**Paper 1: Literary Analysis**

*Assignment*

This first paper will utilize the close reading skills and writing skills that you learned in the first half of this course. In this 4-5 page paper, you must answer one of the following prompts about short stories or poems we have read in class. No matter which option you pick, your essay must have an argumentative and interpretative thesis and must back up that thesis with specific evidence from the text. Thus, you are not performing a summary of the piece but exploring minute elements of the text and explaining their significance in the larger work. Assume that your reader has read the story and refrain from merely telling me what the story is about.

This paper is not an opinion piece. Refrain from evaluating the story (telling me whether it is good or bad), and instead focus on answering why and how the story works.

Prompts:

1. A lot of the texts we have read address the motif of masculinity: what being a man means, how to be a man, what men should and should not do. Explore this motif in one of the following works, describing what this text assumes the reader knows about men and what a man should actually be: “Puppy,” “Good People,” “The Lady with the Dog,” “The Flea,” “To His Coy Mistress.”
2. Does “Bartleby, the Scrivener” critique capitalism and is that critique successful? Consider the type of work Bartleby performs, the narrator’s viewpoint on work, and the subtitle, “A Story of Wall Street.”
3. Discuss which mother we are meant to sympathize more with in “Puppy.” Consider how the story is structured, what information we find out from whom, and how the story begins and ends.
4. Compare ee cummings and Walt Whitman’s different views on what America is and should be. Compare the way they structure their poem, the figurative language they use, and the
5. Compare the setting in “Lady with the Dog” and “Cask of Amontillado.” Consider not only the authors’ descriptive techniques but also the way the authors use setting to shape plot, point of view, and character.
6. Pick a topic and get it approved by me! You can write about anything that interests you in these stories.

*Format*

Your essay must be double-spaced in MLA format with 1-inch margins, 12pt. Times New Roman font.

*Due Dates*

A **full rough draft** is due on **Friday, October 4th**. You will need to bring 1 copy to class for a workshop.

You must meet with me during the week of **October 7th** to discuss your draft with me. Please sign up for a 10 minute time slot. Meeting with me is a necessary part of this paper; failure to do so will harm your grade. If you can’t meet with me during my office hours, please arrange an alternative time with me.

The **final paper** is due on **Friday, October 11th**. The paper must be turned into the ICON dropbox before class begins.