

British Literature III: Exercise 5

The purpose of this exercise is to give each student in the class a chance to analyze a major Romantic poem before we read it in class; the student will then be primarily responsible for explaining this poem to the class when we get to it.

After reading the poem you are assigned, **write an essay of at least four full paragraphs explaining in depth what the poem means, what you learn about the poet from this poem and how its themes and ideas connect to the Romantic literature you have read thus far** (Frankenstein, Pride and Prejudice, to some extent, the beginning of Jane Eyre, Burns's, Blake's and some of Wordsworth's poems) and other poems by this poet that are in the packet you are receiving. Support your contention with evidence and quotations from the poem. Most of these poems deal with gender, love and/or relationships as their primary focus. Be sure to thoroughly comment on this aspect of the poem.

Structure:

1. Begin with an **introductory paragraph** that introduces the poem and the poet. I will be providing you with some background material, but you are encouraged to do some research on the poet of your own. **Note any research from outside the packet in notes in your essay even if you are not using exact quotations. (Such research is neither required nor desired.)** As you will be drawing conclusions about the poet, the more you know about him/her, the easier this will be. Relevant background needs to be passed on to the reader. Indicate the type of poem it is (narrative, lyric, dramatic monologue) and its main theme in this introduction. End by indicating how the poem you will be discussing fits in with other Romantic literature (your **thesis statement**).
2. **Paragraph two should explain the poem IN DETAIL.** This is likely to be a very long paragraph. I want you to basically go sentence by sentence to explain what each part of the poem means. Support this with quotes to show which phrases are significant. Six sentences won't accomplish this, so be sure to go into detail.
3. **Paragraph three** should discuss **what we learn about the poet** from this poem. You have just explained what the poem means, but now explain how it enlightens us about the character and philosophy of the poet. To do this, explain what the tone of the poem is, providing evidence about it, and how this poem fits in with the biographical material you have about the poet. Use specific evidence to support this. End the body paragraph with a restatement of its main idea.
4. Close the essay with a **concluding paragraph** that **summarizes the significance of the poem and what it tells us about the author. Close by demonstrating how this poem fits thematically and/or philosophically with other Romantic literature that you have read.**

Schedule:

Draft Deadline: **Wednesday, April 13 (so you have them back before vacation)**

Revision Deadline with the marked up draft: **Monday, April 25**

Exercise 5 assignments:

Student	Poem	Author
	<u>Christabel</u>	Samuel Taylor Coleridge
Lizzy	<u>The Nightingale</u>	Samuel Taylor Coleridge
Tyler	<u>Prometheus</u>	George Gordon, Lord Byron
	<u>Choruses From Hellas</u>	Percy Bysshe Shelley
Koen	<u>Ozymandias</u>	Percy Bysshe Shelley
	<u>Ode To The West Wind</u>	Percy Bysshe Shelley
	<u>Ode To Psyche</u>	John Keats
Juliette	<u>Ode On Indolence</u>	John Keats
	<u>On First Looking Into Chapman's Homer</u>	John Keats
Dev	<u>Ode To a Nightingale</u>	John Keats
Abby	<u>Ode On A Grecian Urn</u>	John Keats
Guhan	<u>La Belle Dame Sans Merci</u>	John Keats

While it would be good to do some research on your author, **PLEASE DON'T USE SOMEONE ELSE'S ANALYSIS OF THE POEM**. While I might or might not catch you, you won't learn anything by typing someone else's ideas. You will learn more by struggling with the poem and even misinterpreting it than you will by being "correct" but not thinking up the analysis yourself. I avoided some of the great poems that are very difficult or that require vast knowledge of Plato and neo-Platonism so that you should be able to interpret your poem with the notes in the packets and your own brain. **DON'T CHEAT YOURSELF OF THE INTELLECTUAL GROWTH AND EXPERIENCE BY LETTING SOMEONE ELSE DO THE THINKING FOR YOU!**

If you need help with your poem, see me well before the deadline. I'm happy to lead you in

the right direction by asking questions.