

Unit 3 - Creative Writing Project

Creative writing allows us to explore parts of ourselves and our human experience that defy simple explanation. Through poetry and story, we share the difficulties, beauties, and complexities of human life with others.

As the final part of our unit on freedom and conscience, you will write a piece of creative writing (poem or prose) that explores the following questions:

**What is true freedom?
What does it mean to love?
What is our conscience?**

You may choose to focus simply on one of these questions, or write something that shows the relationships between freedom, love, and conscience.

Your writing must, in some way, address our ideas from class, but more importantly, **your writing should show me the way you understand freedom, love, or conscience in light of your own experience.** The point of this project is to give you the space to draw connections between what we do in class and your own life outside of class. Do you agree with what we talked about in class? Does it seem like it contradicts with your experience? By the time I finish your poem or story, I should understand a little bit of your perspective, what you find compelling, perplexing, true, beautiful, or troubling about these ideas.

Some further questions to consider: What is your experience of freedom, love, or conscience? What do freedom, love, or conscience have to do with human nature? Were there times you did not feel free or loved? Are there things that trouble your conscience, or that you feel should trouble your conscience but do not? What do the words “freedom”, “love”, and “conscience” mean to most people? What do they mean to you?

Grading: There are two rubrics below, one for poetry and one for prose. You will be graded half on your thoughtfulness and engagement with class ideas and half on the writing itself.

Other creative projects are possible, but they will be graded to the same degree as works of creative writing. Excellence is expected. If it is a piece of art, a dance or a song, it must explore the deepness and complexity of the questions of freedom and love to an equal degree.

Due: Monday, April 24 @ 3:00 PM. Submissions after 3:00 PM will be penalized 20%, and submissions after midnight will be penalized 30%.

POETRY -

Should be around 1 pg. minimum.

No limitations on form or style, but every word and punctuation mark matters. Your choices carry weight. Thoughtfulness is key - a hastily-written poem will not score well.

Outcome	4	3	2	1
Theme	All aspects of the poem integrate theme and topic with sophistication.	Most aspects of the poem successfully integrate theme and topic.	Some aspects of the poem successfully integrate theme and topic while others seem arbitrary.	Connection between theme and topic is limited or extremely vague.
Diction and Details	Diction is exceptionally fresh and original. There are no clichés. Diction is specific and purposeful. Rich, unique details are used to vividly show the readers the poem's world	Diction is original and generally free of clichés. Diction is specific. Specific details are used to show the readers the poem's world	Diction is sometimes clichéd or repetitive. Much of the poem is vague or awkwardly worded. Details are sometimes used to show, but there is a great deal of telling.	Diction is clichéd and/or repetitive. The poem is too vague, too generalized, and/or too awkwardly worded. There are few details or details lack the specificity to show rather than tell.
Voice	A compelling and engaging voice is evident in the poem. The reader can infer how the author thinks or feels about the subjects or ideas explored in the poem.	The writer's personal voice is fairly evident. The reader can mostly infer how the author thinks or feels about the subjects or ideas explored in the poem.	Some sense of the writer's personal voice is evident. The reader can occasionally infer how the author thinks or feels about the subjects or ideas explored in the poem.	Little or no personal voice is evident. The reader has difficulty inferring how the author thinks or feels about the subjects or ideas explored in the poem.
Conventions	The poem contains no errors. The writer shows a clear understanding of the rules of capitalization, punctuation and spelling OR consistency and intentionality in breaking the rules.	The poem contains few errors. The writer shows understanding of the rules of capitalization, punctuation and spelling OR consistency and intentionality in breaking the rules.	The poem contains some errors. The writer shows some understanding for the rules of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling OR some consistency and intentionality in breaking the rules.	Poem contains numerous errors that compromise meaning. Writer shows little understanding for the use OR manipulation of conventions in writing.
Form	The structure is intentional and meaningfully connects to the content.	The structure is linked to content a clear way.	The structure loosely relates to content.	The structure does not relate to the content.

Process	The author demonstrates diligent revision that achieves effective organization, content, diction, and level of detail.	The author demonstrates effective revision of organization, content, diction, and level of detail.	The author misses some key elements of revision of organization, content, diction, and level of detail.	The author shows little or no revision of organization, content, diction, and level of detail.
---------	--	--	---	--

PROSE -

Should be between 3-5 pages long, 12-pt. font double-spaced.

Can be either a fictional short story or an autobiographical memoir - NOT a formal essay!

Attention must be paid to the way the story *reveals* - not tells - your perspective on the topic.

Outcome	5	4	3	2	1
Students will write well organized, cohesive narrative.	Work functions well as a whole. Piece has a clear flow and a sense of purpose.	Response has either a strong lead, developed body, or satisfying conclusion, but not all three.	Uneven. Awkward or missing transitions. Weakly unified.	Wanders. Repetitive. Inconclusive.	Incoherent and fragmentary. Student didn't write enough to judge.
Students will use appropriate voice and tone in writing.	Voice is confident and appropriate. Consistently engaging. Active, not passive voice. Natural. A strong sense of both authorship and audience.	The speaker sounds as if he or she cares too little or too much about the topic. Or the voice fades in and out. Occasionally passive.	Tone is okay. But the paper could have been written by anyone. Apathetic or artificial. Overly formal or informal.	"I just want to get this over with."	Mechanical and cognitive problems so basic that tone doesn't even figure in. Student didn't write enough to judge.
Students will demonstrate original, creative writing.	Excellent use of imagery; similes; vivid, detailed descriptions; figurative language; puns; wordplay; irony. Surprises the reader with unusual associations, breaks conventions, thwarts expectations.	Some startling images, a few stunning associative leaps with a weak conclusion or lesser, more ordinary images and comparisons. Inconsistent.	Sentimental, predictable, or cliché.	Borrows ideas or images from popular culture in an unreflective way.	Cursory response. Obvious lack of motivation and/or poor understanding of the assignment.