



Short Written Assignments

Depending on the subject and outline of the specific course, the assignments may cover a range of text types, such as summaries/excerpts, tasked-based and free critical essays.

In compliance with the module descriptions, the completion of the assignments should not require more than a third of the time assigned for the course, i.e. within the frame of an *Übung* (2 LP), the module states 60 working hours, 40 of which should be dedicated to active participation (seminar time, preparatory reading).

General Hints

These are **the formal guidelines** you are **required** to follow:

- 12 point Times New Roman or 11.5 Arial
- 1.5 line spacing,
- wide enough margin for comments and corrections (usually 2.5 cm on the left, 3-4 cm on the right),
- *Blocksatz* (also in footnotes),
- structure your text visibly by using paragraphs (each paragraph should explore one particular aspect of your argument; indent the first line of each paragraph apart from the first one after a new headline),
- the assignment should amount to no more than 700 words – add a word count at the end of your assignment,
- staple the pages together.

You are responsible for familiarising yourself with the [departmental guidelines on Bibliography and Citation](#) – they always apply.

You must include the following statement of autonomy at the end (do not forget the date and your signature):

I herewith affirm that I have composed the thesis presented autonomously and that I have used no sources and aids other than those indicated. All passages in the text that were extracted from other works either literally or accordingly were identified as borrowings.

A separate title page is not necessary. Just put the essential information on top of your first page:

TU Dresden	WS 2017/18
Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik	Dresden, 30. XIII. 2017
PS/Ü <i>The Novels of Graham Greene</i>	Erika Mustermann
Dozent: Prof. Dr. A. Anglicus	

The **dates** for handing in your written assignments will be **set by the teacher**. They are **not negotiable**. As a rule, there will be 5-6 assignments over the course of the semester, **three of which you must submit**.

Some of the following assignment types will be relevant for you.

1. Summary of a Theoretical Text

You may be asked to **summarise a piece of criticism**, i.e. essays, interpretations, magazine articles, chapters from monographs etc. This one is important to practise if you prepare a term paper and have to deal with theoretical texts on a regular basis. You can either summarise the main theses of a given text or its statements with regard to a specific question (the latter applies to very lengthy theoretical texts of more than thirty pages, where your summary has to focus on just one aspect, e.g. "What does the author say on the character of Claudius in *Hamlet*?").

The main focus is to present the **outline** of the source text, introduce its **line of argument** as well as the **main points** (and, if there is room, relate some of the examples used there).

The summary should show that you **know how to quote a source text**. A full bibliographical reference to your source must be part of the assignment.

The summary involves the **lowest degree of subjectivity** on behalf of its author. However, a critical statement of your own may, of course, serve as a summing-up at the end.

2. Task-Based Essay

The task-based essay may cover a **wide range of different topics**. Therefore, it is difficult to provide an exhaustive list of all the issues that might be tackled.

Possible topics include:

- a certain theoretical point of view,
- a reading of a certain motif (e.g. "The motif of the mirror in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*"),
- spatial features of the text,
- narrative perspective,
- stylistic devices & formal aspects,
- genre questions,
- characterisations of major/minor characters from the text.

You should take the following aspects into consideration:

- Make sure you have **delineated a clear topic**, i.e. focus on one particular aspect.
- Apply **criteria of analysis** and employ literary terms correctly.
- It is not necessary to offer a summary of the content of the poem/novel/drama/film to start with (unless you are asked to do so).
- Always support your argument with **quotes from the text**.
- **Avoid overly subjective comments** such as "I feel", "I think", "I suppose", "in my opinion". The same goes for emotional statements (such as "beautiful", "boring"). Describe the textual phenomena that *trigger* your reaction.

Although it is not necessary to consult as many sources as when writing a full term paper, you must **consult relevant articles or books** on the topic.

Give a **brief introduction** where you present your thesis, use the **main body** in order to **develop your argument** and provide examples before giving a **brief summing up-statement**. A division of your text into chapters is not necessary here.

3. Free Critical Essay

Unlike a term paper or a task-based essay, the free literary critical essay is dedicated to **your own reflections and interpretations** of a given text. The essay should chiefly stick to the primary text and develop a concise argument of one of its major aspects.

Amongst the short assignments, this type of essay will provide you with the greatest degree of freedom, yet it is also the most elaborate form of interpretation, for **you mainly rely on your own ability to interpret a literary source**. While you offer a subjective point of view, you are still expected to support it with logical arguments and to aim for **a well-founded piece of criticism**.

The free critical essay may cover a diverse range of topics, including motifs, characters and narrative angles among others. In contrast to the task-based essay, you must come up with a topic of your own – however, the topic must be discussed with your teacher beforehand.

Despite the considerable degree of freedom regarding the choice of topic and its discussion, **the usual guidelines for quotations apply**, of course.

With a free literary critical essay, you should be aware that you always **run a greater risk** than with the other tasks – your grade depends a lot more on your own creativity and the way you can convince your reader in an argument of your own.

The faculty policy regarding plagiarism applies:

Prüfungsordnung § 17 (3):

(3) Versucht die oder der Studierende, das Ergebnis einer Prüfungsleistung durch Täuschung, Plagiat (ganz oder zu Teilen) oder Benutzung nicht zugelassener Hilfsmittel zu beeinflussen, wird die entsprechende Prüfungsleistung insgesamt mit "nicht ausreichend" (5,0) bewertet.

PrOBA SLK – ANLAGE C:

Unter einem Plagiat ist im Rahmen einer Prüfungsleistung der Umstand zu verstehen, dass eine Studentin oder ein Student eine schriftliche Arbeit einreicht, die/das *wörtlich oder nahezu wörtlich, ganz oder zu Teilen* aus einer Arbeit oder mehreren Arbeiten (publiziert im Internet, in Zeitschriften, Monographien etc.) anderer ohne entsprechende Kennzeichnung übernimmt und dies damit *als eigene Leistung ausgibt*. In diesem Sinn liegt auch dann ein Plagiat vor, wenn bei der Übernahme in eine andere Sprache als die des Originals *übersetzt* wurde.

Sinngemäße Übernahmen und wörtliche, in Anführungszeichen gesetzte bzw. anders entsprechend ausgewiesene Übernahmen, die unter Angabe der Quelle als solche gekennzeichnet sind, fallen nicht unter diese Definition.