

## LITERARY RESEARCH

### LUTHER COLLEGE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT GRID FOR ASSESSING SENIOR PROJECTS

Project Author: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Semester and year: \_\_\_\_\_

Credits \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Adviser \_\_\_\_\_ 2<sup>nd</sup> Reader \_\_\_\_\_

(Note: The following assessment criteria for senior projects are based on the English Department's goals for student achievement.)

\_\_\_\_ **1. Does the paper demonstrate sophisticated reading? (Dept. goal 1, "to become a more sophisticated reader)**

1. Paper is a superficial exploration of the work or works—primarily biography, plot or topic summary rather than a critical engagement with the work. Paper shows very little understanding of literary history or literary tools—genres, structural elements, or metaphorical language.
2. Paper's interpretation engages works superficially. Paper shows some understanding of literary history and literary tools—genres, structural elements, or metaphorical language.
3. Paper explores the work or works with acceptable depth and complexity. Paper shows considerable understanding of literary history and literary tools—genres, structural elements, metaphorical language.
4. Paper shows mature depth of understanding and/or complexity in its reading. The paper shows nuanced and sensitive textual analysis and interpretation. Paper shows ample understanding of literary history and literary tools—genres, structural elements, metaphorical language.

\_\_\_\_ **2. Is the paper well written? (Dept. goal 2, "to become a better, more flexible writer")**

1. The paper has poor sentence structure and overall organization with inappropriate word choice and few transitions. The paper includes many mistakes in mechanics (punctuation, run-on or fragmented sentences, spelling, grammar, usage). Introduction and conclusion are perfunctory and/or inadequate.
2. The paper has a few distracting mechanical errors. Sentence structure is repetitive and/or sometimes awkward. The writer's word choice is occasionally inappropriate. The level of discourse is not up to the ideas at which it aims. The introduction and conclusion are sketchy.
3. The paper is understandable and has fine moments, but there is occasional awkwardness in sentence structure and transitions. The organization is clear, and there are only a few careless mechanical errors. There are only occasional inadequacies in word choice. The discourse is adequate to the ideas, and the introduction and conclusion adequately prepare for and summarize the argument.
4. The paper is a pleasure to read. The writer's ideas are clearly and fluently expressed, and transitions help the reader to follow the argument. Introduction and conclusions seize the reader's attention and imagination and reach toward eloquence. Maturity of style holds the reader's interest. Writer has clear command of vocabulary and sentence structure and the level of discourse makes ideas clear that would otherwise be difficult or obscure.

\_\_\_\_ **3. Does the paper show critical thinking (a conclusion or judgment arrived at through analytical argument grounded in sufficient textual evidence)? (Dept. goal 4, "to become a more . . . critical thinker")**

1. Paper is not argumentative. Sections are unconnected. The writer offers little evidence for the paper's claims.

2. Paper is weak and argument doesn't build on consistent reasons and conclusions. Textual evidence is present but not always helpful or convincing.
3. Paper builds an argument cumulatively through the paper to support an interpretive thesis. The argument, however, is at times obvious or inconsistent. Textual evidence is sufficient.
4. Paper's thesis offers a significant literary interpretation, developed through rigorous and nuanced argumentation and supported with full and well-chosen textual evidence.

\_\_\_\_ **4. Does the paper exhibit good scholarship? (Dept. goal 4, "to become a more creative and critical thinker")**

1. Paper relies on insufficient sources. Sources are not integrated into the writer's argument. The writer makes little attempt to evaluate the sources and shows minimal innovative investigation. The paper is under-documented and has a slim and flawed bibliography.
2. Paper relies on minimal scholarly sources. Paper could be described as falling into parts based on the sources that are used. Writer may rely too heavily on quotation. There is some evidence that the writer has evaluated sources. Paper is documented when quotations are used, but there are questions about whether summarized material is accurate or fully paraphrased. The bibliography reflects a weak survey of the appropriate scholarship and has errors.
3. Paper has integrated well an adequate number of sources. The writer introduces the sources and integrates them into the argument but the source evaluation is uneven, with an imbalance of summary and quotation. Writer understands how to document and the bibliography is correct and adequate, with an appropriate range of the right sources.
4. Paper shows understanding of the critical conversation and the ability to join in. The writer carefully contextualizes source material (quotation or paraphrase) within its original, larger argument and skillfully enfolds the source's argument into the writer's own argument. The writer carefully balances summarized and quoted material and documents correctly. The bibliography shows a range of aggressively sought-out and exactly right resources.

\_\_\_\_ **5. Does the project convey the writer's active moral and/or aesthetic imagination in a way that invites and serves readers? (Dept. goal 5, "to develop moral imagination, ethical values, and a sense of vocation")**

1. The writer has produced a generic report with little personal investment.
2. The writer stakes a very tentative claim in the discourse and/or adopts a stance that seems ill-attuned to the discourse or to the full range of material under consideration.
3. The writer identifies the intellectual, social, aesthetic, or moral issues at stake and takes a stance that largely makes sense of the discourse and the material.
4. The writer identifies the intellectual, social, aesthetic, or moral issues at stake and takes a clear stance in the discourse with a voice that shows active and mature judgment and imagination as she or he makes sense of the material.

\_\_\_\_ **TOTAL SCORE**

\_\_\_\_ **REVIEWER'S GRADE**

\_\_\_\_ **FINAL GRADE**