

Electronic Literature Review/Analysis

Assignment Description

Proposal memo due October 1st

Paper due October 8th

Purpose

To further our introduction to hypertext and new media literature, the midterm assignment for the course will be a review/analysis of a work of electronic literature. This will provide you with practice reviewing and analyzing texts while introducing you to a “new” kind of literary analysis, that includes an emphasis on visuals, design, movement, interactivity, and sound. We will be looking at examples of e-lit in class and discussing terms used to analyze print literature and terms that may need to be included to discuss electronic works. You will then choose a work from the *Electronic Literature Collection Volume 1* or *PoemsThatGo* website (or a work of your own choosing, approved by me) to review and analyze—be sure to choose something that you can comment on and are interested in. Proposal memos (1 page) for the paper are due October 1st, will be in memo format (discussed in class), and will include the work you would like to review/analyze, why you chose it, and what you might focus on in your paper.

Method

As with any work of literature, you will want to write about the themes, characterization, tone, setting, and narrative elements. You will also need to pay attention to not only visual and audio elements of the work, but reader interaction and how the media (form/technology) expresses and enhances the theme(s) and characters of the work. Describe the text to a reader who has never seen it. What does it look like? What colors are used? How does it require the reader to interact with it? What is the overall effect? Use sensory details and quote from the work to support your discussion. You may employ applicable terms from the collaborative list we will come up with and use for in-class group work. Not every piece, however, will have audio or interactivity for instance, although the lack of these may also be discussed. You may make personal connections to the work, commenting on your interest-level, why you chose this particular work, etc. In your paper I will also expect your opinion of whether or not you would consider this literature and comments on this new “genre” in general. Here, citations from Unit 1’s readings will be helpful.

Questions to consider: How does electronic literature differ from that of print? Do the visuals, movement, and audio count as “text”? How does the idea of medium as message fit into the work you are writing about? Does reading in an online environment mean the “end of books”?

Audience

Your instructor and your classmates. Someone unfamiliar with electronic literature and who has NOT seen/read the literature you are evaluating.

Length & Format

5-7 pages. STAPLED, double spaced, 12 pt. font, 1-inch margins, etc. As per MLA format, name and class information in the upper LEFT-hand corner OR a cover sheet. AND a fabulous title! You will need citations for the course readings and electronic literature itself (I will show you how to cite these in class). This assignment (including the proposal memo) is worth 30% of your final grade.