

Maymester British Literature I Shakespeare Presentation Assignment

Presentation Date: May 20

Since we don't have time to cover Shakespeare the way we ought to, we'll have several presentations. That way we can all learn a little something about several things, rather than learning a little something about just one thing. That's my logic, anyway. Notice, please, that these are *long* presentations. You're actually teaching us, not just popping up to the front of the room and reciting things from Sparknotes.

My original idea for this assignment was group presentations, but I realize some people don't like to chance their marks (and sanity) in that fashion. Therefore, you'll have the choice of a group presentation or going at it alone. Choose the description below that best suits you.

Group Presentation: 30-35 minutes, ballpark

Choose one of Shakespeare's plays that is *not* in the *NAEL* and divide the task of presenting it to the class among your group members. You may do this by Act, theme, character, critical approaches, or any other method you choose, so long as you present a complete picture of the play to your classmates. Let's say you were doing *King Lear*. The division of labor might look something like this:

Bellee: plot summary; focus on Lear and his daughters; nothing and unnatural occurrences.

Traci: plot summary; focus on the Gloucester subplot; blindness and mistaken identity.

Kelly: legendary British history and political climate which inspired the play

Mike: history of the text and critical approaches

Make sure your presentation is both informative and interesting. You may be as cheeky as you wish: dress as characters, make glittery posters, do Facebook profiles for the characters, act out an especially poignant scene, etc. You may also, of course, do something more traditional...but let me know if we'll need the tech cart for PowerPoint or something like that. You might find it useful to involve your classmates.

You'll need to make a handout for your classmates on the play you choose. Please make sure to cite your sources. I'd like to base your grade on *your* presentation—not all plays are created equally, and neither are all groups—so you'll need to discuss your plans with me no later than Monday, May 19, so that I can set up a rubric for you.

Individual Presentation: 10-15 minutes, ballpark

Rather than trying to tackle a play all by yourself, you'll be responsible for discussing something more manageable. You might choose to present a particularly interesting aspect of Shakespeare's biography (but be careful here, as it should be something that directly relates to the *literature* rather than something we'd like to hear about in a gossip magazine), a bit of Renaissance or previous history that influenced his writing in some fashion, some aspect of Renaissance theatre, or an opinion on Shakespeare held by some other British author within our time period. You might also want to discuss a "lesser" work, such as "The Phoenix and the Turtle."

As above, please make sure your presentation is both informative and interesting. You may also be cheeky! See suggestions above, and feel free to do whatever you wish otherwise.

You will also need to make a handout and cite your sources. Also, you'll need to let me know what you plan to do no later than May 19.

Questions? Let me know.