

English 342: The Contemporary Novel

Take-Home Final Exam

Length and Due Date

Length: 3 pages

Formatting: Please submit the take-home final on 8.5" by 11" paper, titled, paginated, typed and double-spaced, with one-inch margins. In the upper right hand corner of the first page, include your name, the course number, the assignment, and the due date; this information should be single-spaced. You may use a 10 or 12 point Arial, Bookman, Century Schoolbook, or Times New Roman font for your final. When you cite sources, please use MLA format.

Due: Friday, June 6, by 12:00 p.m. in hard copy at Padelford A-305 or via E-Submit. **Please note: I will not accept late take-home finals.**

Assignment

Your take-home final consists of an essay on one of the following topics:

- 1) How does *Patchwork Girl* explore the construction of identity?
- 2) *Patchwork Girl* draws upon and directly quotes multiple texts, foremost among them Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and L. Frank Baum's *The Patchwork Girl of Oz*. Why does Jackson shape *Patchwork Girl* around these texts?
- 3) Why is or isn't *Patchwork Girl* a postmodern text?

Guidelines

- 1) Although I have provided topics, you will need to narrow the topic and develop a specific argument. For example, an essay on identity could focus on how the form of Jackson's text constructs identity, how history feeds the Patchwork Girl's identity, or how identity emerges through language or in the relationship of creator and created.
- 2) Close textual analysis will serve as your main source of evidence. In supporting your argument, you will need to pay attention to the text's language, structure, and themes. Because of the restricted page limit, I do not expect you to cite and analyze multiple instances from the text as you develop each point. However, I do expect you to ground in text your thesis and the main points you make in connection to the thesis. Plan on discussing one example from the text for each major point. Remember, though, that your citations do not always have to consist of direct quotations. You may summarize or paraphrase as well.
- 3) Remember that you are writing to an audience who has already read the hypertext. Therefore, your essay should not offer plot summaries. Instead, any reference to the text should support your analysis.
- 4) Do not forget the arguments posed in readings, class or the electronic bulletin board. A review of the readings and the postings on *Patchwork Girl* may help you to ask key questions and shape your analysis. You will, of course, cite specific words and interpretations borrowed from classmates or other authors.

Grading Criteria

I will focus on the following areas when grading the take-home exam. Exams that fall in the A range excel in all criteria; exams that fall in the B, C, and D range exhibit problems in one or more categories. F-range exams represent another author's work as the writer's own, do not address one of the assigned topics, or simply summarize the text.

- **Thesis** (defendable, clearly explained, and supported in the body of the essay)
- **Complexity** (the analysis exhibits depth, fullness, and complexity of thought)
- **Organization** (essay has a logical structure, with each point connected to the previous and following points; the writer doesn't simply relate her path through the text, but shapes the essay around the main argument)
- **Development** (the writer supports his arguments with persuasive reasoning and well-chosen references to the text; there is an appropriate balance between providing evidence and analyzing that evidence)
- **Clarity** (writer expresses ideas clearly)
- **Citation** (writer correctly cites words and ideas borrowed from other sources)

Point Ranges

- **A Range:** 53-60 points
- **B Range:** 38-52 points
- **C Range:** 23-37 points
- **D Range:** 11-36 points
- **F Range:** 0-11 points