

Department of English & Writing Studies

English 1027F (001)

The Storyteller's Art I: Introduction to Narrative

Fall 2025

We acknowledge that Western University is located on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabek (Ah-nish-in-a-bek), Haudenosaunee (Ho-den-no-show-nee), Lūnaapéewak (Len-ahpay-wuk) and Chonnonton (Chun-ongk-ton) Nations, on lands connected with the London Township and Sombra Treaties of 1796 and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum.

With this, we respect the longstanding relationships that Indigenous Nations have to this land, as they are the original caretakers. We acknowledge historical and ongoing injustices that Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) endure in Canada, and we accept responsibility as a public institution to contribute toward revealing and correcting miseducation as well as renewing respectful relationships with Indigenous communities through our teaching, research and community service.

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Office Hours: Wednesday 1:30-3:30 (other times, in person or on zoom, by appointment)

Course Description

Reading literature allows us to think differently, to engage our curiosity and imagination, to look into the past and to see the present through different eyes. Literature demonstrates the power of language to persuade, to move, and sometimes to mislead. It introduces us to new words and words in new combinations that allow us to think new thoughts. This course will examine how it does so focussing on how narratives are constructed and stories are told.

The weekly course schedule consists of two hours of lecture and a third hour of tutorial discussion facilitated by a teaching assistant. In addition to providing an opportunity to discuss reading and lecture materials, tutorials will also provide substantial instruction in effective essay writing and research methods.

English 1027F is a course in its own right. It need not be taken in combination with any other course. Students who subsequently take English 1028G (The Storyteller's Art II) will have the equivalent of a 1.0 "essay" course for their breadth requirements and will have completed the 1.0 credits in first-year English necessary to take senior courses in English.

Course Objectives:

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Identify and analyse basic elements of narrative literature such as plot, story, character, point of view, setting, imagery, diction, and tone;
- Develop a critical reading of a text, and write essays that have an effective thesis and a logical argument supported by evidence from the text(s);
- Engage in research and properly document their essays using the MLA guidelines;

- *Converse in the language of the discipline, using literary terms and concepts, both in written and oral forms;
- Demonstrate a basic ability to practice intersectional analysis.

Course Materials

Required Texts:

Print copies are available from the Campus Bookstore (includes an option for delivery) <https://bookstore.uwo.ca/> **Digital** versions are available from the vendors whose URLs are listed below the titles.

Broadview Introduction to Literature: Short Fiction. Second Ed. (Broadview). (BIL)
<https://broadviewpress.com/product/the-broadview-introduction-to-literature-short-fiction-second-edition/#tab-description/9781554814039>. PB: \$49.95; e-book: \$31.70

Mitchell, Stephen, ed. *Gilgamesh: A New English Version* (Free Press).
<https://www.simonandschuster.ca/books/Gilgamesh/Stephen-Mitchell/9781439104743>
PB\$27.00; e-book: \$18.99

Andrea Levy, *The Long Song* (Penguin).
<https://www.penguinrandomhouse.ca/books/417169/the-long-song-by-andrea-levy/9780143173953>
PB: \$23.00; e-book: \$12.99

Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol* (Project Gutenberg e-book:
<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/46/46-h/46-h.htm>)

Please note: The above editions are the ones I will be using in class. All quotations in your written work should refer to these editions.

Searchable Style Guide: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html

Methods of Evaluation

Final Exam: 35%

Tutorial: 15%:

TWO Passage Analyses: (approximately 750 words each) 2x15% Due: **1. Week of September 22-26 written in tutorial; 2. Not written in tutorial. Due, on OWL, October 23.**

Final Paper: (1500-2000 words) 20% Due: **November 20**

Assignments will be submitted electronically through the OWL site, and are due by 11:55 pm on the due date.

*****PLEASE NOTE: there will be no extensions without academic accommodation.**

Late papers without academic accommodation will have 15% deducted on day 1, and 2% per day on subsequent days, including weekends, to a maximum of 7 days, after which the paper will receive a 0.

If you wish to request a re-reading of any of your work, you must make the request no more than 7 days after receipt of the grade. The first step in this process is to contact the person who originally graded your paper to ask for clarification. If you still have questions, I will read the paper.

Email

While I appreciate that email is the dinosaur of communication strategies, it is nevertheless the medium through which the University, and I, will get in touch. Please check it from time to time. I try to respond to email within 24 hours, 48 on weekends.

Passage Analyses

Students will be assigned an excerpt from a longer work. Please note that the first of these will take place in class, in tutorial, **the week of September 22. The second will be due October 22.** Further instructions will be forthcoming in tutorial.

Final Essay

The questions for this essay will be based on the longer texts on the course – *Gilgamesh*, *The Long Song* and *A Christmas Carol*. You will be expected to consider **at least** one secondary source (scholarly, peer-reviewed sources as opposed to Wikipedia or SparkNotes), and this should support your argument, or show places in which your analysis differs from that of the critic(s) upon whom you are drawing. Specific instructions will be on the essay topics sheet. More information about how to access secondary texts from the library will be forthcoming in tutorials.

Tutorials and Participation

In addition to lectures, all students will be assigned to a tutorial group of approximately twenty students, facilitated by a Teaching Assistant. These tutorial groups are, in many ways, the heart and soul of a large lecture course such as English 1027F, affording students opportunities to raise questions and pursue issues introduced in the weekly lectures, and to share their insights with their fellow students. The tutorial groups will also provide a venue for instruction regarding researching, organizing, and writing an effective, university-level research essay, complete with secondary criticism and a list of works cited.

Participation means arriving for your tutorial on time, having read the assigned materials, and regularly volunteering informed, thoughtful, and helpful replies to questions and/or leading group discussions, as arranged by the Teaching Assistant.

In order for the tutorial groups to promote a free exchange of ideas and opinions, all students are expected to treat each other and their Teaching Assistants with dignity and respect. This means listening carefully to each other's contributions to the group discussion, and allowing each group member an opportunity to express his or her own point of view, with the objective of sharing and enriching our understanding of the literature we are studying.

Course Assignments

Essay and Passage Analysis assignments (with the exception of in-class assignments) will be written according to standard essay style: double-spaced, 12 point font, and all margins set at 1 inch. A title-page is not necessary, but the first page must include the title of the essay, your name, the course number, the professor's name, teaching assistant's name, and the date.

Originality of argument, the ability to support the argument with reference to the primary text, rhetorical persuasiveness, syntax, grammar, spelling, and accurate bibliographic citation will *all* be factors in the grading of the essay.

All bibliographic notation will employ the MLA method of parenthetical notation and a works cited page. Please consult Purdue OWL (https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html) for a good online guide to the MLA method.

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence

I am interested in **your** thinking and writing. I therefore ask that you complete your work without the use of AI (automatic translation tool, grammar checkers, ChatGPT etc.). If I suspect AI use in your assignments, I will request research notes, rough drafts, essay outlines, and any other relevant material. You are expected to retain these materials until after final grades have been entered. I will treat AI use as plagiarism, and will report it to the Undergraduate Chair, which could result in a 0 for the assignment. Critical thinking and independent problem solving are among the aims of this course; neither of those is helped by using AI.

OFFICIAL THINGS THAT MAKE YOUR EYES GLAZE OVER, BUT THAT YOU REALLY NEED TO KNOW:

Academic Consideration

Students may request academic consideration in cases of extenuating circumstances – that is, personal circumstances beyond the student's control that have a substantial but temporary impact on the student's ability to meet essential academic requirements.

1. Requests for academic consideration are made to the Academic Advising office of the student's Faculty of Registration.
2. Requests for academic consideration include the following components:
 - a. Self-attestation signed by the student;
 - b. Indication of the course(s) and assessment(s) relevant to the request;
 - c. Supporting documentation as relevant.

Requests without supporting documentation are limited to one per term per course.

Documentation for medical illness, when required, includes the completion of a Western Student Medical Certificate (SMC) or, where that is not possible, equivalent documentation, by a health care practitioner.

Requests linked to examinations scheduled by the Office of the Registrar during official examination periods as well as practice laboratory and performance tests typically scheduled in the last week of term always require formal supporting documentation.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory in all classes and tutorials. In cases of excessive absenteeism (e.g. more than 9 unexcused hours for a half course, 18 for a full course), which are not accounted for by either academic consideration or accommodation, students may be debarred from taking the final examination, and will receive an official warning to this effect by or before the course drop date (see Senate policy). In classes with or without final exams, students who do not attend class will receive 0% for course participation grades. Unless other policies dictate a different set of penalties in specific English and Writing Studies programs, this will apply to all department programs.

Gender-Based and Sexual Violence

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website:

https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

Intellectual Property/Copyright

All instructor-written materials (e.g. PowerPoints, lecture notes, oral lectures) for this course are created solely for students' personal use within the course, and remain the instructor's intellectual property. Further reproduction, fixation, distribution, transmission, dissemination, communication, or any other uses, without securing the consent of the copyright owner (the course instructor) may be an infringement of copyright. You may not distribute, email, or otherwise communicate these materials to any other person. These limitations extend to recording, photographing, or sharing lectures (online or in-person) and lecture material without permission. Posting the instructor's content from this course to online course sharing sites like OneClass or Course Hero without permission is both an infringement of intellectual property law and a violation of academic integrity guidelines. The instructor will pass these cases on to the Western University Ombudsperson or their Department Chair as appropriate.

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the Western Multicultural Calendar.

Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Academic Support & Engagement <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western:
<http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at
http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Plagiarism

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

Plagiarism Checking

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Chair of Undergraduate Studies. Proven cases of plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. Subsequent offences will result in failure for the course.

Schedule of Classes and Assignments

September 4: Introduction

September 9: Margaret Atwood, "Happy Endings"; James Kelman, "Acid." (BIL)

September 11: Ursula Le Guin, "The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas." (BIL)

September 16, 18, 23, 25: Mitchell, Ed. *Gilgamesh*.

September 30: National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (non-instructional day)

October 2, 7: Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "The Yellow Wallpaper" (BIL)

October 9, 14, 16, 21: Andrea Levy, *The Long Song*

October 23: Madeleine Thien, "Simple Recipes" (BIL)

October 28: Kazuo Ishiguro, "A Family Supper" (BIL)

October 30: Ali Smith, "True Short Story" (BIL)

Reading Week: November 3-7

November 11: Octavia Butler, "Speech Sounds" (BIL)

November 13, 18, 20: Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol*

November 25: Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, "Big Water" (BIL)

November 27: Jonathan Safran Foer, "A Primer for the Punctuation of Heart Disease" (BIL online)

December 2: REVIEW