

RL&L 123 – Response Papers

Response Papers [20%]. Writing is an essential means by which to synthesize information, organize and clarify your thoughts, and discover ideas. Therefore, I ask you to do to prepare the readings and post on Moodle 10 short responses, or reflective pieces. They will not be graded individually on an A-F scale; instead, you will receive 10 points for each response (10x10=100 points). If your responses are unsatisfactory, you will not receive full credit for the response. (For instance, if you write substantially less than what is asked, or if you do not demonstrate earnest engagement with the reading and/or task at hand, etc.). The objective of these responses is to allow you to write without the pressure of a grade. They are also meant to prepare for discussion and to be drawn on in class. They should be posted on Moodle **at least 24 hours before class** so that I—and your peers—have time to read your responses before we meet to discuss the material.

Response 1

This course is about Love, Sex, and Marriage in Renaissance Europe (c.1350-1700). However, before we begin discussing these concepts in their historical context, I'd like you to write between 350 and 500 words about what the words "love," "sex," and "marriage" mean to *you*. For example, how do you define them? What do they connote for you?

Response 2

Write a 200- to 250-word reflection on your reading of Kelly-Gadol's article and Woolf's chapter from *A Room of One's Own*. How does Labé's epistle relate to the issues raised by Kelly-Gadol and Woolf?

Response 3

Find a contemporary love song (20th-21st centuries) that employs similar themes, images, stylistic devices, and so forth, that we've seen in Renaissance love poetry. Or perhaps you would like to present a love song that does NOT resemble love poetry from the period we're studying.

Present the artist/s and the song title, provide the song lyrics, and write 150-200 words about why you chose this song.

Please link the song (e.g. YouTube clip, music video) to your response.

You will present the song to the class in short, informal presentations on Tuesday (2-3 minutes).

Response 4

Free Response -- Choose one of Cereta's letters (especially XVII and XIX, but feel free to choose a different letter) and write a response of 100-150 words on a topic of your choice. Feel free, too, to raise questions in your response that you'd like to discuss with your partner/s.

Response 5

Why is Bijns so adamantly opposed to marriage, or at the very least skeptical about it? What are her arguments (for or) against marriage? How do you react (emotionally or otherwise) to her misogynic* poems? (*misogamy = hatred of marriage)

Write a response of 150-200 words.

Response 6

According to the internal narrator of this story, Dioneo, "we are more inclined to laugh at wicked actions than good ones, especially in matters that do not concern us" (354). Do you agree with this statement? Do you find Dioneo's story funny? What is the connection between wickedness and comedy, particularly regarding Dioneo's story? Do you feel any compassion for the characters?

Write a 150- to 200-word response to one or more of the questions above.

Response 7

Search the [Davison Art Center Online Collection](#) and find an image that relates to the themes of love, sex, and marriage in Renaissance Europe. Be creative with your search terms; for instance, you can search artists' or historical/mythological figures' names (e.g., Titian; Lucretia) or geographical places (e.g., Africa). You can also sort results by date to be sure your chosen image fits within the temporal limits of the class (c.1350-1700).

Attach your image to your post and include a 150- to 200-word description of the image, including the name of the artist/printer/engraver, the title (if applicable), and the date of creation. Explain why you chose your image and ask any questions you might have about the print.

You will present your print in class on Tuesday, August 3rd (2-3 minutes).

Response 8

Write a 150- to 200-word response to one or more of the following questions:

- 1) Why does Montaigne begin his essay on friendship with a discussion on painting?
- 2) What are the different kinds of friendship, according to Montaigne?
- 3) What is the difference between “perfect” friendship and love between a man and a woman?
- 4) What is the difference between “perfect” friendship and “platonic” friendship (= pederastic)?

Response 9

Choose "love," "sex," "marriage," or "race" and write a 150- to 200-word reflection on how this theme manifests in Shakespeare's *Othello*. Write another 150-200 words on how Morrison's *Desdemona* helps you re-imagine the story of Othello that Shakespeare wrote? How does Morrison's play challenge your ideas of love, sex, and marriage found in *Othello*? Finally, write at least one question or theme based on Morrison's *Desdemona* that you'd like to discuss in class.

Response 10

For your first response paper, I asked you to reflect on the meanings of "love," "sex," and "marriage." For this final response paper, I'd like you to think about these concepts again and how your ideas have changed (or not) after taking this seminar. (Write between 250 and 300 words.)

Also, of all the things you've learned in the seminar, which three issues/ideas/concepts/etc. have you found to be the most compelling, exciting, and/or striking? Think back to the first week of class and reflect on all the texts that we've discussed. What has had the largest impact on you? (A list of three items will suffice, but feel free to write more.)