

PAPER #1:
Close Reading of a Short Story

- Due Date:** Monday, September 16th
Papers must be handed in at the beginning of class on this date.
Papers will NOT be accepted late and will NOT be accepted via email.
- Length:** Minimum 2 pages, maximum 3
- Format:** Double-spaced, normal margins, page numbers, 12 point Times font.
Create a short header with your name. Cite page numbers parenthetically.
- Texts:** Your paper will focus on the short story “Safari” by Jennifer Egan
For this paper, you will use NO outside sources. Do NOT consult the internet.
- Topic:** This paper will focus on the literary element of character.

Provide a close reading of ONE character, emphasizing the careful use of literary evidence.

Explain how and why one character changes, evolves, develops (or does not change and remains static) over the course of the story. In your analysis, make sure to **use quotations** from the story as evidence for your ideas. Create an argument about how character “works” over the course of the story (for example, as you explore how one character develops, think about his or her motivation; or, think about if he/she represents a key concept; or think about his/her voice...).

- Writing tasks:**
- Open your paper with a **thesis** that clearly presents your interpretation (what you are arguing about how and why the character develops).
 - Organize your paper’s body by the **ideas** that develop your interpretation. Work to focus your thinking.
 - Perform a **close reading** that supports your interpretation of the story. See the “Close Reading” handout. A close reading examines the story itself for clues about its meaning, paying careful attention to key words, phrases, images, literary elements, and structures of the story. (A close reading does *not* look at critical articles or historical information.)
 - Explain **short key passages** that connect to your argument about character; provide close readings of lots of evidence from the text.

- Thesis Brainstorming tips:** As you develop your paper’s thesis, think of the following:
- Locate meaningful quotations from the story; let them shape your thesis.
 - What intrigues you about the character? Often personal reactions are a good start—*begin* with your “gut” response and *move towards analysis*.
 - Imagine yourself arguing with someone, saying “I think character X changes because _____.” What would you put in the blank?