**Module 2 – Short Story Interpretation**

Although part of the role of storytelling is to entertain, a greater purpose of it is to reveal perspectives on reality. We tell and read stories to learn about ourselves, other people, and the world around us. Thus, it is important to be able to interpret short stories to determine what an author is attempting to teach or tell us.

Using **one** of the stories we read in class, you are to present and defend your interpretation. To write a successful and insightful interpretation, it is best to focus on particular features of the story (we’ll discuss these in class) and look for patterns within the writing. To determine your angle, you will find some aspect or part of the story you find most interesting or worth discussing. Your thesis should present an argument of what the short story reveals or teaches based upon those features or patterns. Interpretations of these stories can vary greatly; therefore, you want to be able to support your interpretation with specific evidence to ensure your credibility.

To write your interpretation, you will need the following:

1. An angle (point of view) expressed as a thesis about meaning
2. A set of points that develop your angle
3. Evidence from the story to back up each point.

To generate ideas for the interpretation, pay close attention to your first impressions of the story and practice writing a few close readings of significant passages. Keep your audience in mind when writing the essay – remember that they have read the short stories, too, so you need not focus on extensive plot summary. Organize your essay around the set of points you develop, not the plot or author’s structure; ensure that paragraphs are organized in a way to achieve clarity and flow. Don’t forget to cite all quotations and paraphrases per MLA style. Since your own view is critical to an interpretation, please use only your voice and the original story in the paper – *no outside interpretation, critical essays, etc. should be used.*

**Length Requirement:** 3-5 pages, double-spaced, 12 pt. font, 1” margins

**Total:** 100 points