

This week you will be working alone and in pairs. You may work in the commons area or the library but you should be working quietly-especially in the library. 30-1 will have two jobs to complete. 30-2 will have one job to complete.

Job #1

In class essay development. You will study and prepare for an in-class critical essay based on one of the stories we have read in class.

"The Painted Door" by Sinclair Ross
"The Destroyers" by Graham Greene
"Counterparts" by James Joyce
"Two Fisherman" by Morley Callaghan
"Ellen's Confession" by Phillip Grove
"On the Rainy River" by Tim O'Brien

- Choose the story that you like the best.
- Read the story over at least 3 times.
- Memorize and write down a clutch of quotes that can be used-say, 5 to 10.
- Search the Internet for commentary on the story but be discerning. Not all sites are credible.
- Go to "Alberta education" website and look up "proficient" and "excellent" responses. Study these and the following rationales from the markers.
- Compose several thesis statements to former topics. In point form, sketch out the makings of several papers. Remember: Point-Proof-Explain.

The in-class essay will be on Thursday, May 1st. This should be a fully composed essay. That is, 800-1200 words should be the target.

Job #2 (30-1 Only)

Reading comprehension and writing skills development. In critical-voice writing, compose rationales to key answers from an old reading comprehension selection. Read the attached excerpt from the novel *Oscar and Lucinda* by Peter Carey.

- Work alone or in pairs
- Submit by Thursday, May 1st via the class website.
- A mark of 3, 4. Or 5 will be awarded on the quality of the work. Completeness, thoroughness, and correctness will be the guide to achieving the grade.

Example:

An excerpt from the novel *Catch-22* by Joseph Heller

1 "America," he said, "will lose the war. And Italy will win it."

2 "America is the strongest and most prosperous nation on earth," Nately informed him with lofty¹ fervor² and dignity. "And the American fighting man is second to none."

3 "Exactly," agreed the old man pleasantly, with a hint of taunting amusement. "Italy, on the other hand, is one of the least prosperous nations on earth. And the Italian fighting man is probably second to all. And that's exactly why my country is doing so well in this war while your country is doing so poorly."

4 Nately guffawed with surprise, then blushed apologetically for his impoliteness. "I'm sorry I laughed at you," he said sincerely, and he continued in a tone of respectful condescension. "But Italy was occupied by the Germans and is now being occupied by us. You don't call that doing very well, do you?"

5 "But of course I do," exclaimed the old man cheerfully. "The Germans are being driven out, and we are still here. In a few years you will be gone too, and we will still be here. You see, Italy is really a very poor and weak country, and that's what makes us so strong. Italian soldiers are not dying anymore. But American and German soldiers are. I call that doing extremely well. Yes, I am quite certain that Italy will survive this war and still be in existence long after your own country has been destroyed."

6 Nately could scarcely believe his ears. He had never heard such shocking blasphemies³ before, and he wondered with instinctive logic why G-men⁴ did not appear to lock the traitorous old man up. "America is not going to be destroyed!" he shouted passionately.

7 "Never?" prodded the old man softly.

8 "Well . . ." Nately faltered.

9 The old man laughed indulgently, holding in check a deeper, more explosive delight. His goading remained gentle. "Rome was destroyed, Greece was destroyed, Persia was destroyed, Spain was destroyed. All great countries are destroyed. Why not yours? How much longer do you think your own country will last? Forever? Keep in mind that the earth itself is destined to be destroyed by the sun in twenty-five million years or so."

10 Nately squirmed uncomfortably. "Well, forever is a long time, I guess."

1 lofty = of an air of superiority; arrogant; haughty

2 fervor = emotional intensity (especially associated with commitment to ideals)

3 blasphemies = plural of blasphemy, a deeply offensive remark or behavior (usually associated with language or action directed against that which is considered sacred to certain other people)

4 G-men = slang (now out of date) for officers with the Federal Bureau of Investigation

11 "A million years?" persisted the jeering old man keen, sadistic zest. "A half million? The frog is almost five hundred million years old. Could you really say with much certainty that America, with all its strength and prosperity, with its fighting man that is second to none, and with its standard of living that is the highest in the world, will last as long as . . . the frog?"

12 Nately wanted to smash his leering face. He looked about imploringly for help in defending his country's future against the obnoxious calumnies⁵ of this sly and sinful assailant.⁶

5 calumnies = plural of calumny, a statement of slander

6 assailant = attacker

SAMPLE RATIONALES

1. The excerpt suggests that Nately has arrived at his "lofty fervor" (paragraph 2) through

- A. a blind, unquestioning belief in America.
- B. his unstoppable descent into mental illness.
- C. careful study of history and social evolution.

Choice A is correct. To see that Nately's "lofty fervor" has to do with his belief in the greatness of America, readers will note first his statements in paragraph 2 that "America is the strongest and most prosperous nation on earth" and "the American fighting man is second to none." We see that such statements are largely unprovable generalizations, suggesting that they are "blind, unquestioning [beliefs]." As well, the impression of Nately as one whose belief is "blind" and "unquestioning" is further supported in paragraph 6, where he takes the old man's statements about America as "shocking blasphemies" and he "[shouts] passionately" that America will not be destroyed.

Choice B is incorrect, considering that no details in the excerpt clearly suggest mental illness in Nately. True, he does speak with "lofty fervor" and he does "[shout] passionately," but these alone are not certain signs that he is mentally ill. They suggest only his strong emotion in the moment.

Choice C is incorrect, for Nately's only argument based on history is in his statement that "Italy was occupied by the Germans and is now being occupied by us," which is not enough to suggest a "careful study of history" and does not speak at all of "social evolution." Where a "careful study of history and social evolution" is implied, it is apparent only in the old man's statements, not in Nately's.

2. The comment that best indicates the old man's idea of real winning is

- A. "America . . . will lose the war. And Italy will win it" (paragraph 1).
- B. "Italian soldiers are not dying anymore" (paragraph 5).
- C. "All great countries are destroyed" (paragraph 9).

The question emphasizes with italics the word "real." This cues readers to think of winning in something other than usual ways, just as the old man thinks in an unexpected way about winning. With this in mind, we see that choice A is incorrect, as it reflects a standard, or a usual, understanding of winning and losing.

Choice C is incorrect for it speaks of every country losing (i.e. being "destroyed") and therefore of no one winning at all.

Choice B is correct. The old man's clearest statements of what winning really means appear in paragraph 5, in which he reveals that winning is simply a matter of

surviving. This is most obvious in his observations that Italians "are still here" and "will still be here" and that "Italian soldiers are not dying anymore." That belief is reinforced by his reference, in paragraph 11, to the frog, which has lasted for five hundred million years.

