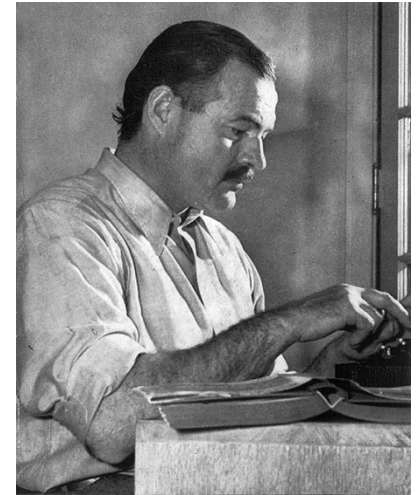


American writer Flannery O'Connor once received a letter from a student at Hollins College asking her "just what enlightenment" she intended in her stories. "I suspect she had a paper to write," O'Connor said. "I wrote her back to forget about the enlightenment and just try to enjoy them." For O'Connor, enjoyment and analysis fit cog and wheel. "A story isn't any good," she wrote, "unless it...hangs on and expands in the mind. Properly, you analyze to enjoy, but it's equally true that to analyze with any discrimination, you have to have enjoyed already...." I hope you've read at least one short story this unit that has hung on and expanded in your mind, for while doing well on this next process essay doesn't necessarily require you to enjoy the reading of the stories, I like to think it helps. And so, man-to-man, I ask you to approach this project authentically: the process of authentic reading, thinking, and writing sounds like a daunting task, but it's an inspiring one, I assure you, if done to the highest standard you've set for yourself. Aim not merely for the good grade but for true and genuine intellectual fulfillment, and I'll aim to reward you.



- When?** October 5 or 6, 8:00 AM
- What?** A 1200-2500-word essay on multiple short stories
- How?** Splendidly. With style. Using words. Posted to turnitin.com.
- Why?** For the continued development of your prefrontal cortex

## Requirements

**(1) Read** at least 10 short stories from one or more of the following writers:

<b>Ernest Hemingway</b>	<b>James Joyce</b>	Flannery O'Connor	William Faulkner	F. Scott Fitzgerald	Raymond Carver	Anton Chekhov	Nikolai Gogol
Jorge Luis Borges	George Saunders	Shirley Jackson	James Baldwin	Charlotte P-G	Leo Tolstoy	O. Henry	Tobias Wolff

**(2) Think.** After you read your 10 stories, note stylistic characteristics of each writer and make thematic connections between stories. Your job is to engage multiple—at least three but no more than six—short stories within a single essay. The short stories could come from the same author, in which case the task is to define the author's style and to show how he or she employs it to create an overarching theme across the stories<sup>1</sup>; the short stories could come from multiple authors, in which case the task changes to one wherein you distinguish the style of two authors in order to highlight each author's thematic preoccupations. Should you choose the former, you must narrow down to and write about three short stories; should you choose the latter, you must narrow down to and write about four short stories, two per author. I can even conceive of a third possibility, wherein you identify three authors who each write on a similar topic and show how their styles shape distinctive ethical ends. In that case, you must narrow down to and write about six short stories. How fun. I envy your being a student.

In any case, I encourage you to follow your interests as long as you're staying within the requirements I've set. If you write an essay over two short stories only or even—God forbid!—one short story, you're not going to do well, I assure you. I require you to demand of yourself the highest standard of close reading and clear thinking, leaving yourself plenty of time to cogently write a thoughtful essay of literary analysis, filled to capacity with mighty sentences of all kinds; rich, close analysis of words, tone, and elements of fiction; a sturdy argument you build and support with structure and evidence and a persuasive style; a keen sense of how stories work and why we read; an engaging opener and closer with imagination and inventiveness and originality; and seamless transitions that move me effortlessly through the essay.

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<sup>1</sup> If you choose this path and use Joyce or Hemingway, you may only use one of the stories we read together.

## Kubus AP English Literature, Short Story Process Essay

I want you to begin using secondary sources, a key skill for next year's research essays. So, I require you to fortify your thinking about your chosen author's or authors' style(s) with at least one quotation from at least three chapters of David Lodge's *The Art of Fiction* though I encourage more. The text, provided to you over the summer, is a goldmine of great critical insight into how various writers make fiction. To be able to incorporate this secondary material, you'll need to read around the book as if it were a reference manual, using the table of contents and index to help you navigate Lodge's observations and insights.

Your Works Cited page should include entries for all your sources, primary and secondary.

**(3) Write.** In this ChatGPT world, you're going to need to find ways to identify yourself as a human. So, STOP writing like an algorithm and learn to write like a human. Learn to write an essay that thinks in topics rather than 5 paragraphs, an essay with structure but no formula, an essay in which clarity and good common sense rule.

Let your argument determine the number of ¶s and their content, order, and length. Remember that all ¶s don't have to be of equal length or serve the same function. You might, for example, write short transition ¶s to move from one topic to another or to sum up your argument before moving to your next idea. Let the argument, the way you make it, guide ¶s. And remember that developing ¶s follow the same structure. Use that structure to your advantage.

As you write, integrate your evidence from the stories and from Lodge in the right way. Your reader should know how and why you're using every quotation and every reference to your sources. That means integrating them and situating primary text quotes just as you did in your summer revision.

And follow MLA guidelines for parenthetical citation, being very, very careful to *cite every use of every source* and to be diligent and meticulous in citation. You must make dead clear that you've used a source, which source you've used, and how you've used that source, including whether you've quoted any words or followed the original's sentence structure. Be attentive to plagiarism, which can creep into your essay when you're sloppy. Scholars are an honest lot, always tipping their hats to sources. Follow their lead. The consequences of plagiarism are serious and dire, possibly even mortal.

**(4) Proof** your work.

**Do no googling. Use no chatbot. Seek no unethical guidance.**