

Acknowledgments

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Studies in Special Topics: Prairie Literature

Introduction to the Course

In this course you will study a selection of Prairie writing from the earliest to the very recent, with an emphasis on the last half of the 20th century.

Although an indigenous Prairie literature has been somewhat slow to develop, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta are now home to a very impressive list of poets, fiction writers, and playwrights. A diverse group, they explore the full spectrum of formal possibilities and address an astonishing range of issues. They are skilled and imaginative, finding fresh and innovative ways to discover their time and their place.

These writers are, however, part of a tradition of writing on the Prairies extending back into at least the last century. We no longer think of the Prairies as the last great frontier, that romantic ideal that sparked the imagination of the first immigrants and writers. On the other hand, perhaps a little of that spirit remains with us still.

This is an online course with the intention of fully exploiting the new medium. Hypertext and literary text share at least one important feature—both are composed of links to other texts. We intend to develop that commonality here.

With your course materials, you will be asked to purchase an anthology of literature (readings manual) from the Book Store. This course manual contains study notes to guide your reading of that literature. These study notes will introduce authors, issues, terminology, and provide links to other resources, both electronic and print, for further study. You will have electronic access to your colleagues and instructor via email. As well, on specific weeks we will discuss a selection of relevant topics in the online classroom.

There is some great reading here. Enjoy!



Course description

In this course you will read a selection of Prairie literature from the earliest to the most recent attempts to render the Prairies into words. You will study a variety of genres including stories, novels, plays, and poems, written in styles ranging from the most conventional to the most innovative, addressing both enduring and contemporary issues. As well, you will briefly consider some attempts by writers and critics to theorize Prairie literature and culture. All the texts you will read for this course share an origin in Prairie experience and attempt in one way or another to come to terms with that origin.

The University of Manitoba *Undergraduate Calendar* describes ENGL 3190 as follows:

Prerequisite: a grade of "C" or better in six hours of English at the 2000 level. NOTE: The content of this course will vary from year to year. Students are asked to consult the department of English Handbook for detailed course descriptions.



Course goals

At the completion of this course you will be able to:

- analyze a variety of literary texts;
- describe how literary traditions and techniques have been adapted to the demands of Prairie culture;
- discuss patterns that reflect the aesthetic, geographical, social, political, psychological, and mythical forces that constitute the Prairie environment;
- compare and contrast the concepts of Romanticism, Prairie Realism, the long poem, Postcolonialism and Historiographic Metafiction; and
- discuss the relationship between geography, culture, and literature that informs Prairie writing.



Course materials

The following materials may be purchased from the University of Manitoba Book Store:

Textbooks

Ostenso, Martha. 1989 (c 1961). *Wild Geese*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart. ISBN 0-7710-9994-0

Laurence, Margaret. 2009 (c 1969). *The Fire-Dwellers*. Toronto: McLelland & Stewart. ISBN 978-0-7710-9377-7

Ross, Ian. 1996. *fareWel*. Winnipeg: Scirocco Drama. ISBN 1-896239-21-8

Kroetsch, Robert. 1986. *Seed Catalogue*. Winnipeg: Turnstone. ISBN 0-88801-109-1

Ross, Sinclair. 1968. *Lamp at Noon and Other Stories*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart. ISBN 07710-9996-7

Harrison, Dick. 1977. *Unnamed Country: The Struggle for a Canadian Prairie Fiction*. Edmonton: University of Alberta Press. ISBN 0-8864-019-6






Arnason, David. 1987. *Skrag*. Winnipeg, MB: Turnstone Press. ISBN 0-88801-114-8

Readings package

Readings Manual: 004.319 Studies in Special Topics: Prairie Literature.

Internet delivery

This is a Web course, which means the course material will be delivered via a series of inter-linked web pages. Within these pages you will find five kinds of links:

	indicates a link to more detailed information;
	indicates a link to online classroom focus questions;
	indicates a link to a selection of print resources;
	indicates a link to a selection of internet resources; and
	indicates online audio recording.

If you ever get lost, we recommend that you return to the course homepage in the course site. From there you should be able to get back to where you want to be.

Internet technology makes ongoing interaction with your fellow students and your instructor possible. It also means we can enhance the literary experience with visual material and audio recordings of authors reading and discussing their work. Furthermore, hypertext links within the online materials make access to all course materials simple and fast. They also provide access to a wealth of information available on the internet.

We have made every attempt to make the Web structure of the course coherent and efficient, as well as conducive to a rewarding learning experience.



How to proceed

Before each week begins consult the course [schedule](#) and determine the reading assignment for the week. By the beginning of each week you should have read the assigned material and corresponding study notes as well as thought through

responses to the focus questions. Whether you read the study notes, focus questions, or literature first, is your choice. Often you will need to read one or all of them a couple of times. The next step is to open the online classroom (located in Communication Options) if a discussion is scheduled for that week.

The course [schedule](#) outlines the assigned material under discussion for specific weeks the discussion is scheduled for. These discussions will occur online over the duration of the week. These discussions are not live-you can enter the classroom at your convenience (just so long as you do enter) and consider your responses before submitting them. Generally, an assigned student will initiate the discussion followed by a responder (see online classroom). At that point anyone is welcome and encouraged to join in. These, then, are the steps:

1. Consult the schedule well in advance. Read the assigned literature and the accompanying study notes and carefully consider the online classroom focus questions before the week begins.
2. If it is a discussion week, at the beginning of the week, open the online classroom.
3. If you have been assigned to initiate the discussion for the week, submit your response to any one of the focus questions.
4. If you have been assigned to respond, wait for the initiator's comments, then prepare and submit your response.
5. Engage in the discussion.

Please note that your participation in the discussions will be invaluable to you as well as the other students. Therefore, participation is a requirement of the course and constitutes a significant part of your final grade.

Literary study is not a linear process. Accordingly, you are encouraged to read ahead as much as possible. Although the discussions have been ordered chronologically for the most part, you will often find that later texts and discussions help you to better understand the previous ones. Take the time to go back and reconsider (hypertext links will often be available to take you back and ahead to relevant information in the study notes).



Grading and evaluation

Aside from reading the assigned literature and the corresponding study notes, you will be required to do the following:

Participate in online classroom	20%
Write two short essays (2 x 10%)	20%
Write a major term paper	30%
Write a final exam	30%

Total	100%
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Please note: All final grades are subject to departmental review.



Assignment due dates

Assignment	Due dates
Participate in online classroom	Please see the course schedule for the exact dates.
Short Essays 1. Short Essay #1 2. Short Essay #2	October 29 January 15
Major term paper	March 16
Final exam	TBA

Online classroom

Participation means genuinely entering and contributing to the discussion by submitting relevant and respectful questions and answers in response to other students and the instructor. Please see [Online classroom](#) for more details.

Depending on enrolment in the course, you will be expected to open the discussion (initiate) **at least once** during the year. This means responding to one of the topics offered for the week as fully but succinctly as you can. As there are usually more students than discussion topics, there may be more than one person opening a discussion. On **one other occasion** during the year, you will be expected to make the first response to someone else's initiating comment, which means indicating where your thinking coincides with or differs from the initiator's, and what you might add to the points the initiator made. There may also be more than one responder in each discussion. We will establish a schedule of initiators and responders during the first week, and will attempt to accommodate your preferences as much as possible. After the initial comments and the first responses, everyone may join in. Each student must participate at least once in every discussion. We hope you will participate more than once. Initiating and responding counts as participating in the discussion. The instructor will intervene from time to time at his or her discretion or because a student requests the instructor's feedback.

Focus questions

Focus questions are provided for specific weeks during the course. They raise questions and issues about the text(s) we are studying and are intended to help guide your thinking as well as focus our online discussions. You should think through each of the issues raised carefully and prepare your responses so that you can actively participate in the discussions.

Week 1: Introductions (September 10-17)

No focus questions this week. Online classroom time will be spent getting

acquainted with each other and the technology. We will also assign initiators and first responders for each discussion topic.

Week 5: Prairie realism (Stegner, Mitchell) (October 8-15)

- What makes Ray want to stay in such a place as "Carrion Spring" describes?
- What role does the wind play in the chapter from *Who Has Seen the Wind*

Week 8: *Wild Geese* (romanticism vs. realism)(October 29-November 5)

- Pay especially close attention to the language and imagery used to describe Caleb's death. Is his death an appropriate end to his narrative?
- If a romantic/realist tension informs the whole novel, how does this tension resolve itself? Does either mode of representation win out in the end?

Week 12: *The Fire-Dwellers* (November 26-December 3)

- Discuss the communication between Stacey and Valentine Tonnerre when they meet on the street.
- Discuss the possible significance of the passage which begins with "That's the most Mac will ever be able to say" (p. 269) and ends with "Whatever I think that I think of it, it's the one I most use" (p. 270).

Week 15: Lan(g)scape (Cooley & Barbour) (January 12-19)

- How many possible readings can you come up with for the last stanza of Cooley's "I know my mind"? Explain them.
- Describe what happens in Cooley's "Prairie Vernacular."

Week 17: Postcolonialism & Political Deconstructions (Livesay & Arnason) (January 26-February 2)

- What is the metanarrative exposed and deconstructed in "Day and Night"?
- How does point of view get constructed and contribute to the poem "Skrag"?

Week 24: Term Paper Due

Week 25: Seed Catalogue (Representing the Prairie) (March 23-30)

- Offer a detailed reading of the following lines from Part 3 of *Seed Catalogue*. Your reading should be informed by your grasp of the poem as a whole.

he had named it	he had named
our world	of existence
(the horse	was standing still)

- How does "Brome Grass" figure into the poem? Does it connect with other images, ideas, or feelings in the poem?

Short essays

You should begin planning these essays as soon as possible. Specific topics can be found on the essay topics page. The general guidelines are as follows:

- 1,200-1,500 words in length

- title page
- bibliography or works cited page
- MLA format

You can also access general [tips and guidelines](#) to essay writing and an [essay checklist](#) included in the online course materials. As well, see the [aids to essay writing](#) available on the internet.

Major term paper

This is a research paper. Again you should begin planning this paper as soon as possible. You will be expected to demonstrate the ability to research, organize, mentally process, and communicate a topic. A variety of topics for you to choose from are available on the [essay topics](#) page. The general guidelines are as follows:

- approximately 4,000-5,000 words in length
- title page
- bibliography or works cited page
- MLA format

Once again, you are encouraged to consult the [tips and guidelines](#) to essay writing and the essay checklist included with the online course materials.

Final exam

The three-hour final exam will cover all the course material. You will have a number of options available to you on the exam.

The final exam will be conducted at the University of Manitoba, Fort Garry campus or at an alternate location off-campus. **All students must declare an exam location.** The Registrar's Office is responsible for scheduling the final exam. Once finalized, the exam date and time information will be posted on the University of Manitoba Exam site.








Generally, it will be designed to enable you to demonstrate your acquired reading and writing skills. Please see the [sample exam](#) available online.



Audio materials

A series of interviews and readings recorded in the 1970s for the Canadian Writers Symposium are held in the Elizabeth Dafoe Library Archives. David Arnason, Dennis Cooley, and Wayne Tefs conduct the interviews. A small selection of this material for inclusion in this course. The microphone icon appears in your study notes when audio is available. Included in the audio list is a streamed clip of Ian Ross reading from *fareWel*. This clip is housed on the National Library of Canada website. You can also review all of the audio clips from this page. Clicking on the icon beside the author you want to hear will begin the download.

You will need [RealOne Player](#) to view the streaming video files. If you do not have this program, you can download it at no cost from the Real Player web site. Note that you can also download the professional software for a fee which you would need to pay to Real Player.

	An interview with W.O. Mitchell in November 1975 where he reads from his work and discusses <i>Who has Seen the Wind</i> (unit 3).
	An interview with W. D. Valgardson in October 1976. He talks about his Icelandic Canadian background (Gimli, Manitoba) and his writing style, amongst other things (unit 5).
	An interview with Robert Kroetsch sometime between 1975 and 1977. He talks about the influence of F. P. Grove and other Canadian writers, Native mythology, de-mythologizing the West, and about Canadian Literature generally (unit 7).
	Arnason and Cooley interview a group of Saskatchewan writers who came to be known as the Moose Jaw Movement. They include Gary Hyland, Lorna Uher (now Crozier), Robert Curry, Ralph Ring, Judy Krause, Ed Dyck. There is a good deal of argument over what constitutes Prairie poetry (unit 8).
	In 1997, Ian Ross won the Governor General's Literary Award for his play <i>fareWel</i> . This reading was done the night he accepted his award. It is streamed from the National Library of Canada. (unit 10) Audio: Ian Ross reading <i>fareWel</i> at the Governor General's Literary Awards in 1997. © Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of the Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada (2009) and Ian Ross. Source: Library and Archives Canada/ <i>FareWell</i> Amicus 16127854.
	An interview with Rudy Wiebe in August 1977. He had just published <i>Temptations of Big Bear</i> and won the Governor General's Award. Wiebe discusses Western Canadian literature, his family, and Mennonite background (unit 11).
	Robert Kroetsch reading from <i>Stone Hammer Poems</i> (unit 11).



Essay topics

You will be required to write three essays in this course: two short essays and one major term paper. All essays must conform to the guidelines established by the Modern Language Association (MLA). These guidelines can be found in the *MLA Style Manual* (4th Edition) available in the reference section of most libraries or you can access the guidelines on the internet.



There are other [resources](#) on the web that you will find helpful as you write your essays.

Short essay #1 (1,200-1,500 words)

Due: End of week 8

Weight: 10% of final grade

General instructions: The essay should have a title page, provide documentation, and a works cited page.

Topics (choose one of the following):

1. Romanticism vs. Realism in Sinclair Ross's "Cornet at Night" (included in the course anthology); or
2. The Immigrant Experience in "Mrs. Lund" from F. P. Grove's *Settlers of the Marsh* (included in the course anthology).

Short essay #2 (1,200-1,500 words)**Due: End of week 16****Weight:** 10% of final grade

General instructions: The essay should have a title page, provide documentation, and a works cited page.

Topics (choose one of the following):

1. An analysis of Doug Barbour's "Story for a Saskatchewan Night" (included in the course anthology); or
2. An analysis of Lorna Crozier's "The Oldest Song" (included in the course anthology).

Term paper (4,000-5,000 words)**Due: End of week 26****Weight:** 30% of final grade

General instructions: The essay should have a title page, provide documentation and a works cited page. The general expectation in this assignment is that you will find some patterns in Prairie literature based on a comparison of a few different texts.

Topics (choose one of the following):

1. Make up a small anthology (25 poems or so) of Prairie poetry. In choosing your poems go beyond just using the poems included in the course anthology. This anthology should include a title, a Table of Contents (you need not provide the text of the poems), and **most importantly** a substantial introduction (4000-5000 words) containing:
 - a. the rationale or basis for the selection of the poems (thematic, stylistic, or formalistic);
 - b. a close analysis of 3 or 4 poems, to reveal and develop the idea behind your anthology (this should constitute the major part of your introduction); an overview of some of the other poems included and their relationship to your idea; and
 - c. why your anthology is important (aesthetically, culturally, or politically, etc.).

2. Write an "Introduction" to a book chosen from the following list. Your introduction should include some background on the writer, reference to other work by the writer, an overview of important criticism on the book and/or writer, and most importantly a substantial discussion of theme, technique, and style. Finally, some consideration of why this book is important as Prairie literature. Some books you might want to consider:
 - Margaret Sweatman's *Fox*,
 - Robert Kroetsch's *Badlands*,
 - Carol Shields *The Stone Diaries*,
 - Sinclair Ross's *As for me and My House*,
 - John Marlyn's *Under the Ribs of Death*,
 - David Arnason's *Marsh Burning*,
 - Aritha Van Herk's *No Fixed Address: An Amorous Journey*,
 - Uma Parameswaran's *Trishanku*,
 - Thomas King's *One Good Story, That One*, or
 - Hiromi Goto's *Chorus of Mushrooms*.
3. The gendered landscape. Consider through the comparison and contrast of a few texts how representation of the landscape develops along gender lines. Possibly consider some or all of the following: the landscape represented as having gender; the gender of characters affecting their relationship with the landscape, the gender of authors reflected in the representation of landscape.
4. As above but, instead of gender, consider ethnicity.
5. The function of vernacular in Prairie literature.
6. Political deconstruction in the work of two or more Prairie writers.
7. The relationship between language and land in the work of two or more Prairie writers.
8. Current versions of Romanticism in the work of two or more Prairie writers.
9. Apply Kroetsch's vision of "the imagined real home" to two or more Prairie texts.
10. Experimentation with narrative structure in the short fiction of a few Prairie writers. Course description



Tips and advice on writing the academic essay

Make arguments

Start with a brief introductory statement of your objectives. For example: "In this essay I will discuss the importance of the cemetery in Margaret Laurence's *The Stone Angel*." Then on with your argument: "The cemetery in Margaret Laurence's *The Stone Angel* symbolizes the dramatic conflict that besets Hagar Shipley, throughout most of her life—a vacillation between art and nature. The cemetery, then, symbolizes Hagar's terrible ambivalence and symbolically offers us telling parallels between Hagar's inner psychological state and the outer world of which it is so vivid

an emblem."

Paragraphs

Organize your paragraphs meticulously. First, clearly establish your topic and connect it to the conclusion of the preceding paragraph. Then, in the sentences that follow, go on to elucidate your topic, utilizing the appropriate rhetorical strategy. Remember, your paragraph should be so constructed that even if the sentences were scrambled, their correct order would still be apparent.

Use transitions

Use transitions between sentences and between paragraphs as well. Sometimes your topic sentence will make the transition itself, but other times you might have to insert a connector. There are several ways to create transitions, but there's one easy structure you might try now and then. Supposing you have been talking about Hagar's preference for vitality in flowers, and now in a new paragraph you want to talk about colour imagery as it relates to your argument. You might open the next paragraph with a sentence such as this: "That same concern with intensity carries over into Hagar's stress on bright colours." By mentioning your previous topic and connecting it thematically to the next here on a principle of shared intensity-you easily move into the next topic and take your reader smoothly along with you.

Avoid inflation

Do not strain for the big adjective, the tortured sentence. State your argument in words that you know well enough to handle the argument. Certainly you can and will use a fuller vocabulary and a more involved sentence structure than you observe in casual conversation, but avoid strange words, tangled syntax, or excessively long sentences. Make your point precisely and vigorously. Think of your writing this way: You are trying to explain something to somebody, and it is important therefore that you find intelligible ways of laying out an explanation for a specific audience.

Do not second guess your reader

The more sensitive and thorough your analysis, the clearer and more vigorous your writing, the better your paper will be. An essay should be based on a close reading of the text(s), an awareness of literary conventions as they figure in the work, an explicit thesis, a careful organization, provision and interpretation of evidence, and skilled use of language. Your argument should be precise, consistent, and subtle. The quality of your work, as measured by these criteria-determines your grade.

Incorporate quotations

Introduce quotations smoothly and integrate them into your argument. Try introductions such as the following: "That same concern with what is external to the cemetery and natural to the place emerges in Hagar's reference to the 'Cree with enigmatic faces and greasy hair.'" And then you would go on to comment on the passage you have just quoted; what about the hair? the faces? what do the qualities have to do with your argument-that Hagar's own dilemmas are embodied symbolically in the setting? Here is another model for introducing quotations: "When Ann thinks 'there had always been Steven,' we are not so convinced as is she." Or take the following: "Sammy's naiveteé becomes all the more apparent in his description of what he considers elegant living: Her father and the other men were

standing around in ice-cream coats and bow ties and the women were in sandals picking up herring snacks on toothpicks off a big glass plate and they were all holding drinks the colour of water with olives and sprigs of mint in them."

Also ensure that quotations fit grammatically and syntactically into the text of your essay.

Use present tense

Always refer to the text in the present tense, even when the text itself uses some other tense. Thus: "Hagar complains," "Laurence depicts," "we realize," "the images suggest," and so on. Use past tense analysis referring to the historical events outside the text: "In 1964 when Margaret Laurence published *The Stone Angel* . . ."

Quote accurately

An author has taken special care in choosing his or her words. Be absolutely sure, therefore, that you have quoted the exact words from the book, including the exact spelling and punctuation. Ensuring accuracy is not only a measure of courtesy and care, it can also affect the quality of your arguments.

Plagiarism




Plagiarism is the unacknowledged appropriation of material. Passing off someone else's work as your own, even if only indirectly or briefly, is academic theft.

Concluding

In a paragraph or essay, a conclusion is not simply a summary of what has been done. But it is a summing up, the bottom line. It is the final word(s) on the topic of the essay, what you and your reader inevitably must conclude from the evidence and thought you have provided.

Essay writing resources

Resources on the web:

-  *The MLA Style Manual*
-  The interactive Merriam-Webster's dictionary
-  *Lynch Grammar Guide*

Other helpful resources:

- William Strunk: *The Elements of Style*
- You may find the [Tips for Writing Essays](#) and [Essay Checklist](#) pages on this site

useful, too.

If you have any other questions be sure to contact the Instructor.

Allow yourself plenty of time to research, process, and write your essays.

Essay checklist

For the best results, go over this list before you write, as you write, as you revise, and before you hand your essay in. If you don't understand any of the items, Sheridan Baker's *The Practical Stylist* and the *MLA Style Manual* will help.

Mechanics

Have you:

- provided a useful title;
- double-spaced;
- used quotation marks for titles of essays, poems, or stories, and underlined titles of books;
- indented all quotations of three lines or more;
- quoted accurately; and
- strictly observed the MLA style manual with regard to citing references?

Style

Have you:

- introduced the topic clearly and concisely at the beginning of the essay;
- judiciously acknowledged opposing arguments;
- cited strong evidence and examples to confirm your claims;
- integrated quotations smoothly and grammatically;
- kept on topic and connected all ideas to your main argument;
- used transitions to connect paragraphs, sentences and ideas;
- opened each paragraph with a clear topic sentence, that also links the paragraph to the main topic of the essay;
- observed parallel structure;
- removed all wordiness and awkward expression;
- removed all instances of the passive voice;
- avoided vague pronoun references; and
- maintained present tense as much as possible, and avoided the verb "to be" as much as possible?

Finally

Have you:

- checked for spelling errors and grammatical errors;
- proofread carefully and made all corrections; and
- kept a copy of the essay for yourself?



On-line classroom

Online classroom participation means genuinely entering and contributing to the discussion by submitting relevant and respectful questions and answers in response to other students and the instructor.

Depending on enrolment in the course, you will be expected to open the discussion (initiate) **at least once** during the year. This means responding to one of the topics offered for the week as fully but succinctly as you can. As there are usually more students than discussion topics, there may be more than one person opening a discussion. On **one other occasion** during the year, you will be expected to make the first response to someone else's initiating comment, which means indicating where your thinking coincides with or differs from the initiator's, and what you might add to the points the initiator made. There may also be more than one responder in each discussion. We will establish a schedule of initiators and responders during the first week, and will attempt to accommodate your preferences as much as possible. After the initial comments and the first responses, everyone may join in. Each student must participate at least once in every discussion. We hope you will participate more than once. Initiating and responding counts as participating in the discussion. The instructor will intervene from time to time at his or her discretion or because a student requests the instructor's feedback.

Focus questions

Focus questions are provided for specific weeks during the course. They raise questions and issues about the text(s) we are studying and are intended to help guide your thinking as well as focus our online discussions. You should think through each of the issues raised carefully and prepare your responses so that you can actively participate in the discussions.

To participate in a discussion, select the "Discussions" link in the Action Menu at the top of this page. Alternatively, you can select the "Discussion" link from the left navigation bar or from the course homepage.

Week 1: Introductions

No focus questions this week. Online classroom time will be spent getting acquainted with each other and the technology. We will also assign initiators and first responders for each week of the course.

Week 5: Prairie realism (Stegner, Mitchell)

1. What makes Ray want to stay in such a place as "Carrion Spring" describes?
2. What role does the wind play in the chapter from *Who Has Seen the Wind*?

Week 12: *The Fire-Dwellers* (language and communication)

1. Discuss the communication between Stacey and Valentine Tonnerre when they meet on the street.
2. Discuss the possible significance of the passage which begins with "That's the most Mac will ever be able to say" (p. 269) and ends with "Whatever I think that I think of it, it's the one I most use" (p. 270).

Week 15: Lan(g)scape (Cooley and Barbour)

1. How many possible readings can you come up with for the last stanza of Cooley's "I know my mind"? Explain them.
2. Describe what happens in Cooley's "Prairie Vernacular."

Week 17: Postcolonialism and Political Deconstructions (Livesay and Arnason)

1. What is the metanarrative exposed and deconstructed in "Day and Night"?
2. How does point of view get constructed and contribute to the poem "Skrag"?

Week 25: *Seed Catalogue* (Representing the Prairie)

1. Offer a detailed reading of the following lines from Part 3 of *Seed Catalogue*. Your reading should be informed by your grasp of the poem as a whole.

he had named it he had named
our world out of existence
(the horse was standing still)

2. How does "Brome Grass" figure into the poem? Does it connect with other images, ideas, or feelings in the poem?



Course Schedule

Week	Unit and topic	Assignment	Required readings
1	Unit 1: Introduction to Prairie literature	Introductions Online Sept. 10-17	N/A
2	Unit 2: Beginnings		from <i>The Kelsey Papers</i> , from Butler's <i>The Great Lone Land</i> , from Robert Stead's <i>Homesteaders</i> , "The Pilots Measure" from Ralph Connor's <i>The Sky Pilot</i> , "One of Manitoba's Prosperous Farmers" from Nellie McClung's <i>Saving Seeds in Danny</i> .
3	Unit 3: Prairie realism - Stead & Grove		"Snow" by F.P. Grove & from <i>Grain</i> by Robert Stead
4	Unit 3: Prairie realism - Ross & Kreisel		Sinclair Ross's "The Painted Door" & Henry Kreisel's "The Broken Globe"

5	Unit 3: Prairie realism - Stegner & Mitchell	Discussion topics Oct. 8-15	"Carrion Spring" by Wallace Stegner & from <i>Who has Seen the Wind</i> by W.O. Mitchell
6	Unit 7: Mythographies - Harrison, Kreisel, Laurence		"Eastern Eyes" by Dick Harrison, "The Prairie: A State of Mind" by Henry Kreisel, "Where the World Began" by Margaret Laurence
7	Unit 4: <i>Wild Geese</i> : Landscape		<i>Wild Geese</i> , Martha Ostenso
8	Unit 4: <i>Wild Geese</i> - Realism vs. romanticism	Discussion topics Short essay due Oct. 29-Nov 5.	<i>Wild Geese</i> , Martha Ostenso
9	Unit 5: Storying West - Valgardson, Roy		"The Couch" by Bill Valgardson, "Ely! Ely! Ely!" by Gabrielle Roy
10	Unit 4: Storying West - Birdsell, Watson		"The Wild Plum Tree" by Sandra Birdsell & "Brother Oedipus" by Sheila Watson
11	Unit 6: <i>The Fire-Dwellers</i> - Realism vs. romanticism		Margaret Laurence's <i>The Fire-Dwellers</i>
12	Unit 6: <i>The Fire-Dwellers</i> - Language & communication	Discussion topics Nov. 26-Dec. 3	Margaret Laurence's <i>The Fire-Dwellers</i>
13	Unit 8: Lan(g)scape - Mandel, Friesen		Eli Mandel's "Houdini" and "Wabumin" & Patrick Friesen's "Wings" and "Sunday Afternoon"
14	Unit 8: Lan(g)scape - Crozier, Suknaski		Lorna Crozier's "This One's for You", "The Foetus Dreams", "Cabbages", "Potatoes", "Zucchini"; Andrew Suknaski's "Overland to the Southern Plain", "Jimmy Hoy's Place" and "Jim Lovenzanna"

15	Unit 8: Lan(g)scape - Cooley & Barbour	Discussion topics Jan. 12-19	Dennis Cooley's "I Know my Mind", "Body Parts", "Prairie Vernacular" "Consider How the Brain Resembles" & Douglas Barbour's "Story for a Saskatchewan Night"
16	Unit 7: Mythographies - Mandel, Kroetsch & Cooley	Short essay due	"Images of Prairie Man" by Eli Mandel, "The Discovery of America Continues" by Robert Kroetsch & "Eye and Ear Poetry" by Dennis Cooley.
17	Unit 9: Postcolonialism - Livesay & Arnason	Discussion topics Jan. 26-Feb. 2	Dorothy Livesay's "Call My People Home" & "Skragg" by David Arnason
18	Unit 9: Postcolonialism - Brandt & A. Wiebe		poems from Di Brandt's <i>questions i asked my mother</i> & from Armin Wiebe's <i>The Salvation of Yasch Siemens</i> .
19	Unit 9: Postcolonialism - King, Van Herk		"One Good Story That One" by Thomas King & "The Pea; or" by Aritha Van Herk
20	Unit 10: <i>fareWel</i>		Ian Ross's <i>fareWel</i>
21	Unit 10: <i>fareWel</i>		Ian Ross's <i>fareWel</i>
22	Unit 7: Mythographies - Van Herk & Keahey		"A Gentle Circumcision" by Aritha Van Herk & from <i>Making It Home</i> by Deborah Keahey.
23	Unit 11: History - R. Wiebe & Kroetsch		"Where's the Voice Coming From" by Rudy Wiebe & Robert Kroetsch's "Stone Hammer Poem"
24	Unit 11: History - Sweatman & Kogawa	Term paper due	from <i>Fox</i> by Margaret Sweatman & from <i>Obasan</i> by Joy Kogawa
25	Unit 12: <i>Seed Catalogue</i> - Representing the Prairie	Discussion topics Mar. 23-30	Robert Kroetsch's <i>Seed Catalogue</i>

26	<i>Unit 12: Seed Catalogue - Review</i>		Robert Kroetsch's <i>Seed Catalogue</i>
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Sample Exam

This sample exam is not exactly the one you will receive. Although content of your exam will be different the structure will be the same (i.e., three parts with options within each: 1) identifying quotations; 2) specific authors; 3) general issues). The three-hour exam is worth 30% of your final grade.

ENGL 3190 Studies in Special Topics: Prairie Literature

Time: 3 hours

Your examination consists of three (3) parts. You must do all three, but there is some choice within each section. Read all the questions carefully. Make sure your answers are well-organized and that your arguments are supported by specific reference to the texts. Do not use any single text as your major example more than once. Allow yourself time to proofread your essay for accuracy and effectiveness.

Part one-Quotations: 30% (3 x 10% = 30%)

In a couple of paragraphs identify and discuss the significance of **any three** of the following quotations. Show why the quotation is important and how it works in its context by considering, where appropriate, such matters as: characterization, sound, dramatic impact, use of vernacular or formal language, imagery, themes, point of view, symbols, tone, rhythm, and so on.

1. He dug the soil in rows,
imposed himself with shovels
He asserted
into the furrows, I
am not random.
The ground
replied with aphorisms:
a tree-sprout, a nameless
weed, words
he couldn't understand.
2. The men, below her, downriver in the valley, in the town: they heard the surrendered call. Years later, they would claim to have smelled the moment too: the crocus and cold earth smell, the smell of spring earth, breaking alive. . . . They heard the outcry of her painful joy, those men, the extremist coming; they heard, each of them, and they knew. Not knowing her name, or where she was, or what had touched into that fierce and passionate and desperate ululation: they knew no man would satisfy her. Not one. No mortal man would satisfy her.
3. How good to hear nothing, no voices. I thought you were the one who was screaming about nobody wanting to talk. Yeh. Well. How good it feels, no voices. Except yours, Stacey. Well, that's my shadow. It won't be switched off until I die. I'm stuck with it, and I get bloody sick of it, I can tell you. Who is this you? I don't

know. Shut up. I'm trying to be quiet and you won't let me. If only I could get away, by myself, for about three weeks.

4. Hoy's place was where we waited on
Friday mailnights
to glimpse the train's first black smoke
beyond the snowfence -
as kids we were fascinated by the engineers
and the brakemen
while Hoy brought out their steaks and
mashed potatoes -
the way they flattened mashed potatoes into
thin layers
squared off like dominoes fascinated us
while we searched their eyes for the glow of
distant cities
till Hoy came saying: *Ieddem eat - go
outside and play gee clyz
all time slem ting.*
5. The year they built the TV tower I was heista kopp in love with Shaftich
Shreedda's daughter, Fleeda. I was only almost sixteen and Fleeda was almost
sixteen, too, and I had been in love with her all the way since we were only
almost fourteen when she looked at me in her little pocket mirror from where she
was sitting in the next row in school and I just went heista kopp in love.
6. Okay, I says.
Have some tea.
Stay awake.
Once upon a time.
Those stories start like that, pretty much, those ones, start on time. Anyway.
There was nothing. Pretty hard to believe that, maybe. You fellows keep listening,
I says. Watch the floor. Be careful. No water, no land, no stars, no moon. None of
those things. Must have a sun someplace. Maybe not. Can't say. No Indians are
there once upon a time. Lots of air. Only one person walk around. Call him god.
So.

Part two-Authors: (35%)

Do **one** of the following topics:

1. "I don't want to be conned," Phyllis Webb says in an interview. Can we see this refusal to be conned, her vigilant skepticism, in her writing? Discuss.
2. Discuss how Margaret Atwood's "here/there" dichotomy comes into play in her poetry.
3. Discuss the characterization of Billy and Pat Garrett, as well as their relationship, in *The Collected Works of Billy the Kid*.

Part three-General issues: (35%)

Do **one** of the following topics:

1. Discuss *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe* and/or *La Guerre, Yes Sir!* as Postcolonial texts.
2. Try to elucidate the term "Postmodernism" by comparing Robert Kroetsch's *What the Crow Said* with Margaret Laurence's *The Fire-Dwellers*.

3. All the novels on this course have quite distinctive narrative styles. Strictly speaking, they all employ a third person narrator, but none of these narrators performs like the traditional omniscient, impartial, detached narrator of more conventional fiction. Discuss how the narrator and narrative point of view contributes to two of the novels.

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