

Creating an Assignment to Meet the True Blue Core Objectives for ENGL 2020 and 2030
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There are eight objectives created by the English Department for all ENGL 2020 and 2030 courses. All eight are relevant to the course as a whole, but **one single assignment must also bring them all together**. Below each, I have noted how it might be part of a single assignment:

- **Explore** how literature reflects, informs, and shapes both personal and collective experience.
 - This is how we teach, so it should be reflected in all writing assignment to some degree.
- **Articulate** cogent responses to literature that demonstrate cultural awareness and understanding.
 - Part of interpretive assignments, i.e. close work with literature within its cultural context(s).
- **Reflect** on how reading, writing, and interpreting literature initiates and contributes to cultural and social conversations.
 - Can be met by adding a reflective element to the assignment, e.g. commentary on the purpose and value of the assignment within relevant cultural context(s).
 - Could instead be a separate statement of prediction/result: What do you think you will learn from this assignment? Did this prove to be true? What else did you learn?
- **Examine** how the production and interpretation of literature is shaped by historical, social, and cultural contexts.
 - Like the second objective, this may already be central to your teaching (topical units, 2020 theme, etc.); assignment can include specific contextual research (library, interview, etc.) into a historical period or cultural issue.
- **Analyze** how literature from different cultures, movements, and time periods employ narrative and stylistic strategies to convey complex ideas and meanings.
 - Be sure the assignment has some focus on literary genre, form, and/or style. Could be fulfilled by a comparative focus (poetry vs. drama, film vs. literature, etc.). Could also be relevant to research as mentioned in the previous objective (e.g. style of an interview vs. a memoir, newspaper opinion piece vs. fiction on similar subject).
- **Compose** projects (written, digital, or audio) that utilize critical thinking, analysis, and research to situate literature within diverse cultural and conceptual frameworks.
 - Critical thinking and analysis should be part of all assignments; if research is used to meet one of the two previous objectives, this one is covered.

- **Identify** connections between literature and values, experiences, and practices of multiple cultures.
 - A comparative assignment will work best and most obviously here. That said, a reflective element could ensure the student considers their own worldview/perspectives in comparison with those of a single author and/or text.
- **Develop** an approach to reading, writing, and interpretation that demonstrates an understanding of human experience from multiple cultural vantage points.
 - See previous objective.

Overall, to include all of these elements requires close textual work, attention to cultural difference/diversity, some form of research beyond assigned literature, some form of comparative work, and a reflective element.

In addition to examples that bring these elements together in the form of a single essay/project, the assignment could also be a non-essay project based on a student's choice of a single text from the course's assigned literature. For instance:

1. **Select** one assigned piece of literature that you wish to study further.
2. **Compose** a short summary of the text, brief **commentary** on how it has impacted you and why you wish to study it further, and a **list** of two or more of its central themes.
3. **Write** a short comparison of the text chosen with any one other assigned reading that shares one of the themes you identified but differs in method or style (e.g. genre or tone). Then **analyze** the impact of this difference. For example, a dark story about lies that ruin a marriage vs. a more comic poem about how we may lie to protect our fantasies.
4. Next, **conduct** online research to find one article that helps you study your text further. The article can be directly about the text or its author, or it can be about its historical and/or cultural context, one of its major themes, or the like. For instance, if my text were Shakespearean sonnet 138 (about a tendency to lie to protect lovers' feelings), I could read: a scholarly interpretation that links the poem to Shakespeare's own romantic relationships; a magazine article on the theme of acceptable vs. unacceptable lies and how this varies by era and culture; or a historical commentary on the sonnet and its cultural uses. I recommend reading multiple articles on various relevant topics to find one that most helped me expand my understanding of some facet(s) of the text. **Write** out the full citation for the article chosen (using proper MLA methods), **summarize** the article, and then **discuss** why you chose it and what it adds to your understanding.
5. Finally, **reflect** in writing on what you have learned from this assignment. How has it helped you to learn more about literature, about literary methods or style, about historical and/or cultural contexts, and/or about the value of intensive study of a single text.