

Formal Writing One (FW1): The “Hills” Essay

Preliminary Draft Due: Thursday, **26 SEPT**

Electronic Copy & Final Draft Due: Thursday, **08 OCT**

Formal Writing Assignment 1: “Hills” Essay

Read the short story, “Hills like White Elephants,” by Ernest Hemingway (you’ll find a link to this story on Canvas; it’s not in our textbooks). After reading the story (this may take more than once to understand), write an essay of seven-and-a-half to eight (8) typed pages, formatted in MLA style. You must submit three copies: the first copy is a preliminary draft; the second copy is to be submitted electronically to the drop box set up in Canvas; the third is a hard copy to be handed in at the beginning of class on the due date.

Your essay should be organized in this manner:

1) Introduction

- a) Provide background information on author (be sure to cite information! Not sure how to cite? Check the MLA handouts on Canvas).
- b) What is the plot of the story? Write a brief summary.
- c) Have a debatable thesis that is a restricted, precisely worded declarative sentence that states the purpose of your essay

3) Setting

- a) What is the setting of this story? Be as specific as possible.
- b) Why is this setting important?

5) Comprehension, Critical Thinking

- a) Looking back on the story, list the evidence that tells what kind of operations Jig is confronting. Can you guess what the operation is based on this evidence?
- b) Why is the story titled “Hills Like White Elephants?” What is a white elephant and why is Hemingway referencing it here?
- c) Hypothesize what Jig did in the end. What makes you believe this?

7) Citations

Quotations, paraphrases, and summaries are launched correctly and used judiciously and only when it directly relates to your topic.

9) Mechanics

- a) Use the *present tense* when you are discussing and writing about literature -- literary works are considered to exist in the present
- b) Proofread for grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

2) Characters

- a) Who are the characters in the story?
- b) Describe the characters’ (physical and personality characteristics)
- c) Based on their actions in the story, what can you infer about these people?
- d) Are these characters round or flat? Give examples why.

4) Social Context

- a) What is the social context of this story?
- b) How does the social context affect the characters and story?

6) Conclusion, Reader Response

- a) What are your thoughts on this short story?
- b) Do you like or dislike it—why?
- c) Would you recommend it to other readers? Why or why not?

8) MLA Format

Any information from sources outside the actual work of literature (for example, academic journal articles), should be documented properly

10) Works Cited

Create a proper Works Cited page; every reference is found in the text; each reference has a hanging indentation, no details are missing

I would suggest you analyze this story as soon as possible. I am willing to answer any questions you might have about this story and open up a class discussion. If you wait until the last minute, this assignment will be more difficult than I designed it to be. If you’re uncomfortable discussing or asking questions in class, please feel free to email me with questions and concerns.