

Oral Presentation--The Great Gatsby; The Catcher in the Rye; The Bean Trees

60 points

This assignment is purposely left open to creativity. You only have three requirements:

1. The presentation *must help other students understand ideas* in the novel (hard to do)
2. The presentation is to last 8-11 minutes (16-22 if you work with a partner)
3. The presentation must examine at least *four passages* from the work (actually quote)

Note: This is an oral presentation. That means that you can't just read it. Minimal notes are fine, but it must be clear that you can discuss the topic off the top of your head.

Here are a few ideas with examples of presentations that other students have done in the past, all of which could receive "A" grades (only about 1/3 of the class receives "A's")

- Background information--the people. The culture of one or more characters in the novel is discussed and the values of that culture are shown to relate to ideas in the novel. The background information contains ideas that help the class understand the novel in a new light. A Powerpoint or Prezi presentation could work well here.

Example 1: The novel Woman Warrior deals with a Chinese American girl who cannot understand her Chinese mother from a distinctly different culture. Part of the story refers to foot binding. The presentation explains what foot binding was (pictures included) and then the concept of inhibiting a woman's growth was explored as it applies to the novel as a whole. This was a Feminist reading of the novel.

Example 2: Students brought food and created props as well as played music of the culture in question and showed that knowledge of the culture helps one understand ideas in the novel. Specific passages were examined. Insightful and fun

- Create a work of art and show that it follows (or is based on) ideas in the novel.
Hamlet example: the student created two paintings, one showing the evil king Claudius as a pre-Renaissance man, obsessed with power. It was painted in a pre-Renaissance style complete with symbolism--red as a color of power, for example. Hamlet was painted as a Renaissance Man, an individualist and a thinker, his own man. He was portrayed pointing a dagger straight at the viewer and confidence shown in his bright blue eyes. The concepts of the Renaissance Man were explored in passages.

Example 2: Creative writing. Pretend that you're a character in the novel and write a letter (or similar writing up to 1000 words) to another character. Explain your choices as you examine four examples from the novel and show that the tone (etc.) of your writing is true to the text. One student did this by creating an illustrated journal of Clara in the novel House of the Spirits. A 500-750 word explanation of her artistic choices followed.

Other examples: Choreographed interpretive dance and music pieces have been done

- Explore ideas of the times such as the philosophical environment environment that influenced the author. Example: The novel Demian was examined as a by-product of

Nietzschian thought. Parallels were drawn between Nietzsche quotes and passages in the novel. Powerpoint presentation

- Read an article an expert has written on the novel and share what you found, showing how this information helps the reader understand passages in the work. Head to the library for this one as the Internet is a dangerous place when it comes to finding quality writing about others' writing. If you're having a tough time with this, consider searching for the title plus "Marxist reading," "Feminist reading," "post-modern," "archetypal"
- Show understanding of a character in the novel by interviewing that character on stage in front of the class (or as an Xtranormal presentation). At the end of the interview you must explain how the ideas expressed by the character illustrate ideas or themes in the work. For example, if the character explains why he or she would vote for President Obama, find examples from the work that show liberal leanings, etc. Tom Joad wouldn't vote for a Republican, for example
- Show understanding of the novel by filming a scene from the book. Create a second version of the movie with director's voice-over explaining artistic choices concerning lighting, camera angle, blocking, actor's delivery, etc.
- Other. I'm sure that you can come up with an idea of your own that meets the criteria of the assignment. After all, every single one of the examples I have given you were done this way.

Grading Guidelines

Full points for *outstanding* work that is articulately developed. B's go to *good* work (understanding, teaching, presentation). C's go to ok work

20 pts. Understanding of the novel shown (themes, writing, etc.) Original ideas

20 pts. Educational. Taught in a way that helps students gain a deeper understand and appreciation for the novel. Four passages from novel explained.

20 pts. Effectiveness of presentation--articulate explanation, visual aides or other elements that help people become engaged in the presentation

60 points total