

## EXPLORING THEMES AND OTHER ELEMENTS IN SHORT STORIES

This short-story course is for readers who are intrigued by the complex layers it takes to bring a short story to life. Readers who like to open-mindedly engage in discussions about what they have read. We will focus on short stories by authors of various cultural backgrounds; and our sessions will be discussion-seminar-based. We will explore key elements in the short stories by examining them in the light of several literary criticisms such as social, psychological, political, thematic, and other contexts. We will explore the ways in which our own life experiences guide our interpretation and understanding of what we read and how our own ways of seeing the world, ourselves, and others can benefit from a close encounter with short stories. Writers to be covered include Nathaniel Hawthorne, Edwidge Danticat, John Updike, Jamaica Kincaid, James Baldwin, Shirley Jackson, William Faulkner, Alice Walker, Edgar Allan Poe, Kate Chopin, and Ernest Hemingway.

**All short stories are in public domain. I have included the links where you may download the full texts.**

### LINKS TO SHORT STORIES

Young Goodman Brown, Nathaniel Hawthorne: [http://www.columbia.edu/itc/english/f1124y-001/resources/Young\\_Goodman\\_Brown.pdf](http://www.columbia.edu/itc/english/f1124y-001/resources/Young_Goodman_Brown.pdf)

A & P, John Updike: [https://littletonpublicschools.net/sites/default/files/HHS-2015-Eng-10%20Honors%20Summer%20reading\\_1.pdf](https://littletonpublicschools.net/sites/default/files/HHS-2015-Eng-10%20Honors%20Summer%20reading_1.pdf)

The Tell-Tale Heart, Edgar Allan Poe: [https://americanenglish.state.gov/files/ae/resource\\_files/the\\_tell-tale\\_heart\\_0.pdf](https://americanenglish.state.gov/files/ae/resource_files/the_tell-tale_heart_0.pdf)

A Clean Well-Lighted Place, Ernest Hemingway: <https://www.wlps.org/view/2546.pdf>

Sonny's Blues: James Baldwin: <https://uwm.edu/cultures-communities/wp-content/uploads/sites/219/2018/01/SonnysBlues.Baldwin.pdf>

Girl, Jamaica Kincaid: <http://www.saginaw-twp.k12.mi.us/view/8490.pdf>

The Lottery, Shirley Jackson: [https://sites.middlebury.edu/individualandthesociety/files/2019/09/jackson\\_lottery.pdf](https://sites.middlebury.edu/individualandthesociety/files/2019/09/jackson_lottery.pdf)

Everyday Use, Alice Walker: [https://sites.middlebury.edu/individualandthesociety/files/2019/09/jackson\\_lottery.pdf](https://sites.middlebury.edu/individualandthesociety/files/2019/09/jackson_lottery.pdf)

A Rose For Emily, William Faulkner: <http://www.cje.ids.czest.pl/biblioteka/7117936-A-Rose-for-Emily.pdf>

The Storm, Kate Chopin: [https://www.lonestar.edu/departments/english/chopin\\_storm.pdf](https://www.lonestar.edu/departments/english/chopin_storm.pdf)

Seven, Edwidge Danticat: <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2001/10/01/seven>

### **Tentative Syllabus**

Session 1. Introduction. Read Updike

Session 2. Read Poe, Hemingway, and Kincaid

Session 3. Read Hawthorne

Session 4. Read Danticat

Session 5. Baldwin and Jackson

Session 6. Wrap-up celebration. Read Faulkner

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**Leader:** Dr. Gretna Wilkinson began her career as a missionary teacher in the jungles of her native Guyana. She has been featured in *The New York Times*, *NJ Star Ledger*, *Courier News* and others. She has published four chapbooks and a full-length collection, *Opening the Drawer*. Along with commendations for her teaching from the New Jersey Senate and State Assembly, and State Department of Education, she recently received the Claes Nobel Educator of Distinction Award.

**Fridays:** 10:00 am to noon, 6 weeks: February 26 through April 9 (no class on 4/2)

**Maximum:** 15