

*I imagine that I speak for a constituency, living and dead, giving utterance to energy, insight, words flowing from many lives. I have always desired that my poems work for others, be useful.*

*What I mean by useful is simply that readers will find poems that speak to and for them, will take those poems into their lives and say them to each other and put them up on the bathroom wall and remember bits and pieces in stressful or quiet moments. That the poems may give voice to something in the experience of a life has been my intention. To find ourselves spoken for in art gives dignity to our pain, our anger, our lust, our losses. We can hear what we hope for and what we most fear, in the small release of cadenced utterance. We have few rituals that function for us in the ordinary chaos of our lives.*  
--Marge Piercy (1936- )

*I want to suggest that there is a[n] . . . essential experience that you owe yourselves, one . . . which finally depends on you, in all your interactions with yourself and your world. This is the experience of taking responsibility toward yourselves . . . .*

*Responsibility to yourself means refusing to let others do your thinking, talking, and naming for you; it means learning to respect and use your own brains and instincts; hence, grappling with hard work . . . . The difference between a life lived actively, and a life of passive drifting and dispersal of energies, is an immense difference. Once we begin to feel committed to our lives, responsible to ourselves, we can never again be satisfied with the old, passive way.*  
Adrienne Rich (1929- )

Camosun College  
School of Arts a& Science  
English Department  
English 160-01  
Fall 2002

### Course Outline

#### 1. Instructor Information

- (a) Instructor: Moira Walker
- (b) Office hours: M/W 4:00-5:00 p.m.; T/Th 2:30-3:30 p.m.
- (c) Location: Paul 235
- (d) Telephone: 370-3330
- (e) E-mail: [walkerm@camosun.bc.ca](mailto:walkerm@camosun.bc.ca)

#### 2. Intended Learning Outcomes

Please see the end of this outline for this section, an administration requirement.

#### 3. Required Materials

##### (a) Texts

King, Thomas. *Medicine River*. Toronto: Penguin Books, 1989.

Schilb, John & John Clifford. *Making Literature Matter: An Anthology for Readers and Writers*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Boston: Bedford/St Martin's, 2003.

## (b) Other

A good dictionary, for example, the *Canadian Gage Dictionary* or the *Canadian Oxford Dictionary*.

## 4. Course Content

## Purpose of the Course:

During this course, we will read selected pieces of literature by writers of varying nationality, ethnicity, language group, economic class, sexual preference, and religious creed. We will discuss the material in class, and you will write about it informally in a journal and formally in two essays and one test. In addition, you will recite a sonnet or part of a poem of your choosing from our anthology, and you will keep a free-writing journal.

The purposes of the course are to increase your appreciation of literature as a valuable and crucial form of human expression, and to extend your understanding of yourself, others, and our society through the study of a novel, a play, short stories, and poems. In extending your understanding of yourself by finding pieces of literature that “speak to and for” you, I trust that you will also enhance your voice or sense of self.

## Readings

**Introduction**

Cameron, “Clowns” HO

Cardiff, “Combing” HO

Wordsworth, “Nuns Fret Not at their Convent’s Narrow Room” HO

Pinsky, “Sonnet” HO

**Creativity: Necessity? Compulsory? Liberating?**

Yourcenar, “How Wang-Fo was Saved” HO

Braid, “Houses” HO

Alice Walker, “In Search of Our Mothers’ Gardens” 163

Gilman, “Yellow Wallpaper” 1149

Carver, “Cathedral” HO

Marquez, “The Handsomest Drowned Man in the World” 1465

## Music:

Alice Walker, “To Hell with Dying” HO

Baldwin, “Sonny’s Blues” 404-

**Disconnection**

Carrier, “Lisa” HO

Saffarzadeh, “Birthplace” HO

Dickinson, “The Soul Selects its Own Society” HO

Dickinson, poems on pages 1488 to 52

Smith, “Not Waving but Drowning” 1543

Maracle, “Alone” HO

Harjo, “The Woman Hanging from the Thirteenth Floor Window” HO

**Surviving Families**

Kincaid, “Girl” 768

Sellers, "In the Counselor's Waiting Room" HO  
 Clifton, "forgiving my father" 344  
 Geok-Lin Lim, "Father from Asia" 347  
 Thomas, "Do Not Go Gentle into that Good Night" 1477  
 Roethke, "My Papa's Waltz" 346  
 Hayden, "Those Winter Sundays" 345  
 Ortiz, "My Father's Song" HO  
 Swenson, "The Centaur" HO

**Love: An illusion? A drug? A method of manipulation? A vital necessity?**

Millay, "Love is Not all" 818  
 Carver, "Cathedral" HO  
 Beer, "Love Poem" HO  
 Yevtushenko, "People" HO

**Work: A threat? A source of drudgery, boredom, or fulfilling challenge?**

Oliver, "Singapore" 118  
 Piercy, "To Be of Use" 181  
 Dunn, "Hard Work" 19  
 Braid, "These Hips" HO  
 Traven, "Assembly Line" HO  
 Laux, "What I wouldn't Do" 20  
 Stanton, "Shoplifters" 22  
 Hull, "Night Waitress" 40  
 Levine, "What Work Is" 7

**Identity**

Hogan, "The Truth Is" HO  
 Tan, "Two Kinds" 373-  
 Fraser, "Poem in which my Legs are Accepted" HO  
 Rodriguez, "Aria" 752  
 King, *Medicine River* (novel)  
 Singer, "Son from America" HO  
 Burns, "Sure You Can Ask Me a Personal Question" HO  
 Rose, "For White Poets/ Who Would Be Indian" HO  
 Alice Walker, "Everyday Use" 382-  
 O'Connor, "Good Country People" HO  
 Bambara, "The Lesson" 659

**Evil: Banal? Inevitable? Ubiquitous? A perpetual challenge?**

Forche, "The Colonel" 1304  
 Blake, "A Poison Tree" HO  
 Browning, "To My Last Duchess" 1302  
 Blake, "The Chimney Sweeper" 18  
 Orwell, "Shooting an Elephant" 1481-  
 Glaspell, "Trifles" 1290-  
 Hawthorne, "The Minister's Black Veil" 1356-  
 Olsen, "I Stand Here Ironing" 367-

**Spirituality/Hope: A crutch? A lifeline? A challenge? The color purple?**

Whitman, "When I heard the Learn'd Astronomer" 693

Wordsworth, "The World is Too Much with Us" HO

Allen, "Grandmother" HO

Angelou, "Still I Rise" (video)

Harjo, "I give You Back" HO

Hayden, "Frederick Douglass" HO

M. Walker, "Coming to Life" HO

Harjo, "Remember" HO

5. Basis of Student Assessment (Weighting)

(a) Assignments

In-class exercise	10
Essay #1	20
Essay #2 ( <i>Medicine River</i> )	25
Journal	10

(b) Quizzes

(c) Exams: Final test during the examination period 25

**Journal:** Your class journal is a place to meditate and generate ideas about a particular piece of literature, including the ways in which it calls into question, parallels, or celebrates aspects of your own life, that of others, or of our society. Please complete a full-page entry as a preparation for class; please date the entries and name the work you are discussing.

**Class Participation:** Reading literature gives us an opportunity to think. In addition to exploring your thoughts on paper in your journal, I encourage you to learn to speak aloud in class whenever you have questions, observations, or insights into the course material. By voicing your thoughts, you will allow others to benefit from your viewpoint. This may encourage others to value their own perspective, which may resemble yours; to give them the courage to speak; or to generate another appraisal of the work. Keep in mind that literature is complex. This richness can be better understood and appreciated if we allow multiple voices to be heard.

The act of speaking and the act of listening are both important skills that I hope you will develop, strengthen, and regularly exercise in this class. Keep in mind that silence can be a form of oppression; encourage one another to speak.

6. Grading System

The following percentage conversion to letter grade will be used:

A+ =95-100	B- =70-74	I =See Calendar
A =90-94	C+ =65-69	AUD =Audit
A- =85-98	C =60-64	W =Official withdrawal
B+ =80-84	D =50-59	
B =75-79	F =0-49	

## 2. Intended Learning Outcomes

According to the English Department, students in English 160 are expected to develop the following abilities:

In reading literature, students will be encouraged to make connections, consider meaning, make and support inferences, and evaluate. Instructors will select course materials and provide information that will enable students to

- distinguish between literal and figurative meaning;
- analyze themes;
- use literary elements such as metaphor, irony, character, setting, and plot;
- be acquainted with one or more literary theories;
- develop an informed critical response;
- use appropriate language associated with analyzing fiction, poetry, drama, and non-fiction.

In writing about literature, students will be expected to explain, support, and illustrate points using relevant textual evidence as they complete the following tasks:

- an analysis using elements of literature such as plot, characterization, setting, figurative language, point of view, tone, and style;
- a comparison of pieces of literature;
- a works cited list using correct MLA documentation.

To assist your studies at Camosun, the college offers a number of services, workshops, and centres. Do make use of them!

Computer Labs—Ewing, 1st floor (See Rm. 102 & 110 for time tables)

Personal Counselling—Dawson 202

Learning Skills Centre—Dawson 202

Library Note: Please acquire a library card as soon as possible.

Writing Centre—Dawson 207

See the College Calendar, the Registrar's Office, or the College web site at <http://www.camosun.bc.ca> for further details.

### Academic Conduct Policy

It is your responsibility to become familiar with the content of the Academic Conduct Policy. The policy is available in each School Administration Office, Registration, and on the College web site in the Policy Section.