

Literature Essay Four (*Narrator/Speaker*)

Timed Essay: 40 minutes

After drafting each timed essay, you will read it aloud to your instructor and receive feedback for revision; you will then revise it and submit a final draft.

Narrators of stories and speakers of poems often hint at or say directly something about their own identity that affects how we make sense of the whole work. Choose a work in which the narrator's self-representation is either supported by other details of the work, or contradicted by other details of the work. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how the reliability or unreliability of the narrator's self-representation contributes to an interpretation of the work as a whole.

Do not merely summarize the plot. In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation.
- Provide evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

You may choose any work we have read in this class, including but not limited to those on the following page.

Some stories we have read with narrators who describe themselves:

John

Patrick of Ireland, *Confession*

Patrick of Ireland, *Letter to the soldiers of Coroticus*

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Reveries of the Solitary Walker*

Fyodor Dostoevsky, *Notes From Underground*

Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front*

Frances Trollope, from *Domestic Manners of the Americans*

John Smith, from *General History of Virginia*

Cotton Mather, from *The Wonders of the Invisible World*

Samson Occom, from *A Short Narrative of My Life*

Red Jacket, "Reply to the Missionary Jacob Cram"

Thomas Jefferson, from *The Autobiography of Thomas Jefferson*

Some letters we have read with authors who describe themselves:

Pliny the Younger, "Letter to his wife Calpurnia" (*Letters* 7.5.1)

Romans (excerpts)

1 Corinthians (excerpts)

1 Peter

Some poems we have read with speakers:

Job (excerpts)

Psalm 16/15 (Preserve me, O God)

Psalm 23/22 (The Lord is my shepherd / The Lord ruleth me)

Psalm 36/35 (Transgression speaks to the wicked / The unjust hath said within himself)

Psalm 42/41 (As a deer pants for flowing streams)

Psalm 51/50 (Have mercy on me, O God)

Psalm 73/72 (Truly God is good to Israel)

Psalm 84/83 (How lovely is your dwelling place)

Psalm 104/103 (Bless the Lord, O my soul)

Psalm 115/113:9-26 (Not to us, O Lord)

Psalm 136/135 (Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good)

Psalm 139/138 (O Lord, you have searched me and known me)

Proverbs 8:12-31

Songs of Songs 8:6-7

Jeremiah 2:2, 2:32, 3:12-13, 3:20, 16:19-20

Hosea 6:4-7

Sappho

- "Star of Evening"
- "Cypris and you Néréids, bring my brother"
- "I have a daughter, golden"
- "The Moon is set"
- "Come to me here from Crete"
- "For me"
- "One Girl"
- "Please Abanthis"
- "It's no use"
- "Virginité, virginité"
- "He is more than a hero"
- "To an army wife, in Sardis"
- "Honestly, I would like to die"
- "Artfully adorned Aphrodite"
- "Girls, you be ardent"
- "I have a daughter, golden"
- "When you lie dead"
- "Death is an evil"

Lucretius, *The Way Things Are* (*De Rerum Natura*)

Gaius Valerius Catullus, "Vivamus" (*Carmina* 5)

Horace, *Odes*:

- *Odes* 1.1, "Dedication to Maecenas"
- *Odes* 1.2, "To the deliverer and hope of the state"
- *Odes* 1.9, "Winter bids us make merry" (Soracte ode)
- *Odes* 1.10, "Hymn to Mercury"
- *Odes* 1.11, "Gather ye rosebuds" (*Carpe diem* ode)
- *Odes* 1.34, "Unpredictability"
- *Odes* 1.37, "The fall of Cleopatra"
- *Odes* 2.13, "A narrow escape from death"
- *Odes* 2.14, "Death is inevitable"
- *Odes* 2.20, "The poet's metamorphosis"
- *Odes* 3.2, "Military and social virtues"
- *Odes* 3.30, "The poet's monument"
- *Odes* 4.1, "Horace is too old for passion (?)"

Odes 4.7, "The cycle of nature" (*Diffugere nives*)

Petrarch, *Canzoniere*:

- "Happy, fortunate flowers" (*Lieti fiori et felici*)
- "A pure white hind" (*Una candida cerva*)

Katharina Amalia Dorothea von Schlegel, "Be still, my soul" (*Stille, mein wille*)

Li Po, "The River-Merchant's Wife: A Letter"

Wang Yinglin or Ou Shizi, "The Three Character Classic"

Ch'ng Ch'ol, "Magistrate"

Matsuo Bashō, "Even in Kyoto"

Yuan Mei, "Growing Old (I)"

Tachibana Akemi, "Happiness is When"

Tran Te Xuong, "Women"

Anne Bradstreet:

- "To My Dear and Loving Husband"
- "A Letter to My Husband, Absent upon Public Employment"
- "Here Follows Some Verses upon the Burning of Our House, July 10th, 1666"

Edward Taylor:

- "Upon Wedlock, and Death of Children"
- "Upon a Wasp Chilled with Cold"