

Essay 2: Writing with Feminist/Postfeminist Criticism

For this essay assignment, you will apply either Feminist or Postfeminist Criticism on **either** "Hut on the Mountain," **or** "Celestial Bath," **or** any short story that you did not write on for Essay 1. Focus your analysis on just **one** of these texts.

An alternative is to apply Psychological Criticism to "Celestial Bath" *if you did not use this critical theory for Essay 1.*

You must come up with your own thesis statement and angle into the work, so spend time making an outline that will help guide your thoughts logically for your audience.

I will base your grade on the following criteria:

1. A close reading of the literary work.
2. Your ability to apply the assumptions and practices of Feminist, Postfeminist, or Psychological criticism on the literary work.
3. How well you interpret the work.
4. Originality of your thesis.
5. Standards of good essay composition, such as an explicitly asserted thesis statement, clear and focused paragraph development that explores and supports your thesis, Standard American Written English (SAWE).

Use a title that has 2 parts. The main title should be inventive but reflect the nature of your paper. Separate this title from the subtitle with a colon. The subtitle should incorporate the particular theoretical framework within which you are analyzing the work. For example:

Aylmer's Id: A Psychological Interpretation of Hawthorne's "The Birthmark"

Additional requirements:

1. Page length: 4-5 pages.
2. Cite the literary work correctly with underscoring or italics.
3. Add a Work Cited (singular) page giving the text from which you are citing.
4. A thesis statement in the introductory paragraph.
5. Interpretive evidence.
6. Clear logical essay structure.
7. Focused paragraphs.

Feminist/Postfeminist Criticism Approach

1. How are women's lives portrayed in the work? Do the women in the work accept or reject these roles?
2. Is the form and content of the work influenced by the author's gender?
3. What are the relationships between men and women? Are these relationships sources of conflict? Do they provide resolution to conflict?
4. Does the work challenge or affirm traditional ideas about women? About men?
5. What attitudes about women are explicit in the work? What attitudes are conveyed implicitly? How do plot conventions and character stereotypes contribute to these attitudes?
6. How are traditional female roles and activities valued in the work? (Are we given a sense of their importance in daily life? Do they create the primary action of the story?)
7. Are the women in the work constrained from acting in certain ways, from performing certain tasks, or from holding certain positions because they are women? Why? What assumptions in the work underlie these constraints?
8. Are men in the work constrained from acting in certain ways, from performing certain tasks, or from holding certain positions because they are men? Why? What assumptions in the work underlie these constraints?
9. In what way(s) does the text expose or reinforce stereotypes about women?
10. How does the writer's own gender affect her discourse and her aims/goals?

Review pages 31-34 and Chapter 8 in Lynn