

The Synthesis Paper

Synthesis means putting ideas from many sources together in one essay or presentation. After reading several books, plays, and short works, your task is to organize some of the information around a theme or a question, make informed observations and analyses, and then present information (quotes, examples) in a logical way to support your **theme-based argument**. Remember that a synthesis is **NOT** a summary, a comparison or a review. Rather a synthesis is a result of an *integration* of what you heard/read and your ability to use this learning to develop and support a key thesis or argument. Learning to write a synthesis paper is a critical skill, crucial to organizing and presenting information in academic and non-academic settings.

Format Guidelines—These are absolute and non-negotiable; please read carefully and follow!

1. All **rough draft** assignments are to be handwritten, double-spaced, on lined, loose-leaf paper. You may write on the back of your paper as long as you do not use a writing instrument whose ink bleeds through the paper. **Word-processed rough drafts will not receive credit or feedback.** Why do I do this? Because the AP Exam date draws near and it is time to practice legible handwriting, and the double spacing gives me an area to put my comments so that you can read them.
2. The final copy must be typed, double-spaced, twelve-point **Courier New** font or **Times New Roman** font, with one-inch margins on both sides, as well as the top and bottom of the pages. Any student who has trouble finding access to a computer may come in and type in my room before school (7:30 to 8:05), after school (until 4:00 p.m.), and during "B" lunch for Mrs. Davis or "A" for Mrs. Kincy.
3. You will need to make parenthetical citations when you quote from the texts, which will necessitate a Works Cited list at the end of your paper. We will follow MLA rules for citation of texts. Refer to pages 16-27 of your Perrine's Literature anthology for parenthetical citation guidelines. You should know how to construct the Works Cited pages, but I will answer questions in class, and here is a website you may refer to if you want to get an early start on this:
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>
Also, when available, the MLA Style Wizard is a fantastic tool: <http://www.stylewizard.com/mlaindex.html>
Also, there are several bibliography makers:
<http://citationmachine.net/>
<http://www.easybib.com/>
4. All deadlines are absolute for this assignment—as they are being set well in advance, please show honor and respect for yourself, your work, your fellow classmates, and your teacher by not asking for exceptions. If you know in advance that you are going to be absent, make arrangements to have the work turned in even though you are not in class. All assignments are due at the start of your AP English class on the date specified. Remember, all deadlines will stand, regardless of your attendance—if you are going to miss class, make appropriate arrangements in order to receive credit!
5. Do not use first (i.e. "I" "Me" or "We") or second (i.e. "You" or "Your") person at any time in this paper. Your paper should also be written in present tense (You are analyzing it now).
6. There will be no need for a cover page, as we will follow MLA format for all parts of this paper. You will need to craft a title for your paper (hint: make your title reflective of your theme/prompt). You will staple your paper in the top left corner—no covers, please!
7. Turn in your scoring rubric sheet with your final paper, with appropriate fields completed (your name, titles).
8. **Any form of plagiarism** will result in a score of zero for the entire assignment. This includes the creative recycling of all or part of old synthesis papers.

Steps to Building Content—follow these, and complete each step in order!

1. Develop a thesis statement. Use your selected prompt to develop a thesis concerning how a particular theme is supported in the works you will be discussing. Your thesis statement will be the final sentence of

your introductory paragraph.

2. The introduction: this is a formal paper, and it needs a thoughtfully developed introduction (more than two sentences—more like a minimum of five). Good introductions captivate the interest of the reader, while also making the reader aware of the paper's topic and how the author feels about the topic. When written well, a quality introduction makes your audience want to continue reading the rest of the paper. Remember to begin with extremely general information, building specificity with each subsequent statement, and finishing with the thematic thesis statement.
3. Consider each of your long and short works carefully (you may have to do some re-reading!); summarize main points as they relate to the theme you have chosen. This is a time to remember the Big 5: Setting, Plot, Characterization, Point of View, and of course, THEME! Consider how the setting, plot, characters, and point of view support and reflect the theme you are weaving through all your works. I recommend that you not underestimate the time it will take to complete step #3, and that you do some sort of pre-writing for each of the works you will discuss. In that prewriting, you should include quotes you intend to incorporate, and other specific information. After prewriting, you need to begin writing the body paragraphs, one work at a time. For major works, I expect at least three well-developed paragraphs discussing how the theme applies to that particular work. For minor works, write at least two well-developed paragraphs. For **any** work, no more than five paragraphs of discussion, please!
4. After all the work with Step 3, you will need to craft a stunning conclusion. Begin by re-wording and restating your thesis. From there, write a statement for each work you used, indicating the most obvious way this theme is revealed or supported. Finally, make a statement that applies the theme generally to the human experience, human relationships, or the world we are currently living in.

Final Copy: Preferably word-processed, margins must be one inch all around, font must be `Courier New` (or something close to it), font size must be 12 point, and the entire document must be double-spaced. On the first page (there is no cover page), the first four lines should be left-margin justified, and should be as follows: line one--your first and last name, line two-- teacher's name (Mrs. Kincy), line three--the course name (English IV AP), and line four--the date with numeric date then the month spelled out followed by numeric year (25 April 2011). The fifth line of the first page should be your original, creative, and aptly selected title for your paper. It needs to be centered on the page. The sixth line of the first page should be the indented first line of your introductory paragraph. There is **NO double-double-spacing** anywhere! As we get closer to the final deadline date and as you begin working on your final copy, I will provide information about formatting your Works Cited page.

Do I need a Report Cover? The final copy must be turned in with all graded portions of the rough draft in a two-pocket folder--final copy in the left pocket, all rough draft pieces in the right pocket. No other report holder is necessary. If any student cannot afford a two-pocket folder, see me and arrangements can be made for an alternative or substitution. I will keep the final copy that you turn in, but you will get your rough draft and folder back when you receive your final copy grade.

Major Works List—Select Three in addition to *Madame Bovary*

Hamlet

Frankenstein

As I Lay Dying

A Tale of Two Cities

Heart of Darkness
Madame Bovary (required)
An independently read novel of merit (my approval!!)

Minor Works—Select Three

Use the archived assignment descriptions to peruse the titles of short stories and poetry that we have examined this year. It is a possibility and not a probability that a master list of short works will become available on the website at some point after Spring Break.

Synthesis Paper Timeline

ALL Deadlines must be met or no credit will be given for that portion of the assignment—NO Exceptions! The work assigned is due at the start of your AP English class on the date specified. Have it in your teacher’s hands on or before that time—even if you are not present in class on these days.

- Wednesday, March 30, 2011 Prompt selection and list of major & minor works form is due (15 points).
- Friday, April 1, 2011 Introductory Paragraph Rough Draft is due (20 points).
- Tuesday, April 5, 2011 Rough Draft Body Paragraphs over first major work or first point are due (20 points).
- Thursday, April 7, 2011 Rough Draft Body Paragraphs over second major work or second point are due (20 points).
- Tuesday, April 12, 2011 Rough Draft Body Paragraphs over third major work or third point are due (20 points).
- Thursday, April 14, 2011 Rough Draft Body Paragraphs over fourth major work or third point are due (20 points).
- Monday, April 18, 2011 Rough Draft Body Paragraphs over first minor work or fourth point are due (20 points).
- Tuesday, April 19, 2011 Rough Draft Body Paragraphs over second minor work or fifth point are due (20 Points).
- Thursday, April 21, 2011 Rough Draft Body Paragraphs over third minor work or sixth point AND the conclusion are due (40 points).
- Friday, April 29, 2011 Final Paper is DUE at the start of class (points to be determined based on current class points)!

As you receive rough draft portions back from me, you should be typing, typing, typing (and saving, saving, saving!)! Do not wait to type the entire paper in one sitting unless you are very happy to type a lot.

Name _____ Topic _____
Synthesis Paper Rubric

Rating	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations	Grossly Fails to Meet Expectations
Criteria	4	3	2	1

Introduction, thesis, and conclusion (x5)	Intro provides context for the rest of the paper; thesis is explicit and clear; conclusion recasts thesis and provides cohesion to whole paper 20	Either intro provides insufficient context for the rest of the paper, thesis is lacking in clarity, OR conclusion fails to recast thesis effectively 15	Intro provides little context for the paper; thesis is implicit and hard to find; conclusion makes insufficient reference to thesis 10	Intro does not provide context for the paper; thesis is undetectable; conclusion seems unrelated to the rest of the paper 5
Summaries (x7) _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	Each text is summarized judiciously and succinctly with ideas that clearly relate to the thesis and effectively support the synthesis 28	Summaries support synthesis but could be more clearly related; all ideas are not explicitly related to thesis 21	Summaries are either unclear or too broad or too narrow to demonstrate relation to synthesis; little connection between summaries and synthesis 14	Summaries poorly constructed with carelessly selected details; no connection with synthesis 7
Synthesis (x5)	Clearly identified synthesis based on well-supported and well-selected points of comparison and/or departure among the texts 20	Synthesis identifiable but could be more explicit and better developed; sufficiently supported by ideas from the texts 15	Synthesis is hard to find or poorly developed; insufficiently supported by ideas from the texts 10	No connection among texts or no apparent attempt at developing a synthesis 5
Organization and coherence (x5)	Logical sequence of paragraphs; transition sentences and cohesion markers used effectively throughout paper 20	Sequence of paragraphs is good but could be improved; some transition sentences and cohesion markers are used but could be more effective 15	Sequence of paragraphs seems to be out of logical sequence; insufficient transitions and cohesion markers 10	Paragraphs seem to be out of order and haphazard throughout; no transition sentences or cohesion markers are used 5
Mechanics, Usage, & Formatting (x3)	Superior editing – limited errors in spelling, grammar, word order, word usage, and punctuation; proper citation of texts 12	Good editing – few errors <u>per page</u> in spelling, grammar, word usage, and punctuation; few errors in citations 9	Careless editing – several errors <u>per paragraph</u> in spelling, grammar, word order, word usage, punctuation; several errors in citations 6	No editing – many errors throughout in spelling, grammar, word order, word usage, punctuation, and citations 3

Total Rubric Points Earned: _____ / 100
X (multiplier to be determined based upon total points in class)

Total Synthesis Paper Grade: _____ / 400

Name _____ Class Period _____

Synthesis Paper Prompt and Texts List
Due at start of class, Wednesday, March 30, 2011

I will be using prompt # _____ to direct my synthesis of the following works:

Major Work #1: _____

Major Work #2: _____

Major Work #3: _____

Major Work #4: Madame Bovary

Minor Work #1: _____

Minor Work #2: _____

Name _____

Title of Book	Replacement Price	Book Number Checked Out
<i>The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark</i>	4.00	
<i>A Tale of Two Cities</i>	6.00	
<i>Heart of Darkness</i>	4.00	
<i>As I Lay Dying</i>	13.00	
<i>Frankenstein</i>	5.00	

I understand that by taking these texts to complete my synthesis paper, I am assuming responsibility for them. If I return the books damaged, I am responsible for any fines charged by my teacher, and if I lose any or all books, I am responsible for their replacement costs. I understand that failure to take care of any fines or replacement costs owed will prevent my receipt of a diploma at graduation. I will return all books no later than Friday, April 30, 2010.

Student's signature

Name _____ Class Period _____

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Major Work #1: _____

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Major Work #4: Madame Bovary

Minor Work #1: _____

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Name _____

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student signature

Prompts (Select one only for your paper):

1. The conflict created when the will of an individual opposes the will of the majority has occurred frequently. Sometimes we refer to this as rebellion or nonconformity. Through investigating this kind of conflict in major and minor works, analyze the conflicts and discuss the moral and ethical implications of the conflicts for both the individual and his/her society. Just like the rebellious/nonconformist characters, the works you choose for this task will either need to support a thesis that *necessary change in society begins with an individual*, **OR** *stepping outside accepted norms, attitudes, and behaviors leads to personal defeat and ruin*.
2. Each episode of the 1980's hit sitcom Family Ties began with a theme song that included the line "What would we do, baby, without **us**?" Since nearly all characters we have encountered this year come from families, that fact begs this issue: *how does family influence the central character in your selected literary works* (I'll let **you** decide what kind of influence these families have--good, bad, healthy, codependent, etc.)?
3. Polonius said, "To thine own self be true. And it must follow, as the night the day, Thou canst not then be false to any man" (Hamlet, I.ii.78-80). While honesty may be the best policy, many people (and literary characters) suffer because of the lies they tell themselves. *Discuss the dangers and effects of self-delusion upon the individual. This investigation may also involve a discussion of what results when a*

previously deluded individual discovers the truth, or if/how the truth finally shatters that person's illusion..

4. The "quest" or "journey" is one of the most pervasive, archetypal themes in all of literature. The journey can be physical, mental, spiritual, or emotional. It could be argued that as readers/audiences, we all undergo a journey through the experience of reading literature. Trace the significance of the journey motif/archetype through several important works of literature, and develop an over-arching theme that unites the experiences.

Compose a synthesis paper around a theme pertaining to the significance and value of the journey (physical/mental/emotional/spiritual) in terms of the characters and story.

5. In the words of Martina McBride, "This one's for the girls." In the words of Martina McBride, "This one's for the girls!" What about women? From Miss Brill to Emma Bovary, there have been many feminine characters, yet few are at the center of the plot and action. *Consider how the portrayal of women in literature conveys attitudes toward women and their roles in society.*