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English 598 Writing Assignment

Doctor Heather O’Loughlin

November 22, 2022

“Reactive Lyrical Poetry Assignment”

**Assignment and Audience:**

The genre I chose to set this assignment in is the art of poetry. More specifically, through the form of lyric poetry, which allows the writer to reflect on their feelings about a particular topic and write about said feelings. Lyric poems are personal in nature. I want to present the following assignment to high school seniors or college students in a poetry workshop. Another thought I have been exploring lately is to offer poetry workshops in a non-academic setting. The YMCA in my town has wonderful learning programs for students, children, and adults, and I would love to contribute somehow.

Poetry is a good fit for my assignment idea for obvious reasons (my love of poetry)! I love words, and I love figuring out their hidden meanings. Although, I do prefer more direct forms of poetry. This genre is an excellent way for students to think outside themselves in a way that is not too complicated. Most of the work is in the thinking part of the assignment, which facilitates the writing.

**Purpose:**

This assignment aims to foster a sense of empathy, compassion, and understanding for people and for students to connect with the stories of others through reading about their struggles and how they’ve overcome obstacles. Throughout the course, we have been exposed to various methods and resources surrounding literacy. However, I’ve been able to connect most with the idea of meeting students where they are and the suggestions for reflective writing assignments that facilitate more engagement between students and teachers, as well as among peers.

**Goals/Outcomes:**

My goals are for students to learn how to use poetry to express their thoughts, emotions, and responses to real-life situations. They will do this by evaluating a poem or short story, analyzing the characters' emotional reactions, and finding a way to connect with those feelings. Once they’ve done some reflecting, students will create the poetry reaction. Then, when they find a place of empathy and understanding through these assignments, they will be able to apply the learning outcomes in life.

**Materials/Context:**

There is one required book for this week’s readings and an optional read:

1. Harjo Joy. *Poet Warrior: A Memoir*. First ed. W. W. Norton & Company 2021. ISBN 978-0-393-24852-4.
2. Harjo, Joy. *An American Sunrise: Poems.* First edition. New York, NY, W.W. Norton & Company, 2019. ISBN 978-1-324-00386-1.

**Assignment Instructions:**

Reactive Lyrical Poem Assignment:

For this week's assignment, you will read one poem and part of a story and write a reactive lyrical poem for EACH reading, one in response to the story and one in response to the poem. This means you will be submitting TWO poems in total.

Please submit directly to this week's discussion board as either a voice thread or a written post.

Once you have read the poem/story, I'd like you to take a moment to identify the writer's struggles. Try viewing the situation through their eyes if you can. Pay close attention to feelings that may come, even uncomfortable ones, since that is oftentimes the place that facilitates growth and fosters understanding between human beings. Really see yourself as the narrator and imagine their world as your own.

Book: "Poet Warrior", by Joy Hargo, pages 9-22. Read the story and accompanying poem.

You have two options for how you would like to approach this writing assignment:

1) Write two poems from the writer's point of view based on what they've already written. Think of this as part two or a continuance of the original poem or their feelings about the story they have shared.

2) Write two poems in reaction to how each poem/story made you feel. What has come up for you while doing the readings?

3) Mix and match: You can do option #1 for one poem and option #2 for the other.

\*Extra credit:

To receive three extra points towards your final grade, write four poems by answering prompts #1 & #2 for EACH poem/story read.

Recap and Requirements:

1) Read one poem and part of one story.

2) Write at least two response poems.

3) Submit to the discussion board via voice thread or text.

4) Respond to at least one of your classmate's poems by commenting on their work. While there is no word limit, the post must demonstrate an effort to engage your peers.

OPTIONAL READING:

BOOK: “An American Sunrise” by Joy Harjo. *Mvskoke Mourning Song*p. 51. You are welcome to discuss this on the discussion board as well.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

Students will be assessed by showing evidence of engaging with the readings and following the assignment prompts. In addition, students must demonstrate an understanding of the assignment’s purpose and clearly establish a meaningful connection with the story and poem. Students will also be assessed on how they connect with peers and respond to classmates’ posts.

**Sources:**

1. Harjo Joy. *Poet Warrior: A Memoir*. First ed. W. W. Norton & Company 2021. ISBN 978-0-393-24852-4.
2. Harjo, Joy. *An American Sunrise: Poems.* First edition. New York, NY, W.W. Norton & Company, 2019. ISBN 978-1-324-00386-1.