

Choose Your Short Story

You will be choosing the short story that you will use in your assignment for Paper 1. You will start to work on the assignment in Week 2. Be sure to read the Assignment carefully. It is found in the Assignments area of the bluenav bar at the top of the classroom. To help you with your selection, the stories have already been placed into general topics, as noted below.

Overview of the Selection of Short Stories: The following short stories have been selected from a range of sources and writers and include classic writers as well as contemporary ones. They are also available on a PDF below. When you click on the links that lead you to the LION database of the UMUC Library, you will be able to download a PDF of the story--and thereby can use your annotation skills! For stories from websites, you may want to create a PDF of the story (if not available there) so you can annotate it.

Please keep in mind that the stories are being presented in topics or general categories. The theme of the work will present a focused exposition of that topic. For instance, the play *Romeo and Juliet* is about the topic of love. However, it explores themes of young love and the implications of a “first love” as well as many others.

Some stories here have been presented under different topics. Remember, one short story can be read for different topics and themes.

For Paper 1, you will be choosing one story from your chosen topic; for Paper 2, you will be choosing another short story from that same topic. You may want to read the assignments for both papers--as well as all the stories under a category--so you can be sure you can work with the stories for both papers. Pick the stories and themes that interest you and that you want to understand and know better.

Courage: How do humans express courage? Does the expression of that virtue have any personal or societal implications on us as human? Read these stories which express a wide range of courage--and the specific theme about courage which you see in the story.

"The Signal" | Vsevolod Garshin. <http://www.classicreader.com/book/2150/1/>

"Beyond the Bayou" | Kate Chopin. <http://americanliterature.com/author/kate-chopin/short-story/beyond-the-bayou>

"The Open Boat" | Stephen Crane. http://americanenglish.state.gov/files/ae/resource_files/the-open-boat.pdf

Family: The topic of family is important in all human cultures. In your chosen story, look for the expression of family--and what it means to the characters--and thereby to us, as readers. As you read the stories, consider the "take-away" of the topic of family that the writer wants you to reflect on. The take-away/main idea can be your exploration of a more specific theme.

"A Tiny Feast" | Chris Adrian Special note: This story uses characters from Shakespeare's *A*

▪ *Midsummer's Night Dream*. Even if you haven't read this story, it has much to say about the concept

of family: <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2009/04/20/a-tiny-feast>

"Lorry Raja" | Madhuri Vijay <http://www.narrativemagazine.com/issues/winter-2012/n30b-winners/lorry-raja-madhuri-vijay>. You must sign up to *Narrative* to read this story. Sign-up is free at <https://www.narrativemagazine.com/user/register?destination=node/166856>

“The Last Night of the World” | Ray Bradbury.

<http://www.esquire.com/entertainment/books/a14340/ray-bradbury-last-night-of-the-world-0251/>

“Beyond the Bayou” | Kate Chopin. <http://americanliterature.com/author/kate-chopin/short-story/beyond-the-bayou>

“The Pianist in the Wal-Mart Parking Lot” | Shao Wang. http://gateway.proquest.com.ezproxy.umuc.edu/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&xri:pqil:res_ver=0.2&res_id=xri:lion&rft_id=xri:lion:ft:journals:R04050462:0

Meaning of Life: How do we reach an understanding of the meaning of life? In these stories, look for the writers’ takes on what may be important, or not, on the topic of the meaning of life. As you read the stories, look for a theme on the meaning of life that the writer wants you to consider.

“The Last Night of the World” | Ray Bradbury. <http://www.esquire.com/entertainment/books/a14340/ray-bradbury-last-night-of-the-world-0251/>

“To Build a Fire” | Jack London. <http://americanliterature.com/author/jack-london/short-story/to-build-a-fire>

“Young Goodman Brown” | Nathaniel Hawthorne. <http://americanliterature.com/author/nathaniel-hawthorne/short-story/young-goodman-brown>

“The Story of a Good Brahmin” | Voltaire. http://gateway.proquest.com.ezproxy.umuc.edu/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&xri:pqil:res_ver=0.2&res_id=xri:lion&rft_id=xri:lion:ft:pr:Z001587783:0

“The Persistence of Memory” | Rachel L. Bowden.

[http://gateway.proquest.com.ezproxy.umuc.edu/openurl?
ctx_ver=Z39.88-
2003&xri:pqil:res_ver=0.2&res_id=xri:lion&rft_id=xri:lion:ft:journals:
R05303383:0](http://gateway.proquest.com.ezproxy.umuc.edu/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&xri:pqil:res_ver=0.2&res_id=xri:lion&rft_id=xri:lion:ft:journals:R05303383:0)

Love: Love is a very abstract topic, and we use this word in a myriad of ways. Writers of all literary genres have tried to capture and explain what this topic means to humans. In short stories, we are often given glimpses into people's lives and relationships to see how the characters in that story are expressing or understanding love. As you're reading, consider how the stories give us, the readers an idea about love-- that idea can be a theme.