

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight Essay Topics

WORKING IN CLASS: Monday, August 19 - Friday, August 23

ESSAY DUE: Friday, August 23, 2024 by the end of class

For this assignment, you will write a **three-paragraph essay** consisting of: a strong, LSU thesis statement, a plan of attack, three well-structured body paragraphs with evidence from the text in support of your thesis, and a concluding sentence (**no full introduction or conclusion**). You will choose one of the topics below:

1. Consider the ways in which Gawain has been tested or challenged in his journey/quest in the poem. Which quality of his does the journey challenge most? What does he learn from his experiences on the quest? Is he virtuous or vicious? Either praise Gawain for his virtue or blame him for his lack of virtue.
2. The portrayal of women in *Sir Gawain* is fascinating and confusing. Queen Guenevere is seen only momentarily, many ladies of the court are mentioned in passing, and Lady Bercilak's motivations remain unclear. How do the women of the story bring out its themes of religion or honor or chivalry? What might Lady Bercilak's character in particular represent in this medieval romance?
3. Shame is a recurring emotion in *Sir Gawain*. What is the main cause of Gawain's shame in the story? How does shame motivate or stall Gawain? To start, you may want to consider the code of chivalry and Gawain's personal moral code.

*You will write this essay **ENTIRELY during class time**. You will not bring home a draft to work on; instead, you will complete your outline during class time, making sure that it is neat and properly edited before turning it in. Your neat, completed outline will be graded like any other essay.*

General Requirements:

- Write with clear handwriting in pen or pencil. Avoid scribbling out and smudges. Proofread carefully for grammatical, spelling, and punctuation errors.
- Write in third person (he, she, they, etc.). Do NOT use first or second person (I, we, you).
- The essay should start with the thesis and plan of attack as a first, mini-paragraph, followed by three supporting body paragraphs. Each body paragraph should be about **7-10 sentences**. You should conclude your essay with a final concluding sentence (a restatement of your thesis statement).
- There should be at least **one quotation** from the text, correctly cited and integrated, in **each body paragraph** (with proper LINE number citation*).

* Make sure to separate lines with a slash (/). Cite line numbers in parentheses.

E.g. "Arthur, boisterous and merry as a boy, / Refused to eat till the others were served" (4-5)

- Remember the Academy Honor Code while completing all assignments. You are not allowed to search online for ideas for your thesis or quotations to use in your essay, and you should never copy text from an online source or a peer.

- Use MLA citation and formatting. This heading should be in the upper left corner:
Student Name
Teacher Name
Literature and Composition III
23 August 2024
- Include last name and page number in the upper right-hand corner of each page.

Outline:

- Ø. Thesis and Plan of Attack
- I. Body Paragraph 1
 - A. Topic sentence, which must align with the first point in your POA
 - B. Set-up sentences which contain concrete details and commentary
 - C. Integrated quotation from the text with citation
 - D. Analysis of quotation
 - 1. Write 2-3 sentences of analysis in order to make sure you thoroughly analyze the quotation
 - E. Write a transition sentence that bridges the ideas in body paragraph 1 to body paragraph 2
- II. Body Paragraph 2
 - A. Topic sentence, which must align with the second point in your POA
 - B. Set-up sentences which contain concrete details and commentary
 - C. Integrated quotation from the text with citation
 - D. Analysis of quotation
 - 1. Write 2-3 sentences of analysis in order to make sure you thoroughly analyze the quotation
 - E. Write a transition sentence that bridges the ideas in body paragraph 2 to body paragraph 3
- III. Body Paragraph 3
 - A. Topic sentence, which must align with the third point in your POA
 - B. Set-up sentences which contain concrete details and commentary
 - C. Integrated quotation from the text with citation
 - D. Analysis of quotation
 - 1. Write 2-3 sentences of analysis in order to make sure you thoroughly analyze the quotation
 - E. Write a conclusion sentence that sums up your ideas in body paragraph 3
- Ø. Final Conclusion Sentence (Restatement of Thesis Statement)