

Gothic, Mystery and Science Fiction/The Short Story Summer Reading Assignment 2017

****All works are required:**

1. *And Then There Were None*- Agatha Christie
2. "The Black Cat"- Edgar Allan Poe
3. "The Adventure of the Speckled Band"- Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (short story)
4. "Long Gone"- Sue Grafton (PDF Attachment) (short story)

Haunted castles and supernatural doings, crimes that need to be solved and fiction that incorporates scientific possibilities into its plots make up the works of the first course you will be taking in your senior year of English. While there seems to be some diversity in the three genres in the Gothic, Mystery and Science Fiction course, they are related to one another in a myriad of ways and a sort of evolution has occurred within the three. An underlying connective thread is the desire of the authors to frighten, baffle and amaze their readers.

Because the nature of the two classes you will be taking in September and January allow for integration of works, you will read one short mystery novel by famed author Agatha Christie and three mystery short stories. Each of the works is written by an author considered a giant in their respective realms. Edgar Allan Poe has the distinction of being called the virtual inventor of the short story and also "The Father of the Detective Story." While the short story that you will read by Poe, "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," may have been the first, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's famed detective, Sherlock Holmes, cracks a mystery in "The Adventure of the Speckled Band" and follows the formula that Poe prescribed for detective fiction (which will be covered in more depth during the course of the year.) Sue Grafton is a contemporary author whose private investigator breaks a missing persons case.

Detective and mystery stories are everywhere. From the popularity of great television shows like *Law and Order*, *Criminal Minds* or *C.S.I.* to films, video games, comic books, short stories—let’s face it—we Americans love a mystery! For your Summer Reading assignment you are to complete the readings and choose **two** of the following topics to explore. **You must use all four works in your writing.**

1. You have been given the task of interviewing two characters from two different works you have read this summer. Come up with a list of questions you would propose to each of the two characters you’ve chosen (be sure to identify the character and the work in which he/she is found) pertaining to their particular role in the plot of the work. Write the interviews.

2. Imagine that you are the reporter of a local newspaper. You have been assigned to cover, and report on, two of the “cases” in the summer reading assignments. Write two news stories detailing the resolutions (the final news story), as they would appear in a newspaper report. (Do a quick study of Journalism 101- a newspaper story answers the questions: Who? What? Where? When? and Why? in its opening paragraph. Look at some examples.)

3. Choose two of the works and cast a film version for each using modern actors. You must cast at least three of the characters from the two works you’ve chosen and you should give specific and valid reasons for the choice. If you’d like to include any other information regarding your “production” of the films, feel free as it can only help your grade. ****Note:** there have been film versions of some of the works. Be sure that your foray into the world of movie production is based purely on how you pictured the characters as you read.

4. In a criminal trial, the attorneys for both sides—the prosecutor (representative of the state or “the people”) and the defense attorney (he/she who is representing the accused.)—finish the trial with what are called “closing arguments.” Simply put, a closing argument is a persuasive essay (delivered as a speech) used to convince the members of the jury, based on the evidence given and the testimony of witnesses, of the defendant’s guilt (for the prosecutor) or innocence or justification of actions (for the defense attorney.) Write the closing arguments for the prosecutor **and/or** for the defense attorney for the husband in “Long Gone” **and** the prosecutor/defense attorney for the “killer” in *And Then There Were None*. (Hint: watch a few episodes of *Law and Order*- the original version- for examples on which you can model your arguments.) ****You will be writing one closing argument (the side of your choice) for “Long Gone” and one (again your choice) for *And Then There Were None*—two closing arguments in total.**

Each question **must be answered in no less than** one and one-half pages typed. Each answer must have its own page (you will be handing in **two** separate papers—stapled together-- with the correct heading and MLA format (correct heading, Times New Roman 12, 1” margins, double-spaced.) **Pay careful attention to these instructions; papers that do not fulfill these few—but specific—requirements will be penalized.**

Papers will be due during the first cycle of classes in September- the week of 9/11/17.

“Long Gone”- Sue Grafton:

http://www.suegrifton.com/pdf/Grafton_KINSEY_AND_ME_preview.pdf

“The Black Cat”- Edgar Allan Poe:

<http://poestories.com/print/blackcat>

“The Speckled Band”- Sir Arthur Conan Doyle:

<https://sherlock-holm.es/stories/pdf/a4/1-sided/spec.pdf>

It does not matter which edition of *And Then There Were None* that you buy (I do ask that you purchase a copy-for annotating purposes). There are a number of copies available from Amazon that are extremely reasonable. Please be sure to print these versions of the short stories and annotate as you read all of the works as there will be an in-class essay in the beginning of the year in which you may use your notes/books.

Understanding How to Annotate:

http://www.paulding.k12.ga.us/cms/lib010/GA01903603/Centricity/Domain/1987/Zimmerman_How_to_Annotate.pdf