Response Paper #1: Finding Arguments in Traditional Fairy Tales (Literary Analysis & Close Reading)

Value: 40 points

Format: Typed, MLA style

Length: 750 words (approximate)

Due Date: See the syllabus. Submit a typed, MLA-formatted as a Single File Upload to Turnitin by 11:59 pm on the due date (the night before class).

Directions: In three to five paragraphs, respond to one of the prompts below about one of the versions of “Cinderella” or “Little Red Riding Hood.” Grammar and spelling count. The prompt identifies the topic, not your claim (specific argument).

CINDERELLA:
- Charles Perrault’s “Cinderella, or the Little Glass Slipper”
- Jacob & Wilhelm Grimm’s “Cinderella”
- Walt Disney’s “Cinderella” adapted by Campbell Grant
- “Yeh-hsien” (a Chinese version of “Cinderella”)  
- “The Hidden One” (a Native American version of “Cinderella”)

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD:
- Charles Perrault’s “Little Red Riding Hood”
- Jacob & Wilhelm Grimm’s “Little Red Cap”
- “Lon Po Po” (a Chinese version of “Little Red Riding Hood”)

PROMPT:
1. According to one of the traditional versions of “Cinderella” or “Little Red Riding Hood,” what traits or behaviors are valued in society? What traits and behaviors are necessary for a person to be considered good?
2. According to one of the traditional versions of “Cinderella” or “Little Red Riding Hood,” what are men expected to be like?
3. According to one of the traditional versions of “Cinderella” or “Little Red Riding Hood,” what are women expected to be like?
4. What is the definition of beauty in one of the traditional versions of “Cinderella” or “Little Red Riding Hood,” and what is its value and function?
5. According to one of the traditional versions of “Cinderella,” what is the value and function of wealth?
6. What perception of nature or what attitude toward nature is expressed in one of the traditional versions of “Cinderella” or “Little Red Riding Hood?”
7. What is the attitude toward work in one of the traditional versions of “Cinderella” or “Little Red Riding Hood?”
8. What is the perception of or attitude toward childhood according to one of the traditional versions of “Cinderella” or “Little Red Riding Hood?”
ESSAY STRUCTURE:  (I would strongly recommend structuring your paper like an essay with at least 3 paragraphs: intro, one or more body paragraphs, and a brief conclusion.)

PARAGRAPH #1: INTRODUCTION

Step 1: Introduce the text’s author, title, and topic. (Think of this step as introducing WHAT the paper is about. But do not announce it or ever mentioning “I” or writing the paper.) For example: Shirley Jackson’s story “The Lottery” presents the reader with a bleak commentary on human nature.

Step 2: Provide relevant and necessary background or context and narrow the focus, leading to the claim without giving the claim away. (Think of this step as focusing on HOW you will approach the topic, looking at what characters, literary devices, etc.) For example: The story is told with an omniscient third person point of view, locating the reader outside the events looking in seemingly from a distance but ultimately really from the point of view of the villagers. . . . Etc.

Step 3: Introduce the claim (thesis). The claim is the main argument of the entire paper and should focus on just one idea the rest of the paper will prove and develop. (Think of this step as WHY you are writing this paper, its purpose.) For example: Ultimately, Jackson’s story holds up a mirror to the readers, compelling us to see ourselves in the villagers.

Note: Do not list your reasons (point or topic sentences) in the claim. The claim is one sentence and the final sentence of Paragraph #1.

BODY PARAGRAPHS:

Note: Place transitions at the beginning of the body paragraph. Transitions should indicate how the new reason (idea/argument) will relate to the reason from the previous paragraph, whether the new idea is similar, additional, contrasting, etc. The transition could be its own sentence that comes before the reason of this paragraph, but more likely it will be part of the sentence that presents the reason. Looking at the example of a reason below, we can see that the first part of the sentence—Besides placing the reader physically or perceptually on the outside looking in—is the transition.

Step 1: Present the reason (the focusing argument of the paragraph). This argument should be different from the claim but of course must relate to it however loosely. Like the claim, it will present just one idea. For example: Besides placing the reader physically or perceptually on the outside looking in, the story also keeps us emotionally detached from the characters.

Step 2: Supports the reason with evidence, including general and specific examples, details, including correctly formatted and integrated quotations and your interpretation/analysis of them. The claim and reasons TELL; quotations should SHOW and your explanation pointing out what they show and especially how/why they prove the reason. For example: We take notice of Tessie; after all, she comes late, drawing unnecessary attention to herself not only with her arrival but also with her seemingly insincere claim that she “[c]lean forgot what day it was” (965). But while she is singled out for attention, we do not gain any insight into her character, and lacking that insight, we also fail to make an emotional connection with her, remaining at best indifferent. Etc.

Step 3: Explains how the reason proves and develops the claim. The claim is not static. Every paragraph should add to or change its meaning and help to explain its importance. For example: By keeping us emotionally distant from Tessie, we become like the villagers, sharing their casual and indifferent view of each other made necessary by the brutal act they anticipate perpetrating on the selected victim. Etc.

CONCLUSION: (Of course, the response paper is not complete, and if you do elect to write the Literary Essay about it, expanding it, the conclusion will need to grow and develop with it. So don’t spend too much time on the conclusion for this paper, but do make an attempt to write Steps 1 & 2.)

Step 1: Remind us of the claim, but do not just copy/paste the same sentence. For example: By compelling us to identify with the villagers, Jackson is revealing her purpose, which is dependent upon us to fulfill.

Step 2: Develop the claim. (Think of this step as asking yourself and answering the question SO WHAT? Consider the implications, importance, and purpose of this argument.) For example: It is clear the villagers have not changed. Only Tessie undergoes a change, which comes too late for the villagers to hear. But we do hear it. . . . Etc.

Note: Do not repeat the reasons or evidence in the conclusion.

Step 3: Draw the paper to a close. End with a strong last sentence and word.
### GRADING RUBRIC

#### An “A” Essay or Paper (36-40 points) – SUPERIOR
1. Will demonstrate excellence in Critical Thinking, responding effectively, insightfully, and originally to the assignment, fulfilling or exceeding the length, consistently, thoughtfully, and thoroughly analyzing the text, and demonstrating keen understanding of it (and the literary criticism).
2. Will have excellent Focus, presenting a clear, specific, unified claim (thesis) and aptly focused reasons (points) in support of it.
3. Will provide excellent support and development, offering an abundance of relevant, specific reasons (support points), evidence (examples & details from or about the text), warrants, and backing (explanation and discussion of the meaning of the evidence).
4. Will have logical and effective Organization at all levels: idea, essay, paragraph, and sentence and thoughtful, sophisticated transitions.
5. Will have correct, sophisticated, and effective Integration of Sources, with correct presentation and effective use of quotations, paraphrase, and summary, and correct MLA in-text citation, according to genre.
6. Will have clear, specific, and expressive Writing, effectively communicating the ideas.
7. Will adhere exactly to MLA-Formatting.

#### A “B” Essay or Paper (32-35 points) – STRONG
1. Will demonstrate good Critical Thinking, responding effectively and originally to the assignment, fulfilling the length, consistently and thoughtfully analyzing the text, and demonstrating good understanding of it (and the literary criticism).
2. Will have good Focus, presenting a clear, specific claim (thesis) and focused reasons (points) in support of it.
3. Will provide good support and development, offering sufficient relevant, specific reasons (support points), evidence (examples & details from or about the text), warrants, and backing (explanation and discussion of the meaning of the evidence).
4. Will have effective Organization of the essay and paragraphs, including logical transitions.
5. Will have correct and effective Integration of Sources, with correct presentation and effective use of quotations, paraphrase, and summary, and correct MLA in-text citation.
6. Will have clear and specific Writing, effectively communicating the ideas with occasional awkwardness or minor errors that do not detract from the ideas.

#### A “C” Essay or Paper (28-31 points) – ADEQUATE
1. Will demonstrate adequate Critical Thinking, responding adequately to the assignment, fulfilling the length, demonstrating adequate understanding of the text (and the literary criticism), and presenting some analysis of the text with occasional slips into irrelevant material, such as (plot) summary, (character) description, judgment, or personal experience that do not derail from the overall analytical purpose.
2. Will have adequate Focus, presenting a vague or general claim and reasons (points).
3. Will provide adequate Support and Development, offering general and often vague evidence, warrants, and backing.
4. Will demonstrate adequate Organization, so that the reader can follow the argument despite occasional lapses in ordering or missing transitions.
5. Will have adequate Integration of Sources, clearly distinguishing between the student’s ideas and ideas from the text though presentation or use of quotations, paraphrase, summary, and parenthetical in-text citation may be inconsistent or incorrect.
6. Will have Writing that communicates the ideas but has some serious errors as well as considerable awkwardness, vagueness, and minor errors.

#### A “D” Essay or Paper (24-27 points) – WEAK
1. Will demonstrate minimal Critical Thinking, responding incompletely or inconsistently to the assignment, falling short of fulfilling the length, failing to stay focused on analysis but instead summarizing or judging the text or its contents or discussing irrelevant material, or demonstrating an oversimplified or incomplete understanding of the text (and/or literary criticism).
2. Will be poorly Focused, having an unclear, unfocused claim and reasons.
3. Will have minimal Support/Development, mostly relying on generalizations without explanation of them or vaguely or minimally supported opinions.
4. Will be poorly Organized, lacking transitions or clear sense of division or progression of ideas.
5. Will have sloppy Integration of Sources, attempting to distinguish others’ ideas from one’s own but often lacking correct or clear attribution and/or citation.
6. Will have poor Writing due to frequent and/or serious errors so that the reader has to work and sometimes guess at the meaning.

#### An “F” Essay or Paper (0-23 points) – INADEQUATE
1. Will lack Critical Thinking, failing to respond to the assignment, failing to fulfill the length, failing to analyze but instead summarizing or judging the text or its contents or discussing material not in the text, or failing to understand the text (and/or literary criticism).
2. Will lack Focus, having no claim or reasons.
3. Will lack Support/Development, listing facts from the text without explanation of them and/or listing opinions without supporting them.
4. Will lack any sense of Organization, seeming more like notes or free writing.
5. Will be plagiarized or contain plagiarism unintentional or intentional.
6. Will have unclear Writing due to numerous and often serious errors that prevent the ideas from being communicated.