

Close-Reading of 20th Century Literary Texts (LT20)

Course Description

Lecturer: Mgr. Renáta Marosi

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Office hours: Tuesdays, 13.15-14.00

Wednesdays, 9.40-10.25

COURSE OBJECTIVES: The seminar focuses on the intensive analysis of the 20th century literary works. During classes various British and American literary works are analysed. The main goal of the subject is to provide a chance for students to deepen their analysis of given literary works. During classes the students will get acquainted with the method of deep reading which puts emphasis on intensive work on the literary pieces and not on the length of the texts they have to read. The seminar sheds light on the techniques used by given literary schools, as well as gives a great chance to practice them.



Franz Marc: Deer in Woods, 1914

TENTATIVE SYLLABUS:

1. Introduction

2. Virginia Woolf: 'Kew Gardens' (1919)

3. Vladimir Nabokov: 'Signs and Symbols' (1948)

4. Ray Bradbury: 'The Veldt' (1950)

5. Joyce Carol Oates: 'Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been' (1966)

6. Ursula K. LeGuin: 'The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas' (1973)

7. Mid-term test

8. Kazuo Ishiguro: 'A Family Supper' (1982)

9. Agatha Christie: 'Sing a Song of Sixpence' (*Miss Marple and Mystery. The Complete Short Stories*, 1985; first in 1929)

10. Angela Carter: 'The Werewolf' (*The Bloody Chamber and Other Tales*, 1979)

11. Neil Gaiman: 'Snow, Glass, Apples' (*Smoke and Mirrors*, 1994)

12. Margaret Atwood: 'Stone Mattress' (*Stone Mattress: Nine Wicked Tales*, 2014)

13. End-of-term test

ASSESSMENT BASED ON:

- **regular class attendance:** no more than 2 absences are excused. The first lesson does not count as an absence.
- **active participation** during the class - if you are too passive in general, you reduce your final mark by 10%.
- **mind-term test and end-of-term test:** the content of both tests will cover questions based on the questions of the worksheets - available at https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1sJo-lc3g9rzP_egM-IXgY9MOYrjQLBLN - each sheet is accompanied by an answer key ☺

Evaluation: Test 1 - X, Test 2- Y → X+Y/2 = final mark

Grading Scale: 100-90%=A; 89-80=B; 79-70=C; 69-60=D; 59-50=E; 49-0=Fx

☺ If the average of your final mark is under 50%, you have to improve your mark in the following way:

- **write an essay** on one of the short stories listed above by **15 January** (marosiovar@ujssk). Requirements: 3-6 pages (excluding cover page and literature). As for the sources, using the following sites means an FX immediately: Wikipedia, Sparknotes, Shmoop, Gradesaver and other “simple” study guides. Use **min. 5** relevant, professional and high-quality sources (articles, book chapters, essays, reviews, interviews with the author, blogs, vlogs, videos etc.). You are encouraged to ask for help from your professor, who will aid in finding and citing relevant sources ☺ Use the sources to support and enhance **your own ideas** about the chosen short story. If the first version of the essay does not match the requirements, you will have one more opportunity to improve your mark by sending back the corrected version by **30 January**– following the teacher’s comments.

In case of online teaching, the lessons are on **Zoom**. Make sure that you join online meetings on time. Turning your **camera** on is **compulsory**. If you do not switch your camera on, it counts as an absence.

Meeting ID: 778 7665 4395

Passcode: 9jC6z3

RECOMMENDED LITERATURE:

- ❖ Best, S. –Kellner D.: Postmodern Theory. New York: The Guilford Press, 1991.
- ❖ Collier, P. –Geyer-Ryan H. (ed.): Literary Theory Today. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990.
- ❖ Eco, U.: Interpretation and Overinterpretation. Cambridge: CUP, 1992.
- ❖ Fish, S.: Is There a Text in This Class? Cambridge: CUP, 1980.
- ❖ Ricoeur, P.: Time and Narrative (I-II). Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1984-1985

Feel free to contact me if you have any question.

Enjoy the course! ☺

☺ **Some close-reading tips:**

- focus on detail
- proceed slowly and deliberately
- be curious and ask questions
- look up unusual, significant and strange words
- consider multiple meanings
- make connections to other texts and ideas
- think expansively – do not try to decode the text