

Paper #1 Assignment

Answer one of the following questions in a full 4-5 page paper. Draft due Wednesday 11/7

This paper should not be a simple list of similarities and differences; you **MUST** have a clear thesis and then support it with ample references to the poems themselves. Do not quote more than three lines at a time. Use MLA style for your parenthetical documentation. **Use no outside sources; this should represent YOUR reading of these poems.**

1. Read the poem "The Fish" by Mary Oliver (on the conference) and reread "The Fish" by Elizabeth Bishop (in your books). These two poems have similar themes and subjects but with major differences in symbolism, description, and narrative. Discuss the similarities and differences in these two approaches to catching a fish.
2. Read Shakespeare's "Sonnet 20" (attached to this document). You will explicate this poem. You should have a thesis in which you state what the theme of the poem is, and then you will need to discuss how all the elements of the poem, rhythm, meter, rhyme, symbolism, metaphor, simile, personification, etc., contribute to that theme. You may want to scan the poem's rhythm and meter, as this will be important to the poem's meaning. If you want help with this, I will be glad to go over it with you. You do not need to cover every single element listed above if it is not significant to your thesis. Remember to look up any words you do not know.
3. Read Billy Collins' poem "Taking off Emily Dickinson's Clothes" (on the conference). How does Collins use humor to make a serious argument about reading Dickinson's poetry? You have to explain what argument Collins is making. Also consider how he uses allusions to her poetry and to her poetic style.

A woman's face with Nature's own hand painted
Hast thou, the master-mistress of my passion;
A woman's gentle heart, but not acquainted
With shifting change, as is false women's fashion;
An eye more bright than theirs, less false in rolling,
Gilding the object whereupon it gazeth;
A man in hue, all 'hues' in his controlling,
Much steals men's eyes and women's souls amazeth.
And for a woman wert thou first created;
Till Nature, as she wrought thee, fell a-doting,
And by addition me of thee defeated,
By adding one thing to my purpose nothing.
But since she prick'd thee out for women's pleasure,
Mine be thy love and thy love's use their treasure.