

Humanities 1301—Extra Credit Report

General Guidelines and Due Dates

If you wish to earn extra credit (up to ten points added to your midterm exam grade), you may write a three-page (or 1,000-word) report on one (but not both) of the following experiences with your classmates and me: a performance of *The Man Who Came to Dinner* at the Alley Theatre on Thursday, March 12th, or a guided tour of the John A. and Audrey Jones Beck Collection at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, on Saturday, April 4th.

The Alley Theatre production will last approximately two hours (I will provide more detailed information about the running time after the play opens), and the museum tour will last an hour and a half. The Alley Theatre production will cost you \$13.50 per ticket, and you will need to pay for tickets by noon on Thursday, February 12th. The Beck Collection tour, along with admission to the museum, will be free. You may bring a guest for either event. You will need to provide your own transportation to attend either experience, but I will help organize car pools.

The only way to earn extra credit is to attend one of these events on the dates and times listed above and to submit a report by 5:00 p.m. on the following dates: Wednesday March 25th (Alley Theatre report), or Monday, April 13th (Beck Collection report). *I will not accept late work.*

If you submit your work electronically, you must send it as an email attachment to the following address: jhamby@lee.edu. Regardless of how you submit your work, it is your responsibility to verify that I have received it. If you use a word processing application other than *Microsoft Word*, you will need to send your attachment as an RTF (Rich Text Format) file.

Format, Structural and Stylistic Considerations

Your report must be typed, double-spaced, using a standard 12-point font (such as Times New Roman or Cambria) and one-inch margins.

I have not supplied a sample student report for this assignment, but you should look carefully at how the other sample reports are organized and developed. They will also give you an idea of how to handle all aspects of form: header, heading, spacing, and margins.

Your report needs to be structured appropriately. You might use the opening paragraph to give an overview and background: introduce the experience and indicate what you got out of it. Then, construct body paragraphs that develop different aspects of the experience. In the closing paragraph expand upon the significance of the experience. Consider (but do not feel limited by) the following aspects in organizing your work:

- * Describe key aspects of the experience (where you went and what you did).
- * Comment on what you learned or interpret what you saw.
- * Assess or evaluate the experience (what you got out of it).

- * You might also discuss your expectations of the experience, particularly if they changed along the way.

Ultimately, you should strive to make the report your own, and let purpose guide the direction it takes.

Choose the appropriate verb tense. Use past tense to narrate what happened or to describe what you saw or did: *Last Saturday I toured the Museum of Fine Arts with my teacher and several classmates, and afterward we ate a delicious lunch at Cafe Express.* Use present tense to make analytical claims or to assess details (in works of art or a film): *Jim Love's sculpture Can Johnny Come Out and Play? resembles a giant rubber ball, and its companion piece, Jack, which is on view at the Menil Collection, looks, appropriately enough, like a giant toy jack.*

Use first person point of view (indicated by the pronoun *I*) for narrating your experience, and use third person (*viewers* or *audience*, for instance) for making objective assertions: *William Tucker's sculpture Demeter is an abstract work that challenges most viewers unless they know the story of Demeter (the Greek goddess of spring) and her daughter Persephone. In the play Tryst, the audience gains insight into way people lived in Edwardian England.*

Play titles and titles of artwork should be italicized, and all major words should be capitalized. I have reversed that convention in the above examples since I italicized the sample sentences in which titles appear. Also, give your paper a title that provides some insight into your experience, not just where you went but how you responded to going.

Information about the Class Trip to the Alley Theatre

On Thursday, March 12th, students from all of my classes will attend the Alley Theatre production of *The Man Who Came to Dinner*. The show begins at 7:30 p.m., and theatre staff will not seat late arrivals. Therefore, allow yourself plenty of time to get to the theatre. I encourage you to carpool with other students or, at the very least, to leave campus at the same time, forming a caravan into Houston. I plan to leave campus at 6:00 p.m.; if you wish to follow me, meet in front of Bonner Hall (in the parking lot between Bonner Hall and the Student Center). I will be driving a black Honda Passport.

If you would like to see the play just for the fun of it, without having to write an extra credit report, you are certainly welcome to do so.

Directions to the Alley Theatre from Lee College

Drive southeast on Lee Drive, and turn right (heading south) on **Business Highway 146** until it connects to **Highway 146 South** (past the traffic light, just this side of the Hartman Bridge). Cross the bridge and go *right* (heading *west*) on **Highway 225**. Drive several miles, and take the *westbound* exit onto the **610 South Loop** (you will exit from the *left* or inside lane). Continue traveling *west* on 610 for approximately one mile. Stay in the *next-to-the-right-hand* lane, and take the exit for **I-45 North** (immediately after the I-45 South exit). Stay on I-45 for several miles, past the exits for Highway 59 (watch closely to avoid exit-only lanes on the left and right). Exit **Houston Avenue / Memorial Drive (Exit 47-B)**,

and get in the right lane. Keep right as the road forks, and turn right at the traffic light onto **West Capitol Street**. The road curves to the right and becomes **Rusk Street**. After a block or two, look for entrances to the underground parking garages, preferably the first one on the left-hand side of the street). You will pay an attendant shortly after driving down the ramp. Once you park, make note of where your car is located (including the level), and look for signs to the Alley Theatre. If you park on street level, make note of the Alley Theatre address: 615 Texas Avenue.

Parking at the Alley Theatre

Event parking is \$7.00 for the Alley Theatre Garage (located directly behind the Alley) and the other Theatre District parking lots. The closest Theater District Garage is located across the street under Jones Plaza (see directions above). On-street parking in designated areas is free after 6:00 p.m. For additional information about the Alley Theatre (including directions from anywhere in Houston), visit the theatre website: <http://www.alleytheatre.org>.

Information About *The Man Who Came to Dinner*

The following information is quoted directly from the Alley website:

In this hilarious romp, Sheridan Whiteside - theatre critic, lecturer, and radio personality - arrives to dine at the home of the prominent Stanley family in a small Midwestern town, slips on their doorstep, and injures his hip. A tumultuous six weeks of confinement follow, during which Whiteside monopolizes the living room and takes over the Stanley household. Before it's over, the outrageous has become commonplace. This large cast comedy will feature Alley Company members playing a most extravagant array of eccentric characters. *Recommended for general audiences.*

Special Considerations for the Theatre Report

In writing your report, consider what was memorable about the production. How well was the play acted and directed? Were some actors' performances stronger than others? Did you identify with particular characters? Did particular meanings or themes stand out? You might also evaluate technical aspects of the production: set design, sound, lighting, and costumes, for example. Be sure to pick up a program; it will include, among other things, the names of the director, playwright, actors, and characters.

The following structural guidelines may prove helpful for the theatre report, but they should not be regarded as mandatory:

- * In the opening paragraph, include essential information—play title (*italicized*), director, and principal actors—and provide an overview of what the play is about. End with a thesis that states your assessment of the production.
- * In the second paragraph, respond to the play. What unanswered questions do you have? How did the play affect you? What ideas did the playwright develop? Use this or another paragraph to evaluate the production in the ways mentioned above.

- * In the third paragraph compare your experience to previous theatre experiences, or describe how the play met or went against your expectations. Was the play challenging to watch, and if so, in what ways? Did it stick with you after leaving the theatre? How did other audience members react? How likely are you to see additional productions at the Alley?

There is one requirement for a report on the Alley Theatre production: you must evaluate one or more aspects of the production: writing, performance, or stagecraft, for instance.

Information about the Beck Collection Tour

Plan to meet me inside the front door of the Caroline Wiess Law Building (the original MFAH building) at **11:00 a.m.** Park in the lot across the street (at the corner of Montrose Boulevard and Bissonnet Street. Anyone who wishes to do so may meet my wife and me after the tour for lunch at Cafe Express (downstairs in the Beck Building). Lunch, alas, is not free, but the restaurant has self-service, the prices are reasonable, and the food is good. The following link provides detailed information about Cafe Express, including a menu and hours of operation: <http://www.Cafe-express.com/>.

If you decide to join me at the MFAH, please let me know in advance so that I can make a group reservation for free admission to the museum. If you would like to go on the tour just for the fun of it, without having to write an extra credit report, you are certainly welcome to do so.

Directions to the MFAH

Go south on **Highway 146** across the Hartman Bridge. Turn right (heading west) on **Highway 225**. Take the westbound exit onto the **610 South Loop** (you will exit from the left or inside lane), and continue traveling west on 610, several miles past I-45. Take the northbound (or far right) exit onto **Highway 288** (toward downtown Houston), and get off at **Calumet** (which is the next-to-last exit before 288 crosses Highway 59). Stay in the left-hand lane of the feeder road, and turn left at the first light onto **Binz** (the street is Calumet if you take a right). You will travel several blocks (heading northwest). Just before you reach the museum, the street curves to the left (becoming **Bissonnet**). The museum is on the left, at the corner **of Main and Bissonnet**. Park for free in the Presbyterian church parking lot on the right (or north) side of Bissonnet—it is the second of two churches you will see—or you can pay to park in the covered garage just east of the new museum addition. If you park in the garage, you will need to go across the street to the Law Building.

Special Considerations for the Beck Collection Report

There are two content requirements for your report on the Beck Collection: first, you need to trace one or more techniques, subjects, or themes that link the pieces you describe. For instance, you might focus on paintings that exhibit pointillism (technique), depict women (subject), or deal with solitude (theme). Second, you need to describe and discuss specific works of art (italicizing the titles). On the day of the tour, I will provide a list of every work in the Beck Collection.