



What It Means to Be Human

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Note from the Author of This Unit Regarding Its Usage:

This unit has been designed for a regular twelfth grade class of about 30 students in a suburban area of Atlanta. While I think most students could handle the pace I have set out for them, the literature this unit is asking students to read is somewhat complex. Thus, it might be beneficial to have this unit preceded by units incorporating easier works of literature so that students can work up to handling works of the complexity of *Frankenstein* and *The Tempest*. This unit also assumes that students have little to no experience with writing extended definition essays, so the groundwork for writing them has been scaffolded extensively. I hope people who come across this unit find it somewhat helpful in their teaching endeavors.

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Picture of Frankenstein's monster taken from:

<http://www.thesharkguys.com/celebrities/people-who-look-like-the-frankenstein-monster/>

Picture of Prospero and Caliban taken from:

<http://www.mccarter.org/education/tempestguide/tempestguide.html>

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Rationale

In today's world rather than to "return" to where we now stand, we are in need of a resurgence of the humane values in the teaching of literature . . . The requisite is . . . to transcend the mechanical elements toward a deeper concern with the responses to the human condition, its thought patterns, value conflicts and social predicaments (Bogart, 1963, p. 230).

The world is quite a different place today than it was in 1963. However, in the current academic environment of standardization and computerization, where students are more concerned with passing required tests than engaging in meaningful dialogue regarding their lives, a return to humanistic values is more necessary than ever. In order to be great professionals, great citizens, or even great people, students need to analyze who they are, what they value, and how they are going to make the greatest impact on their world. In order to get students to begin reflecting on these issues, this six week unit has been designed to have them analyze and define what it is to be human. In doing so, students will have to wrestle with what values and emotions they find necessary for humans to have. This process will help students to develop a criterion-based definition of what it is to be human that is personal for them.

Students will begin thinking about the important traits associated with humanity by conducting an in-depth analysis of the Gothic novel *Frankenstein*. By traits I do not mean simply speaking or walking on two legs; these physical characteristics I leave to my colleagues in the science department. No, I mean the intellectual, spiritual, and emotional traits that we associate with being human that are often expressed through literature. *Frankenstein* offers characters both

human and otherworldly that exhibit such characteristics. By reading this novel, students will be able to analyze the darker side of humanity and contemplate the line between human and subhuman behavior. Is the creature's murder of Victor Frankenstein's wife subhuman, or is it an example of the darker side of the creature's humanity lashing out? How does it compare to Victor's abandonment of the creature in terms of cruelty or lack of humanity? By offering up these queries, Frankenstein provides students with much to consider as they divine what it is to be human.

Students will also be constructing this definition through an in-depth analysis of *The Tempest*. In this famous Shakespearean comedy, readers encounter characters that, while not human, possess traits that make them seem human in some respects. By this I mean that these characters display some emotion or value of which only human beings are capable. Some of these spirits and monsters might even seem more human than the people interacting with them. For example, when the spirit Ariel says to the human Prospero concerning his prisoners that "If you beheld them, your affections / Would become tender," this ethereal creature for a moment appears just as human as Prospero (Shakespeare, 1610-11, 5.1 2035-2037). And yet on a superficial level he is not. He is a spirit doing the bidding of one. However, he is able to convey that "were he human," he would feel the emotion of pity (Shakespeare, 1610-11, 5.1 2038). Does this recognition of pity actually make Ariel human in some regard? It is through asking and analyzing questions like this one that students will begin to discover which values they consider attributes of being human.

So as to incorporate another medium besides the written works the students will read, this unit will also have them encounter the movie *Forbidden Planet*, a reimagining of *The Tempest* that

takes place in space. Just like the two main literary works, this movie contains characters that walk the line between human and non-human behavior. Though the movie will only be covered briefly, students will be able to consider the characters and viewpoints it provides when thinking about the characters and events of the main texts, as well as incorporate them into the essays they will be writing toward the end of the semester.

In addition to discussing the humanity of the characters in class, students will be constructing texts that assist the students in developing their definition of being human. Throughout the whole unit, students will keep dialogue journals with one or more students in which they will write entries to one another regarding the topics from class. The content of these journals will not be graded for accuracy, but will instead be evaluated through students showing that they have frequently created thoughtful responses to one another regarding the unit's themes. This assignment will allow students to express their own thoughts on the readings and feed off of the responses of others who might have given perspectives they did not consider.

Such evaluations are important because school too often “focuses on these final products without providing opportunities for students to be engaged in—and be rewarded for—the informal, tentative, experimental processes that lead to them” (Smagorinsky, 2008, 83). Because of this kind of attitude, students often wait till too late in a grading period to start seriously thinking about the issues they will be assessed on. Students, by making these journals, will find incentive to actively think about their definitions of being human throughout the whole unit, which will only benefit them when it comes time to produce their other assignments.

The next assignment will allow students to creatively explore their views on being human. Half way through the unit, after completing *Frankenstein*, students will create a tombstone for

Frankenstein's creature. Though this assignment is a little morbid, it fits in well with a Gothic tone of *Frankenstein*. The goal of this assignment will be to get students to focus on expressing the character's humanity in a creative way through artistic representation (though artistic ability itself will not be graded). Students will have much leeway regarding the content of this assignment, but all components, from the name they give the creature to the shape of the tombstone itself, must work toward expressing the character's humanity.

While this project is no typical English assignment, I believe it is important for students to have different avenues through which to digest literature that go beyond simply reading and writing. It has been shown that creative assignments "can provide students with a motivating context for working intensely with curriculum material while supporting their use of high-order thinking skills" (Ellis, 2005, 242). This assignment will hopefully give students a different way of thinking about and expressing what conclusions they have come to regarding what it means to be human. It will also give students experience in taking a definition they have come up with and applying it to a particular character to see which of its traits match it and which ones do not.

The culminating assignment for the unit will be to write an extended definition essay on what it means to be human. Through writing these papers, students will be able to both "*synthesize their knowledge* from the [unit] and *construct new knowledge* through their process of producing them" (Smagorinsky, 2008, 53). Having to perform this task will make students create texts that reflect their thought process for the last few weeks and show how it has developed over time. Students will have a great amount of control in that they will come up with the criteria completely by themselves based on discussions and readings from the course. What will be necessary, however, is that students develop and describe these criteria with regard to how they

adequately define what it means to be human. They must also give and support examples from the texts of characters embodying and not embodying those criteria and how doing so or not doing so affects the characters' degree of humanity. Composing these papers will be no simple task, but after going through the readings, discussions, and other assignments leading up to the students writing their essays, I am confident that they will be up to the challenge.

I anticipate some arguments against both my choice of content and method of teaching this content. As the texts all deal with otherworldly creatures that sometimes engage in less-than-moral activities, some people might argue that the lessons learned from these stories are not appropriate for children, much less great examples of humanity. However, it is important when defining something, whether it be a mathematical concept or a humanistic ideal, to look at it from every perspective. The characters in these texts, both human and otherwise, are never perfect; neither are human beings. In order for students to achieve a full look into what makes us human, they have to see both the good and the bad. Also, I should point out that in these texts bad behaviors and values are never rewarded. They may be forgiven, but they are never rewarded. Students will see the ramifications of these negative attributes and how they affect the characters who exhibit them. The result of encountering these situations will almost certainly be a distaste for poor values and actions.

A concern some administrators might have is that the reading and assignments presented here do not help students prepare for the standardized tests coming up at the end of the year. While it is true that in this particular unit I do not offer much in the way of multiple choice tests, the skills of analyzing literature and determining the criteria necessary to evaluate aspects in it are most certainly applicable to what they will have to do on both standardized exams and in college.

The texts we are reading are as, if not more, sophisticated than any literature one might encounter on a standardized test at this level.

The unit will also prepare students well for standardized writing tests. As two out of the three major assignments are writing intensive, completing the unit will make students much more comfortable in their writing abilities if and when they have to take a writing test. Also, while extended definitions are not exactly persuasive or compare and contrast essays, students must, whether they realize it or not, perform both of these tasks if they are to write good extended definition essays. Students must be persuasive both in convincing their paper's audience that the criteria they choose is relevant to defining the topic and in showing how their examples showcase this relevance. Students must compare and contrast when they include counterexamples of when the criteria presented is not met and how it not being met means their exclusion from the definition.

No matter the challenge before them in life, students will be more confident in themselves and their actions if they have a better understanding of what their values are as human beings. The first step toward figuring this out for many is simply asking what values we associate with the human experience. My goal is to get them to do just that. It is my hope that this analysis will move them toward determining what it is to be a good person, and hopefully a realization of what values they need to cultivate within themselves to meet their own definition of that great ideal. Guiding students to make these realizations is a positive step in preparing them for being responsible citizens once they leave high school

Rationale References

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Unit Daily Lesson Plans (block scheduling with 90 minute periods) With Activities

Day 1 (Monday)

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping issues.

5 minutes: Hand out copies of assignment below to students and field any questions they might have:

During the next few weeks, we will be discussing what it means to be human. We are far from the first people to take this issue under consideration. Below is a list of quotations from various thinkers and writers. Each quotation expresses an opinion on either humanity in general or traits one might believe humans to possess. Please read the quotations by yourself and rate each of them with regard to how much you agree or disagree with the opinions expressed in them. Please rate each quotation from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (strongly agree):

1. When dealing with people, remember that you are not dealing with creatures of logic, but creatures of emotion.

- Dale Carnegie

2. We are all alike on the inside.

- Mark Twain

3. The fact is that people are good, if only their fundamental wishes are satisfied, their wish for affection and security. Give people affection and security, and they will give affection and be secure in their feeling and their behavior.

- Abraham Maslow

4. To sin is a human business, to justify sins is a devilish business.

- Leo Tolstoy

5. To forgive all is as inhuman as to forgive none.

- Seneca

6. The unity of the three H's is essential: Heart, head, and hand. But today this unity is

absent among people, with the result that men are becoming inhuman.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

7. The worst sin towards our fellow creatures is not to hate them, but to be indifferent to them: that's the essence of inhumanity.

- George Bernard Shaw

8. The rarer action is

In virtue than in vengeance

- Prospero from *The Tempest*

9. All men hate the wretched.

- The Creature from *Frankenstein*

10. Man is improvable. Some people think he is only a machine, and that the only difference between a man and a mill is, that one is carried by blood and the other by water.

- Horace Mann

*Quotations taken from Thinkexist.com

*Adapted from Smagorinsky, P., *Teaching English by Design*, 2008

20 minutes: Allow students to individually read the quotations and rate them with regard to what extent they agree or disagree with them.

20 minutes: Get students to form groups of four or five people so they can discuss the quotations and how much everyone agrees or disagrees with them. Have each group determine its members' general level of agreement with the quotations by averaging each group member's individual ratings for a particular quotation together.

30 minutes: Call class back together, but allow students to remain seated near their group members. Guide a class discussion concerning the quotations the students have been working with. For each quotation, ask a spokesperson from each group to briefly tell the rest of the class what they took the quotation's meaning to be and whether his or her group mostly agreed or disagreed with it. Allow the class to discuss any differing interpretations on the quotations that might arise.

10 minutes: Hand out copies of *The Tempest* and *Frankenstein*, explaining while doing so that these will be the two main texts of the unit. Tell them that while they can and should look at *The Tempest* in their spare time, we will be focusing on *Frankenstein* for the first two weeks. Tell students they will need to have the letters at the beginning and the first chapter of *Frankenstein* read by Wednesday.

Last 2 minutes: Tell students their homework for tomorrow is to pick one of the quotations from the handout and write at least half a page on what they interpret the quotation's meaning to be, whether or not they agree with it, and whether the issue commented on in the quotation is important to being considered human. Tell students that their papers will be read by at least one other person the next day. Field any questions on the assignment they might have.

Day 2 (Tuesday)

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping issues, kids pass in homework.

5 minutes: Check off that students did homework and pass it back to them. Then tell them to switch papers with someone so that they can read each other's work. Inform them that they will be attempting to come up with two questions about their classmates' papers.

20 minutes: Before they get started, conduct an activity to give them examples of how to ask the kinds of questions prudent to discussing literature. Pass out the handout below. It has a small blurb that I wrote about one of the quotations (mimicking a response one of my students might give) and some questions about it. Then see if the class can come up with additional ones. Here is the handout:

Example:

When dealing with people, remember that you are not dealing with creatures of logic, but creatures of emotion.

- Dale Carnegie

I think this quotation means that people are led by their emotions and not their minds. It also suggests that we should keep this fact in mind when interacting with one another so that we do not hurt each other's feelings. If we realize that people are not machines and that they do not always make the most rational decisions, then understanding why people act strange sometimes is easier.

I both agree and disagree with this quotation. I think it depends on the particular person you are talking about. Some people are more emotional than others. I, for example, am not a very emotional person. I am in control of my emotions and do not let them get out of control.

In the end, I think the issue of having emotions is important to being considered human. You cannot ignore them, and I think even the most heartless people listen to their emotions at some point.

Questions:

1. Why do you think that some people are more controlled by their emotions than others?
2. Are the people who are more controlled by their emotions less human? Less controlled by their emotions more human?
3. Are emotions critical to being considered human?
4. Are there more important issues related to being human than having emotions?
5. ?
6. ?

Read over the paper as a class. Point out that the questions do not have one correct answer. They can have different answers depending on how you think about it. Go around the room and ask students to come up with questions regarding what I wrote that are similar to the ones found on the handout. If a student just cannot think of one, he or she can pass, but encourage everyone to try. Point out which of the students' questions are like the ones on the handout and try to tweak ones that aren't so that they become akin to the ones on the handout.

5 minutes: Have students read the papers they have traded for. Tell them to attempt coming up with two questions about the issues discussed in what they are reading. Suggest that they refer to the handout or ask if they have other questions.

5 minutes: Have each student pair up with the person he or she traded papers with. Tell them to discuss what they read with each other, paying special attention to whether the issues in the quotations they wrote about are important to being considered human. They should also attempt to answer the questions they came up with while reading each other's papers. Tell them they will have about 12 minutes to do this.

12 minutes: Allow students to meet and discuss their papers and questions.

15 minutes: Call the class back together. Have one person from each pair share a question they discussed during this exercise and whether they came up with a possible answer for it. If so, ask that student to share their answer. Make suggestions on how to fix questions that are not yet beneficial to literary discussion for whatever reason (e.g. fact-based, off-topic, etc.).

20 minutes: On the white board, write "Important for Being Human" at the top and draw a line under it. Ask the person from each pair who did not speak during the last discussion to state the quotations they talked about, the issues discussed by those quotations, and whether they thought

any of these issues to be important for being considered human. Write any issues they come up with on the board. After every pair has gone, tell all of the students to get out a piece of paper and copy the list off the board. Tell them to keep the list somewhere safe and to keep the issues on it in mind as we read and write about *Frankenstein* and *The Tempest*.

5 minutes: For homework, students are to read through chapter one of *Frankenstein*. Tell students that there will be a short quiz or some other way of checking to make sure they have read the material at the beginning of every class while we are reading *Frankenstein*.

Day 3 (Wednesday)

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping issues.

6 minutes: Pass out quiz sheet with the following questions and allow students to answer them as best they can:

1. In the beginning of the novel we read a letter of a captain. What is his expedition's purpose?
2. To whom is the captain writing his letters?
3. What do the people on the ship see in the distance?
4. Who do they encounter and speak with, ultimately letting him on the ship?
5. What secret will Frankenstein not share with anyone?

*Questions adapted from Mayer, L. R., *A Teacher's Guide to the Signet Classics Edition of Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*. 2009.

1 minute: Quickly go over answers after taking quizzes up.

20 minutes: Pass out copies of the handout and rubric for the dialogue journal (see Goals and Rubrics section). Go through the details of the assignment with them and let them examine it and ask questions. Tell them that in these journals, they will be conducting conversations with and asking questions of one another in a way similar to how they interacted in yesterday's activities. After explaining this, use the rest of this block of time to allow students to pair themselves up and begin discussion about how they want to present their journals (paper, email, Facebook discussions, etc.)

5 minutes: Divide students into groups of four or five. Tell them to get out their lists regarding

issues important to being considered human.

10 minutes: Tell each group to discuss the events of *Frankenstein* so far and see if they can find an instance where a character demonstrates a trait related to the issues on their list. Give the example that if the issue were that humans are kind, then they should find an instance where a character exhibits the trait of kindness. Tell the groups that they have come up with at least one instance like this.

10 minutes: Have students find to the pages of where the event where a character shows a trait regarding one of these issues takes place in the story. Pass out and go over the sheet below detailing what a storyboard is. Tell students to create storyboards about the event and to try and make it clear from the storyboard what issue regarding being human it relates to. Tell the students to really pay attention to the descriptions Mary Shelley gives for assistance on what to include. Here is the handout:

***Frankenstein* Storyboard**

A storyboard is a set of drawings that illustrates the major events in a sequence of action. Taking as many frames as you need, illustrate the sequence of events the character you have picked goes through when he does something related to the issues or traits we came up with in class not too long ago. Things to consider when creating these storyboards include:

- Which characters are involved in the action
- How is the trait or issue important to being considered human carried out?
- What images might tell the novel's story in this particular instance?
- Which of Shelley's descriptions should you illustrate to properly show the events taking place?

You should first sketch the frames of the storyboard on scratch paper so that you know what you want to include. Then, copy your frames onto a transparency to show to the class.

*Adapted from Smagorinsky, P. *Teaching English by Design*, 2008.

30 minutes: Allow students to work in groups on their storyboards

5 minutes: Tell students to turn in what they have done to me and that I will keep it until tomorrow. Also tell them that they will have some time tomorrow to finish the storyboards before they present them to the rest of the class. Their homework is to read chapters 2-4 of *Frankenstein* and to keep working on their dialogue journals.

Day 4 (Thursday)

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping issues.

5 minutes: Administer a short-answer quiz with the following questions to make sure they are keeping up with the reading:

1. In Victor's dream, what happened to Elizabeth when he kisses her?
2. Why does Victor go about two years without visiting home?

*Questions adapted from Mayer, L. R., *A Teacher's Guide to the Signet Classics Edition of Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*. 2009.

1 minute: Quickly go over answers after taking quizzes up.

14 minutes: Allow students to get in their dialogue journal groups. Have them discuss how well the format (email, Facebook, whatever) they initially chose for their journal is working and if they want to change it. Remind students that it is their responsibility to keep up with their entries as the unit goes on. Their grade will depend on how much they have done and how much thought they have put in to each entry.

20 minutes: Allow students to get back into their storyboard groups and continue to work on them.

20 minutes: Each group presents and talks the class through its storyboard. Groups take and answer questions about them.

10 minutes: Have a general discussion time where students can have you address any questions or concerns they might have about the unit and/or the novel up to this point. If students have several concerns or questions, instructor can extend this time for the rest of the class. If not, then continue as planned below.

17 minutes: Tell students to read chapters 5-7 of *Frankenstein* and to work with their dialogue journals for homework. Tell them that tomorrow they need to either bring to or send (if it is electronic) you what they have done so far with their journals because you will be giving them feedback on their entries over the weekend. Allow students to get a head start on this by having them read *Frankenstein* silently for the rest of class.

Day 5 (Friday)

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping issues, take dialogue journal entries.

15 minutes: Tell class that instead of a quiz today, all they have to do is write half a page on either

something that struck them as interesting or something that confused them about the reading from last night. Whatever it is must have taken place in the chapters assigned for last night in order to receive credit. After saying this, let them write their papers.

10 minutes: Have students get into groups of four or five to discuss what they wrote about. Have them come up with two or three things that either interested or confused them as a group. Also encourage them to ask questions of one another regarding what they wrote.

5 minutes: Ask one person from each group to give you one of the confusing or interesting ideas they mentioned in group discussion. It could also be something about which they had a question. Write these terms on different areas of the white board.

5 minutes: Explain to students the idea of a chalk talk. Tell students that they will silently go up to the board one at a time and make connections or ask questions about the various terms on the board, either by adding terms themselves or drawing lines between terms to illustrate what connections they are trying to talk about or question. Demonstrate by making a connection yourself to start it off.

20 minutes: Oversee the class as they conduct their chalk talk one at a time. Give guidance at times if they still do not understand or become confused. Make a few connections yourself every once in a while to keep the chalk talk moving along.

20 minutes: Look over the chalk talk as a class and discuss it. Attempt to clarify any confusing concepts or ideas.

12 minutes: Allow students to read silently. Before doing so, tell them the next five chapters (8-12) of *Frankenstein* are due by Monday, and also they should be making entries to put in their dialogue journals once they get them back. If they have not already given or sent me the entries they have already made for their journals, they must do so as soon as possible. Also, as they will finally be encountering the creature in *Frankenstein*, encourage them to discuss in their journals human traits the monster does or does not show through his actions. Ask them to also return to the list we made as a class at the beginning of the week, as well as add to it if they figure out any traits we may have left off.

Day 6 (Monday)

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping issues, give or send back dialogue journal entries with instructor's comments on them.

4 minutes: Administer reading quiz asking the following questions:

1. The narrator changes during these chapters. Which character begins narrating?
2. What does the creature gain from the DeLacey family?

*Questions adapted from Mayer, L. R., *A Teacher's Guide to the Signet Classics Edition of Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*. 2009.

1 minute: Quickly go over answers after taking quizzes up.

5 minutes: Explain to students the concept of a fishbowl discussion by telling them that there will be a three person conversation going on in the middle of the room while others listen over the reading from last night. Students on the outside of the circle will politely tap one of the three on the shoulder to switch places with them. Students are only to do this when they have something to contribute to the discussion and the conversation in the middle of the room has slowed down. Guide students in setting up desks so that three are in the middle and the rest are in a circle around them.

10 minutes: Have students figure out topics and questions they might want to address in the discussion. Tell them that these questions should be similar to the ones that we have been using in other class activities.

25 minutes: Conduct fishbowl discussion. Have three students begin and have others switch out by politely tapping the current participants on the shoulder. Continue to give guidance on how you want the process to go as they are doing it.

40 minutes: Have students get into groups of four or five. Discuss the concept of criteria with students. Relate it back to the earlier exercises when they picked traits and issues relevant to being considered human, only this time they will be coming up with rules and not just possibilities. Hand out the following worksheet concerning how to come up with a set of criteria for what makes a good science fiction movie and go over it with them (they'll probably enjoy something a bit removed from *Frankenstein* for a change).

What Makes for a Good Science Fiction Movie?

Science fiction movies are everywhere these days. We might not all like them, but hopefully for most of you there has been at least one science fiction movie you've seen that's interested you. Even among those who love science fiction movies, there are bound to be disagreements concerning which movies are good, which are bad, and which are mediocre. Today your task will be to think about science fiction movies and decide what makes certain science fiction movies good and others fit for the dollar bin at Block Buster.

This task will be similar to the introductory activity for this course in that you will be exploring issues relevant to a certain topic. However, now I am asking you to be a little stronger with your assertions. I want you to establish rules or criteria for what makes a science fiction movie good. That is, I want you to decide on certain traits a science fiction movie must have in order to be considered good. To do this, think of examples from real movies you have seen.

(Note: If you are completely unfamiliar with science fiction movies, you may pick another genre. However, as *Frankenstein* is a work of science fiction and horror, I would prefer for you to stick with these kinds of movies if you are familiar with them).

*Adapted from Smagorinsky, P., *Teaching English by Design*, 2008.

2 minutes: Tell students to wrap up what they are doing and save the materials for tomorrow. They can turn them in for safe keeping if they want. Remind them the next three chapters (13-15) of *Frankenstein* are due for tomorrow and that they must keep going with their dialogue journals.

Day 7 (Tuesday)

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping issues.

5 minutes: Tell students that instead of a quiz today, they will be meeting with classmates from dialogue journal groups other than their own to further discuss the topics they wrote about in their journals last night. Ask each dialogue journal group to stand up. Once they do, number them off one through five (if there are that many). If there are two in a group, number them off one-two, and when the next group stands up, start numbering at three. This process assures that most students are not grouped with people from their own dialogue journal group. Get students into groups according to these numbers so they can discuss with others what their own dialogue journal group has been talking about.

5 minutes: Tell students that during the discussion they are about to have, they should write down the issue that they bring up in the discussion and one issue that another group member brings up in the discussion. Tell them they will turn it in to the instructor at the end of the 20 minute period they will have for this discussion and that it will take the place of their quiz for the day.

20 minutes: Have students discuss in groups. Take up papers at end of 20 minute period.

30 minutes: Get students back into the groups they were in yesterday for the science fiction activity. Tell them to either get from the instructor or retrieve from their backpacks the criteria for good science fiction movies (or another genre) that they previously came up with. After reviewing what criteria are, pass out and review the following handout, going over the definitions of each term and the examples of each. Come up with examples, contrasting examples, and warrants for the second criterion as a class:

In addition to criteria (covered in previous classes), an extended definition also includes these main traits:

- examples that illustrate each criterion
- contrasting examples that provide an illustration of something that superficially appears to meet the criterion but falls short in some critical way.
- warrants that explain how the examples illustrate the criteria and how the contrasting examples fall short

In your group, you will look at some of the criteria you have created for defining what a good science fiction movie is and try to develop examples, counterexamples, and warrants for each of them. Here is a basic example to get you started:

A student is a good student if all of the following criteria are met:

Criterion 1: That student must push himself or herself to learn from the tasks he or she is given.

Example: Bobby must read a scene from *The Tempest* for homework. Though it is a daunting task, he reads through it as best he can. He consults some secondary sources to figure out some concepts he doesn't quite understand, but ultimately he tries to understand the material itself through careful reading and study.

Warrant: Because Bobby does his homework in a way that challenges him before simply looking up things he doesn't understand, Bobby pushes himself while working on his homework.

Contrasting Example: Andy must read a scene from *Macbeth* for homework. He reads two pages of the play before looking it up on Wikipedia and reading a summary of the scene. After doing so, he thinks he understands it enough to get by in class tomorrow, so he decides to play World of Warcraft for the rest of the night.

Warrant: While Andy did attempt the homework, he gave up after not too long. Owing to the fact that he put in little effort, Andy did not really push himself on this assignment.

Below is another one of my criteria for being a good student. Let's see if we can fill in the rest of the spaces as a class. Fill in the blanks as we decide on good ones together:

Criterion 2: A student does at least one nice thing for a classmate once a day.

Example:

Warrant:

Contrasting example:

Warrant:

Now, in your groups, go through this process for the criteria you have come up with for what makes a science fiction movie a good one.

*Adapted from Smagorinsky, P., *Teaching English by Design*, 2008 and Smagorinsky, P., Johannessen, L.R., Kahn, E.A., & McCann, T.M., *The Dynamics of Writing Instruction: A Structured Process Approach for Middle and High School*, 2008.

25 minutes: Allow groups to analyze their criteria and come up with their own examples, contrasting examples, and warrants. Groups may ask questions of the instructor if they wish.

2 minutes: Tell students to turn in what they have worked on so far. You will look over what they have and give constructive feedback outside of class and give it back to them tomorrow. It will not be graded. Homework is, as usual, to make an entry in their dialogue journals and to read the next three chapters (16-18) of *Frankenstein*.

Day 8 (Wednesday)

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping issues

4 minutes: Administer short quiz with the following questions:

1. What is the motivation behind the creature's vow of "eternal hatred and vengeance to all mankind?"
2. What does the creature demand of Victor?

*Questions adapted from Mayer, L. R., *A Teacher's Guide to the Signet Classics Edition of Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*. 2009.

1 minute: Quickly go over answers after taking quiz up.

5 minutes: Tell students we are going to have a discussion activity about last night's reading. Give them a choice between either another fishbowl or another chalk talk. Let students vote on which they want.

30 minutes: Monitor discussion. If it is a chalk talk, limit writing to 15 minutes so that the other

15 minutes can be used to discuss what was written on the board as a class.

15 minutes: Get students back into their science fiction activity groups. Give back their work from the other day with the instructor's comments on it. Allow students to read over and discuss the comments. Go around to the groups and answer any misunderstandings they might have about comments.

10 minutes: Tell groups that they are going to take what they have outlined and, after making any changes necessary based on the comments, are going to write an extended definition using the criteria, etc. they developed. Disperse and go over the following handout to suggest a structure for them to work from:

First paragraph: introduction. Introduce the concept/problem, explaining why it is important to define the concept or why it is difficult in some cases to define the concept.

Second paragraph: first criterion.

- Explain the criterion as clearly as possible
- Give an example that fulfills the criterion
- Provide a warrant explaining how the example fulfills the criterion
- Give a contrasting example
- Provide a warrant explaining how the contrasting example clarifies the limits of the criterion

Each subsequent body paragraph. Explain, illustrate, and warrant each additional criterion.

Final paragraph: conclusion

*Adapted from Smagorinsky, P., Johannessen, L.R., Kahn, E.A., & McCann, T.M., *The Dynamics of Writing Instruction: A Structured Process Approach for Middle and High School*, 2008.

20 minutes: Allow students to work on drafting their group essays.

2 minutes: Tell students to turn in what they have to you. The papers will be passed back out to them tomorrow so they can continue working on them. Homework is next three chapters (19-21) of *Frankenstein* and dialogue journals.

Day 9 (Thursday)

3 minutes: Attendance; housekeeping issues

4 minutes: Give short quiz with the following questions:

1. What event does Victor remember from his childhood?
2. Name one reason Victor gives concerning why he changes his mind about creating a companion for the creature.
3. Who is Mr. Kerwin?

*Questions adapted from Mayer, L. R., *A Teacher's Guide to the Signet Classics Edition of Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*. 2009.

1 minute: Quickly go over answers after taking quizzes up.

30 minutes: Conduct either fishbowl or chalk talk on *Frankenstein*, whichever one was not chosen by the class yesterday.

45 minutes: Groups work on their extended definition essays on science fiction movies.

7 minutes: Have students finish up what they are working on and hand it in to me. Tell them you will give it back tomorrow. Tell them to read the last three chapters (22-24) of *Frankenstein* and to keep going with their dialogue journals. Also tell them that you will be taking up their dialogue journals to take note of their progress on them, so they either need to bring it to class or send it to you electronically by tomorrow.

Day 10 (Friday)

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping issues, take up journals, announce no quiz today!

30 minutes: Have an end-of-novel discussion about *Frankenstein* as a class. Discuss the ending and ask questions about the creature in relation to the list of issues related to humanity we made at the beginning of the unit. Which ones are relevant to discussing the creature and his actions?

5 minutes: Have students get into their essay groups. Hand them an essay from a different group. Tell them to give that group feedback on their essay. Also pass out the following prompt to guide their comments:

Feedback

Give feedback to the essay you've received by writing in the margins of the paper. Let the following questions guide you as you review the paper.

1. Is each criterion clearly worded so that you understand what is and is not included in the definition?
2. Is each criterion illustrated by an example that is clearly explained and convincingly tied to the criterion by means of a warrant?
3. Is each criterion illustrated by a contrasting example that is clearly explained and convincingly tied to the criterion by means of a warrant?

*Adapted from Smagorinsky, P. *Teaching English by Design*, 2008.

20 minutes: Groups provide the papers they have been given with feedback using the handout.

10 minutes: Groups retrieve their original paper from whichever other group gave it feedback. Tell students they will have time on Monday to revise it before you look at it and give revisions.

20 minutes: Hand out and go over tombstone assignment and rubric. Tell them it will be due one week from today and that they will be working on it individually. Explain that while this assignment will require some out-of-the-box thinking, the assignments we have been doing all along have prepared them of this activity. It will ultimately give them a chance to use the creature to explore which traits a creature must possess – or criteria it must satisfy - to be considered human.

2 minutes: Tell them their homework is to be thinking about how to improve their group essays (communicate with group members if necessary), begin thinking about/working on their tombstone assignments, and to make entries for their dialogue journals.

Day 11 (Monday)

3 minutes: Attendance; Housekeeping issues; return dialogue journals with comments.

30 minutes: Allow students to finish their group essays. Groups turn in their essays at the end of this 30 minute period.

5 minutes: Tell students that you will read them and make comments, hopefully having the papers back to them within two days. Reassure them that it will not be graded for anything but

participation.

20 minutes: Allow class to get into pairs and discuss what ideas they came up with for their tombstone project over the weekend. Remind them that they are not working together on the project, but only bouncing ideas off of one another. Suggest that they use the rubric to analyze each other's ideas to see if they are working toward doing what they have to in order to get a good grade.

30 minutes: Assign *Tempest* roles to students and read Act I aloud. Stop sporadically to ask questions and make sure everyone understands what is going on. Answer their questions.

2 minutes: Homework is tombstone activity and dialogue journal entries. Tell students to bring the materials for their tombstone activity tomorrow if they want to because there will be some free time in class to work on it.

Day 12 (Tuesday)

3 minutes: Attendance; housekeeping issues

10 minutes: Review the events of Act I of *The Tempest* as a class

50 minutes: Read Acts 2-3 of *The Tempest* as a class, having different students read aloud the lines of the characters. Stop sporadically to make sure everyone understands what is happening.

25 minutes: Free time to work on tombstone activity. You will go around to each student and ask them what their plans are for the project and make sure they are on track.

2 minutes: Tell students to continue making entries in their dialogue journals and working on their tombstone project.

Day 13 (Wednesday)

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping issues, give back copies of group essays to everyone in group (though there was only one turned in per group, you should make copies of the group essays with his or hers comments on them so everyone in each group may have a copy).

5 minutes: Have students get into groups of four or five. Disperse the handout below describing what they will be doing. Explain the handout and ask students if they have any questions. Pass out butcher paper and other art supplies

By this point in reading *The Tempest*, you should have a good idea of who the characters are

and what some of their characteristics are. For the first half of class today, I want your group to pick a character from the play and create a body biography – a visual and written portrait illustrating aspects of the character’s life within the play. It should:

- review significant events, choices, and changes involving the character up till this point in the play
- comment on the “humanity,” or lack thereof, of the character by emphasizing the traits that make him/her/it who he/she/it is.
- promote discussion of the character

The following should be included on the body biographies:

- review significant events in the play
- visual symbols
- an original text (write something new about the character or play)
- the character’s most important lines in the play so far
- predictions for what will happen to the character in the remaining two acts.

*Adapted from Smagorinsky, P. *Teaching English by Design*. 2008.

37 minutes: Allow groups to work on their body biographies. Move from group to group, making suggestions and answering questions while doing so.

15 minutes: Allow each group to briefly present its body biography to the class.

28 minutes: Read Act 4 and half of Act 5 of *The Tempest* by having different students read the lines of each character. Stop sporadically to make sure everyone understands what is going on.

2 minutes: Remind students to make entries in their dialogue journals and work on their tombstone activities. Also tell them to look over the comments you made on their extended definition essays, and that next week they will have to each write one individually during the week and turn it in at the end of the unit for a grade.

Day 14 (Thursday)

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping issues

20 minutes: Finish *The Tempest* as a class, having different students read the lines for each

character. Stop sporadically to make sure everyone understands what is happening.

10 minutes: Review the events of the last two acts of the play and how they tied back to earlier events. Ask students if they have any questions or comments on the play as a whole. Tackle a few of the questions that come up as a class.

5 minutes: Get students back into the groups they were in for their body biographies. Tell students to discuss the characteristics they attributed to the characters yesterday, as well as the predictions they made for them. Ask: Did the character you picked display any traits in the last acts of the play that contradicted the characterization of them you came up with after Acts 1-3? Did your predictions come true?

15 minutes: Allow groups to discuss this and make changes to their body biographies that reflect any changes in character and the accuracy of their predictions.

37 minutes: Tell students that tombstone projects are due tomorrow and, of course, they must make entries in their dialogue journals. Also, tell them to send you new entries from their journals so that he or she can check their progress and comment on them. Then, give free time to work on their tombstone activity. Remind them that this is their last chance for them to ask you questions or get input from their classmates.

Day 15 (Friday)

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping issues; take from students their new entries for their dialogue journals to comment on.

20 minutes: Students set up their tombstones around the room.

15 minutes: Students take time to appreciate each other's work by walking around the room and looking at each other's projects.

5 minutes: Tell students that they will now get to begin watching the movie *Forbidden Planet*, and that it is loosely based on *The Tempest*. Also inform students that they should take notes on the characters in the play, specifically any non-human characters who display human characteristics and/or human characters who display what they might consider non-human characteristics. These notes are going to be important to them because they will need them next week to write their extended definition essays on what it is to be human.

46 minutes: Begin watching *Forbidden Planet*.

1 minute: Tell students to keep going with their dialogue journals.

Day 16 (Monday)

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping issues, give back journal entries with comments on them.

52 minutes: Finish watching *Forbidden Planet*.

20 minutes: Discuss *Forbidden Planet* as a class. Ask if they liked the film and if they were able to tell clearly that it was based on *The Tempest*. Prompt students to share anything interesting or important they noticed while taking notes.

13 minutes: Introduce assignment handout and rubric for the culminating assignment of writing an extended definition essay on what it means to be human (see Goals and Rubrics section). Go over these sheets with them. Clear up any confusion about what they need to do. Tell them it is due on Friday, but they will be working on it both inside and outside of class.

2 minutes: Tell them to begin thinking about their essays. Also remind them to keep going with their dialogue journals. They are also due on Friday.

Day 17 (Tuesday)

3 minutes: Attendance; housekeeping issues

85 minutes: Free time to review materials (texts, earlier essays, etc.) and work on extended definition essays. Tell students to have working drafts of their essays by tomorrow so that a peer-review process can take place.

2 minutes: Homework is to work on essays and dialogue journals.

Day 18 (Wednesday)

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping issues

15 minutes: Give students this time to finish up their drafts of their extended definitions on being human.

5 minutes: Have students get into groups of four. Tell them they will be editing each other's drafts. Disperse and briefly go over the handout below with questions to guide them as they edit each other's papers.

1. Does the introduction suggest a set of criteria for defining what it means to be human? Are they clearly distinguishable from one another?

2. For each criterion listed in the introduction, are there examples and contrasting examples provided to clarify the criterion?
3. Are all of the examples and contrasting examples relevant ones from the texts we have studied in this unit?
4. Are any of the criteria, examples, or contrasting examples hard to understand? Why?
5. Are there any suggestions you can make to improve any of the confusing elements of this paper?
6. Are there warrants present for each example and contrasting example? If not, can you suggest some possible ones?
7. Does the paper come to a clear and sensible conclusion?
8. Any other suggestions for the writer?

*Adapted from Smagorinsky, P., Johannessen, L.R., Kahn, E.A., & McCann, T.M., *The Dynamics of Writing Instruction: A Structured Process Approach for Middle and High School*, 2008

60 minutes: Students pass papers around group and give feedback to the other three drafts in rotation using the questions on the above handout as a guide.

5 minutes: Students get back their papers with feedback. Instruct them to briefly go through the comments about their paper and ask the authors of those comments about them if any are confusing.

2 minutes: Tell students to look over comments made about their papers more in-depth and to be finishing up their dialogue journals.

Day 19 (Thursday)

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping issues.

80 minutes: Students work on their essays individually in class. It is their last chance for them to ask you questions or get feedback of any kind. If students finish with their new drafts, then they can either go to the computer lab to begin typing up their final drafts or they can begin handwriting final drafts as neatly as they can.

7 minutes: Tell students that their homework is to finalize their dialogue journals and either type

or write with nice handwriting the final drafts of their extended definition essays. Everything is due at the beginning of class tomorrow. Tackle any last minute concerns or questions they might have.

Day 20 (Friday)

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping issues

10 minutes: Students turn in their dialogue journals and extended definition essays on what it means to be human.

25 minutes: Students take end-of-unit survey so that you get feedback on how they liked the unit, what they did not like about it, etc. Survey is below:

Unit: What It Means to be Human

Assignment: Opinionnaire

Please answer the following questions with as much depth as possible. You may use a separate piece of paper if necessary. I would definitely appreciate responses that are honest yet civil.

1. Were *Frankenstein* and *The Tempest* conducive to the goals of the unit? Did you enjoy reading them?
2. Were the dialogue journals useful? Do you feel that you were adequately taught how to keep one? Should I use them again for this unit or other ones?
3. Were the discussion activities in class (e.g. fishbowl, chalk talk) sufficient for covering the material? Did you feel like you were missing something without more lecture?
4. Did you learn anything from writing your extended definition essays that you think will benefit you in the future? Do you feel you were adequately taught how to write one? Please explain and let me know if you have any suggestions for the next time I do this.
5. Was the tombstone activity useful? Do you feel you were given enough feedback and guidance while you were working on it? Did you like the freedom to do what you wanted with it, or did you feel like there were not enough guidelines for the assignment?
6. What would you recommend I do the same if I were to teach this unit again with other students?
7. What should I do differently?
8. Do you have any suggestions for the way we learn about language, literature, and writing for the rest of the year?

*Adapted from Smagorinsky, *Teaching English by Design*, 2008.

20 minutes: Have a group discussion about the survey. Ask students if they are willing to share some of their thoughts from the survey. Also ask during the course of discussion if there is any other kind of feedback they would like to give me that does not involve profanity. Ask them to create a number nine at the bottom of their surveys and add it if they do.

5 minutes: Thank students for working hard this unit. They can take the rest of class as a study hall or play one of the literature games found in the classroom (assuming classroom has any). A new unit will start on Monday.

27 minutes: Study hall/free time as a reward for all of their hard work this unit.

Goals and Rubrics

Overall Unit Rubric

Daily Participation (e.g. quizzes, class activities, etc.)	20%
Dialogue Journal	25%
Tombstone Activity	25%
Extended Definition Essay On What It Means to Be Human	30%

Because the culminating goal of this unit is to have students write an extended definition essay on what it is to be human, this assignment will count for most of their final grade. Dialogue journals and the tombstone activity, both assignments designed to help student acquire the skills to achieve this end, both count a significant and equal amount. Finally, because daily student participation is pivotal for their educational development, it will count for a significant part of the unit grade as well.

Dialogue Journal (25% of unit grade)

Throughout our unit on “What It Means to Be Human,” you will work with at least one other person in maintaining a dialogue journal to discuss and reflect upon issues discussed in class. Your dialogue journal will be like a regular journal in that you will write informally about your thoughts and emotions regarding class material and activities. However, it will be different in that you will also be responding to your fellow journalists’ thoughts and emotions on these matters. Think of this assignment as having an informal yet serious discussion of class material in written form; you will respond back and forth to each other via journal entries in which you both reflect on what others have said and contribute your own original thoughts to further the discussion. When creating these responses, please remember:

- It is not necessary for your journal to follow textbook English conventions. Focus on the substance of the thoughts presented rather than the form they take.
- Do not simply recap the information discussed in class. Your discussion should go beyond simple summary and should include personal interaction with the material. Question it. Analyze it. There should be evidence that you are putting original thought into your responses and learning something in the process.
- Reflection on personal issues that you feel relate to what we are learning in the literature is welcome but not required.
- Every member of your journal group should participate equally in the discussion.
- *I am required to share thoughts or suggestions of violence, suicide, substance abuse, family abuse, or other harmful behavior with the school counselors.*

Finally, feel free to get creative with how you present your dialogue journal. Responses to one another could be compiled in a traditional journal or in email format. Discussion on Facebook or Twitter may be included as well, but entries must still contribute intellectually to the issues and not go off topic. If you desire to use a format other than those just discussed, please just run it by me before you start creating entries. Barring some kind of impropriety, it should be approved. These dialogue journals will be checked for progress sporadically throughout the semester for me to check your progress. They will also be turned in at the end of the unit along with your essays. As this will be the last day of the unit, **no late work will be accepted.**

*Adapted from Smagorinsky, *Teaching English by Design*, 2008.

Grading Rubric: Dialogue Journal

Students receiving an “A” will:

- participate approximately the same amount in creating journal entries as other journalists creating the dialogue journal
- write entries pertinent to the material being discussed
- include both responses to the thoughts of others and add their own insights regarding topics **in every journal entry**. The one exception would be if a student were the first to write a journal entry on a given topic, in which case he or she would only include original insights.

Students receiving a “B” will:

- participate approximately the same amount in creating journal entries as other journalists creating the dialogue journal
- write all entries pertinent to the material being discussed
- include both responses to the thoughts of others and add their own insights regarding topics in **a significant amount of journal entries, but not all**. The one exception would be if a student were the first to write a journal entry on a given topic, in which case he or she would only include original insights.

Students receiving a “C” will:

- participate less than other journalists in their group, but still enough to show that they consistently interacted with them in discussing the topics.
- make most entries pertinent to the material being discussed
- include both responses to the thoughts of others and add their own insights regarding topics **in at least half of the entries**. The one exception would be if a student were the first to write a journal entry on a given topic, in which case he or she would only include original insights.

Students receiving a “D” will:

- participate very little in comparison to the other journalists in their group.
- write at least some entries pertinent to the material being discussed
- include little to no responses to the thoughts of others and very limited insights of their own in their responses.

No student will receive an “F” on this assignment unless they either abstain from doing it or write all entries on issues that have nothing to do with class.

Extended Definition Essay (30% of final grade)

Through our readings this unit, we have discussed in depth the meaning of being human. We have discovered that, at least for the purposes of literature, being human involves much more than the biological differences we have from other species. Indeed, to many people, some of the otherworldly characters in the works we have read or viewed seem more human than the men and women in them. For this assignment, you will write a 500 word minimum essay on what main characteristics (no more than three) you consider most important for being considered a part of the human race. In your essay, please include the following:

- a clear introduction with a set of characteristics (like criteria) that define what being human is.
- for each characteristic, an example of when a character from either *Frankenstein*, *The Tempest*, or *Forbidden Planet* embodies that characteristic
- for each characteristic, a contrasting example of when a character from the aforementioned literary works does not quite embody that characteristic
- warrants for each example and contrasting example clearly explaining why the characteristic is or is not present
- a clear organization in addition to the introduction (separate paragraphs, conclusion, etc.) that successfully develops your discussion of these characteristics and examples

*Adapted from Smagorinsky, *Teaching English by Design*

Extended Definition Essay Rubric

“A” papers will:

- be at least 500 words in length and turned in on time
- have an effective introduction that clearly presents two-three characteristics that help define what it is to be human and how they do so
- have strong organization which advances the discussion of the characteristics in a clear, logical manner
- support these characteristics by presenting strong examples of situations from *Frankenstein*, *The Tempest*, or *Forbidden Planet* where characters embody these traits
- also present strong contrasting examples of situations from *Frankenstein*, *The Tempest*, or *Forbidden Planet* where characters do not quite embody these traits
- provide strong and clear warrants for each example of characters embodying or not embodying these characteristics that explain why the characteristics are or are not present
- have a very limited amount of errors with regard to grammar, punctuation, and spelling

“B” papers will:

- be at least 500 words in length and turned in on time
- have an effective introduction that clearly presents two-three characteristics that help define what it is to be human, but will have less clear explanations of how these characteristics do so
- have strong organization which advances the discussion of the characteristics in a clear, logical manner
- support these characteristics by presenting decent examples of situations from *Frankenstein*, *The Tempest*, or *Forbidden Planet* where characters embody or do not embody these traits
- also present decent examples of situations from *Frankenstein*, *The Tempest*, or *Forbidden Planet* where characters do not embody these traits
- provide strong and clear warrants for each example of characters embodying or not embodying these characteristics that explain why the characteristics are or are not present
- have a very limited amount of errors with regard to grammar, punctuation, and spelling

“C” papers will:

- be at least 500 words in length and turned in on time
- have a decent, though less-focused introduction that presents two or three characteristics that help define what it is to be human, but also have little explanation of why these characteristics do so
- have a decent overall organization that occasionally goes off course
- support these characteristics by presenting somewhat relevant examples of situations from *Frankenstein*, *The Tempest*, or *Forbidden Planet* where characters embody these traits

- also present somewhat relevant examples of situations from *Frankenstein*, *The Tempest*, or *Forbidden Planet* where characters do not embody these traits
- provide somewhat clear warrants for each example of characters embodying or not embodying these characteristics that explain why the characteristics are or are not present
- have a very limited amount of errors with regard to grammar, punctuation, and spelling

“D” papers will:

- be at least 500 words in length and turned in on time
- have a weak introduction that presents two- three characteristics that help define what it is to be human but fails to explain why they do so
- have weak organization that often goes off topic and fails to further discussion of the characteristics presented in the introduction
- support these characteristics by presenting weak examples of situations from *Frankenstein*, *The Tempest*, or *Forbidden Planet* where characters embody these traits
- offer few or no examples of situations from *Frankenstein*, *The Tempest*, or *Forbidden Planet* where characters do not embody these traits
- Have very weak or no warrants for the examples of characteristics of humanity and inhumanity being presented
- have an amount of errors with regard to grammar, punctuation, and spelling that significantly impairs the reader’s ability to understand the paper

“F” papers will be severely deficient in most or all of the following areas: timeliness of submission, content, organization, textual evidence, and grammar/spelling issues

Tombstone Activity (25% of final grade)

In *Frankenstein*, we see an unfortunate creature who wanted nothing more than to join the human race meet his end before he could gain acceptance. Feeling even sorer for the creature during this reading of the novel than in my previous ones, I have decided to assign you the task of sending him off in a proper fashion. For this assignment, you will design a tombstone for Frankenstein's monster. It should include the following:

- the creature's name
- the dates of his birth and death
- an epitaph summing up his "human" life

As much of this information is not clearly stated in the novel, these elements give you ample opportunity to creatively express the different ways in which the creature could be considered human. You can even use the shape of the tombstone itself to convey meaning, so long as it is appropriate (that goes for everything else, actually). However, every aspect of the tombstone should work together to express whatever humanity you feel was present in the creature during his lifetime.

If you feel that certain elements of your gravestone are not self-explanatory with regard to how it expresses the creature's humanity, please include a written explanation of your work and what you are getting at with it. This explanation should be no longer than a page, and it should do no more than explain any potential confusion you anticipate the viewers of your work might have when first viewing it.

*Adapted from assignment from Jerry Smith of Salem High School

Tombstone Activity Rubric

“A” Projects will have:

- the necessary elements of a name, years lived, and epitaph on the tombstone
- every aspect of the tombstone, from its shape to the epitaph, clearly working toward showcasing the creature’s humanity
- a great amount of creativity and original thinking on the part of its creator
- include written clarification of the significance of any elements on the tombstone that could potentially confuse those who view it
- been turned in on time

“B” projects will have:

- the necessary elements of a name, years lived, and epitaph on the tombstone
- every aspect of the tombstone working toward showcasing the creature’s humanity, though it may be unclear as to how one or two of them do so
- a considerable amount of creativity and original thinking on the part of its creator
- include written clarification of the significance of any elements on the tombstone that could potentially confuse those who view it, but fails to make a convincing case for one or two details
- been turned in on time

“C” projects will have:

- the necessary elements of a name, years lived, and epitaph on the tombstone
- most aspects of the tombstone working toward showcasing the creature’s humanity, but also some that obviously do not contribute to this task
- only some creative thinking put into the making of it
- fail to include written clarification of the significance of elements on the tombstone that would clearly confuse its viewers
- been turned in on time

“D” projects will have:

- only some of the necessary elements of a name, years lived, and epitaph on the tombstone
- very few aspects of the tombstone working toward showcasing the creature’s humanity
- show that little creative effort was put into the making of it
- include no written clarification at all attempting to explain why the obviously confusing project would have anything to do with showcasing the creature’s human characteristics
- been turned in on time

“F” projects will have shown to be a failure in all or most of the following categories: necessary elements, showcasing the creature’s humanity creative effort, written clarification, and timeliness of admission.

Links to Written Materials

Online Version of *The Tempest*:

<http://shakespeare.mit.edu/tempest/full.html>

Online version of *Frankenstein*:

<http://www.literature.org/authors/shelley-mary/frankenstein/>

Online Summary of *Forbidden Planet*:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forbidden_Planet