English Final Exam Summary

**June 2019**

**A. Short Story Writing**

We have written and read short stories in class. Attached are examples of microfiction (300 words or less.). We will read the stories together, discuss how well each uses the elements of a short story (character, setting, conflict, plot, climax and resolution) and then you will chose one or two as models and write one your own. *Notice how each fictional story has complications and a twist at the end. Make sure your story has these elements.* You will be graded on effort and how well your story fits in all the elements. **(40 minutes – 40 pts.)**

**B. Reading Response: Pick One (48 minutes – 40 pts)**

**B.1:** Read "The Bet" by Anton Chekhov, "Jet" by Tony Hoagland and "Cartoon Physics, Part I" by Nick Flynn. Write an essay that relates one or more of these pieces to *The Jell-O Brigade* or your book group book or your independent reading book(s)*.*  You may compare and contrast but try to concentrate on common themes, styles, characters or plot ideas. **Or**

**B.2:** Read the short story and answer attached questions about your initial reaction, the conflicts themes, character and important quotes, and the quality of the story. See a definition of good literature on the back of this page. **Or**

**B.3:** Compare two of the books you read in class this semester. Identify a theme or related themes common to *The Jell-O Brigade* and your book group book or your independent reading book(s). Write a well-developed thesis-based essay comparing and contrasting each books treatment of the theme(s). Include specific examples from both novels that support your thesis.

**C. Becoming-a-Reader Evaluation:** Review your reading accomplishments and your reading evaluations and assess your progress toward becoming an independent reader. What are your greatest accomplishments? What are your regrets? What do you plan to read this summer? What reading goals do you have for next year? **(8 minutes 6 points)**

**D. Course Evaluation: Answer the following in complete sentences and in paragraph form. Your answer will be evaluated on your effort, your sincerity, your insight and your supporting examples. (8 minutes 7 points)**

What was the most important or useful thing you learned this semester in English? (Focus on reading, writing, thinking, or learning skills or concepts) What was the best activity or assignment this semester in English? Why? What was the worst? Why? What was surprising or interesting about this course? What suggestions do you have for making it better next semester?

**E. Self Evaluation: Answer the following in complete sentences and in paragraph form. Your answer will be evaluated on your effort, your sincerity, your insight and your supporting examples. (8 minutes 7 points)**

What grade do you think you deserve for the quarter? Justify your answer by reviewing your writing and especially reading achievements, self-assessments, effort, personal growth, contributions to class, use of class time, attendance and punctuality as well as any less positive behaviors. Be sure to include specific examples of pieces you’ve written and read.

**B.2 Responding to the Short Story (approximately 40 minutes)**

**"The Bet" Anton Chekhov**

1. What are your thoughts and questions about the story? You might reflect on the characters, their problems, the author's use of symbolism, the title or other ideas in the story.
2. Choose one of the following quotations from the story to write about.
   1. "The fifteen years have not been kind to the banker."
   2. "Why should I want that kind of freedom? I know now that it is worth nothing."
   3. "He had won the bet, hadn't he?"
3. What does the story say about people in general? In what ways does it remind you of people you have known or experience you have had? You may also write a bout stories or books you have read, or movies, works of art, or television programs you have seen. Use examples from the story to explain your thinking.
4. How successful was the author in creating a good piece of literature\*? Use examples from the story to explain your thinking.

**\*Good Literature** can be hard to define, but it tends to be creative or original, well crafted, about something important and, if old enough, able to stand the text of time. That last condition can be especially helpful. For any story ask the question: will people still be reading this 20 or 50 years from now and finding it a valuable read?