **Summary.** A summary of your lesson in one paragraph. In your summary include the author(s) and title(s) you will use in the lesson. You may want to write this part of your lesson plan last.
2. **Goal.** The goal of the lesson in one paragraph. Why are you teaching this lesson? What is the major concept you're addressing that you want students to learn?
3. **Context.** The context of the lesson in one paragraph. What time period/literary movement does this belong to in American drama? What historical events tie to the content? What other pieces of literature will you relate directly to this lesson and why?
4. **Terms and Facts.** A list of specific terms and facts you want students to know. What are at least **three specific terms** and facts you want student to know? You may include concept terms (such as *Brechtian*—plays in the style of Brecht) and possible vocabulary words from the readings you select.
5. **Discussion Questions.** List at least five discussion questions for each reading. Why did you choose these? Is there a theme you're using or something specific you want students to focus on with these questions, or are you asking them for a broad understanding? Explain in a paragraph below your questions.
6. **Quotes.** Choose **two quotes from each text** that you would display in class and ask student to analyze in class discussion. Cite the quotes using the page numbers. **Write a paragraph for EACH of these quotes explaining why you chose these specific parts of the text.)** (There are 3 plans, so 6 total quotes and 6 total paragraphs for this one.)
7. **Activities.** Describe what activities you'd use in class, such as a discussion, a webquest, a PowerPoint or Prezi, a lecture from notes, or other activity. You should have at least ONE activity per plan. There are many, many teaching resources online, and you may adapt what you find; you **must cite the source** for any teaching materials you find and

use from online sources. **In two to three paragraphs (about 250 words), explain your choice of activities.** You will **create one** of these activities and attach it with this exam (as described in #9).

8. **Assessment.** Describe what you would do to grade students on their understanding of the lesson. Would you give a quiz, a project, a presentation, a graded discussion, or something else? Explain your choice in **two to three paragraphs (about 250 words)**. You will **create one** of your assessments and include it with the exam (as described in #9).
9. **Attachments.** Create ONE activity (from #7) and ONE assessment (from #8). Each of these should be about one page total. Attach these **two items** when you submit your exam. You're only making TWO total, so it's your choice which plan you make the activity for, as well as the assessment. You may choose to make both for the same plan, if you wish.

*Tip:* Use your own quizzes, in-class writings, paper ideas, and parts of this very exam. Teaching websites are fine to use; include them as sources.

**Grading Criteria (rubrics) start on the next page.**

### Final Exam Essays Grading Criteria

	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Part II. Participation</b>	The paragraph explains the self-evaluation for participation using reasons and a rationale. Uses specific examples.	This one is an all or nothing. These 5 points are lost only if this section is incomplete.				10
<b>Part II. Midterm Paper Extension</b>	Adds 3-5 paragraphs to the final exam using a specific subtopic, point, or argument. Includes 2 specific readings from the 2 <sup>nd</sup> half of the semester. Explains in about 400-500 words the connections among the midterm ideas and subsequent readings in the course. Provides background context. Ideas fully formed and complete. Uses specific examples with at least 3 quotes.	Adds 3-5 paragraphs to the final exam using a subtopic, point, or argument. Is less focused, more general than an A model. Includes 3 specific readings from the 2 <sup>nd</sup> half of the semester. Explains in about 400-500 words the connections among the midterm ideas and subsequent readings in the course, but some ideas may be slightly incomplete or unformed. Position may be slightly unclear. . Uses specific examples with at least 3 quotes.	Makes unclear connections to midterm ideas. May be slightly incomplete or unfocused. Functional but brief or too simplistic; under-developed or unclear context or content; ideas are general and both incomplete and unformed in several instances; is characterized by inconsistency.	Unclear connections; short on content; ideas are very general and lack cohesion, with generalities and unformed concepts; is characterized by lack of detail (development/content/word count) and lack of specifics.	Is characterized by lack of development in most areas, with unformed ideas. Like the description of a D but is characterized by more extreme vagueness.	20
<b>Part III. Essay (if you're doing the lesson plan option, see the next page)</b>	Has a specific thesis. Includes specific examples from readings &/or material from quizzes and class notes. Demonstrates deep understanding of major course concepts, including authors, literary movements, and historical and social contexts. Meets assignment criteria *5 pages *3 direct quotes *proper citations *Topic sentences clearly connect ideas; paragraphs offer a coherent development of the thesis. Concrete details are always well-chosen. Transitions not only between but inside paragraphs are logical and controlled. Free from mechanical, grammatical, punctuation, and spelling errors; shows evidence of careful proofreading.	Has a general thesis. Examples from readings complete. Mostly demonstrates understanding of course concepts, including authors, literary movements, and historical and social contexts. Meets assignment criteria *5 pages *3 direct quotes *proper citations * Topic sentences generally or slightly inconsistently connect ideas; paragraphs offer a general development of the thesis. Concrete details are mostly well-chosen. Transitions not only between but inside paragraphs are mostly logical and controlled. Mostly free from mechanical, grammatical, punctuation, and spelling errors; shows evidence of careful proofreading.	Thesis general or vague. Examples from readings of varying quality. May be incomplete slightly. General understanding of course concepts, including authors, literary movements, and historical and social contexts. Some generalization or slight incompleteness with assignment criteria *may be short on pages/word count/content not met *3 direct quotes *proper citations *Topic sentences present but unclear at times in how to connect argument across the paper and back to the thesis. Concrete details at times weak or not relevant. Some significant errors characterize this work, with some mechanical, grammatical, punctuation, and spelling errors; shows less evidence of careful proofreading.	Ineffective or absent thesis and topic sentences. Missing examples from readings. Characterized by lack of focus and unclear relationship of details to thesis, both paragraph to paragraph and within paragraphs. At times difficult to discern the point of the paragraphs and coherence of the idea. Major inconsistency or lacking completeness in meeting assignment criteria *may be short/ word count/content not met *3 direct quotes *proper citations *Topic sentences present but unclear at times in how to connect argument across the paper and back to the thesis. Concrete details at times weak or not relevant. Many significant errors characterize this work, with many mechanical, grammatical, punctuation, and spelling errors; shows little evidence of careful proofreading.	Ineffective or absent thesis and topic sentences. Writing demonstrates some awareness of topic sentences but is general and lacks focus. Missing examples from readings. Characterized by lack of focus and unclear relationship of details to thesis, both paragraph to paragraph and within paragraphs. At times difficult to discern the point of the paragraphs and coherence of the idea. Severe inconsistency or lacking completeness in meeting assignment criteria *overly brief and lacking content *3 direct quotes *proper citations *Many significant errors characterize this work, with many mechanical, grammatical, punctuation, and spelling errors; shows no evidence of careful proofreading.	70

A+=100; A=95; A-=91; B+=88; B=85; B-=81; C+=78, C=75,C-=71,D+=68,D=65,D-=61, F=59 and below  
**Lesson Plan criteria.**

Description	Lesson Plan One	Lesson Plan Two	Lesson Plan Three
	Points	Points	Points
<b>Summary paragraph.</b> This summary paragraph includes the author(s) and title(s) you will use in the lesson. You may want to write this part of your lesson plan last.	3	3	3
<b>Goal.</b> This paragraph summarizes the goal of the lesson, explaining why you're teaching the lesson. This paragraph explains the major concept you want students to learn.	3	3	3
<b>Context.</b> This paragraph explains the context of the lesson, mentioning what time period/literary movement you're covering from American drama. You mention historical events and also what connections you will ask students to make to other pieces of literature.	3	3	3
<b>Terms and Facts.</b> List of three specific terms and facts included. Concept or vocabulary words are used.	3	3	3
<b>Discussion Questions.</b> Each reading/plan has at least five discussion questions. One paragraph explains the choices for each set of questions. (One set of questions, one paragraph per plan.)	3	3	3
<b>Quotes.</b> Each lesson plan includes at least <b>two quotes from each text</b> that you would display in class and ask students to analyze in class discussion. Citations are included. One paragraph explains the quote.	3	3	3
<b>Activities.</b> Description of activities are included for each plan with citations for online materials. Two to three paragraphs explain activity choices.	4	4	4
<b>Assessment.</b> Description of grading is included with explanation in two to three paragraphs.	4	4	4
<b>Attachments.</b> One activity and one assessment are attached (two total for the entire exam).	12 points.		
<b>Quality.</b> Like essay-writing, the writing for your plans, activity, and assessment should be as close as possible to being free from errors. Your citations should be correct, and you need a works cited page. The work should be organized with logical choices. The work should demonstrate the same amount of effort as writing a 5-page essay exam would, with a range of understanding of major course concepts. The lesson plans and other materials should show careful evidence of proofreading.	10 points.		
	Total: 100 points.		