

## Independent Study ENG4U

The independent study is an ongoing project that will be worked on throughout the course and semester. During this time, you will choose an author and a major work written by him or her. You will then read that novel and complete the various requirements of the Independent Study Project, which is outlined below:

1. A two-page author report, which will focus on the author's influences and related information, as it pertains to the text.
2. A 3-4 page literary paper on the text with a thesis developed by you. The paper must also include secondary sources, which means that you are required to do some research.
3. An oral talk, which you will present to the class. During this presentation, you should make mention of interesting information you learned through doing this project, as well as a summary of your findings on the book of your choice.
4. A work log, which will include detailed information related to the project (i.e., research completed in order to get a better understanding of the issues raised in your chosen book).  
HINT: Use a separate notebook for your work logbook. You must log each time you read and do research. This means that you have to write down the date for each time you read and complete research.

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There will be several library and work periods set aside throughout the semester for you to work on your project. You will also have three conferences throughout the semester so that you and I can discuss your progress and address any issues that you may be having. Please keep in mind that you are advised to get an early start on this project!

## Getting Started

### A). Author:

Try to choose an author who interests you. Take some time to walk through the library and talk to others about an author who you might be interested in. You will be provided with a list of authors and book titles, and you may choose from this list if you need help getting started. Do some research and really think about the author and book you would like to research. Please do keep in mind that you need to choose a work that is „significant“ (i.e., one longer novel or two shorter novels).

### B). Process Work/Work Log:

i). Keep an active work log as you work on your independent study. This should take the form of a notebook. In this notebook, you should write down any questions you may have, as well as the interesting facts and information you are learning from reading your novel. You should also record the date and amount of time spent every time you work on this project. Explain what you have worked on during this time. Remember that this includes time spent reading. Please show your work log at conferences #2 and #3, and you will then submit it when you submit your literary paper.

ii). You are also required to keep all research notes, personal opinion notes, thesis ideas, works cited information and rough drafts. Hand in all of this process work with your author report and your literary essay on the appropriate due date.

iii). The most important part of the process work is the ongoing dialogue the teacher and student will have. You will be required to submit your work log at regular intervals throughout the semester. Here, you will write to your teacher about what you are doing well, and what you need help with. Your teacher will respond to you in your work log. This completed work log will be submitted at the end of the semester with your entire ISU package.

### C). Author Report:

This component is a report, NOT an essay. The purpose of this report is to provide information, and not to prove a thesis. This is what you will be doing when you submit the literary essay. The author report should be approximately two pages (typed, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font) and should attempt to answer the following:

- Background information on the author, especially information that is relevant to his or her writing career
- Influences on the author, such as other writers, personal experiences, and historical events
- His or her specific motivations or reasons for writing the book you chose
- Any interesting or relevant information about the novel Be sure to include a list of sources used for this report. You also need to provide parenthetical references in your report. Follow the MLA format and style. D).

D). Literary Paper: This paper, which will be between 3-4 pages, is a very important project to complete. For this reason, it is very important that you get an early start on this project. The paper should focus on the literary work itself, and must include a well developed thesis (an original thesis, developed by you) and strong support for it. We will practice our thesis writing skills as a class so that you can prepare for this important part of the paper. As a suggestion, choose an aspect of the work (such as theme, character, setting, writing style, plot structure, etc) on which to focus. Remember that it is important that you are using many quotations from the text to support your arguments and position. You must also include relevant quotations from secondary sources (you should have two). These secondary sources should take the form of literary criticism that has been done on the work. Again, you must follow the standard MLA format when citing from other works.

E). Oral Talk:

The oral talk should last between 7 and 10 minutes. You should begin your oral talk by introducing the name of the work and the author, as well as any other information you feel is interesting and relevant to your presentation. A very brief summary or synopsis of the story should be given, but this must be kept very short (as there is a time limit on the oral talk). **The majority of your talk should focus on your assessment and understanding of this work as a literary piece of writing.** This means that you should be discussing the strengths and weaknesses of the work. Be sure to provide examples and support from the text. As a suggestion, think about commenting on plot structure, narration style, characterization, theme, etc.

