

Expository Essay: Examining Metaphors in Literature

When communicating, explicitly stating ideas, thoughts, feelings, opinions and the like often does not occur directly; instead, it is common--sometimes more so--that effective communication occur through description or comparison. In literature, these techniques often occur as literary devices. One of the prime building blocks of literature is the metaphor, or a comparison of two or more things without using the words 'like' or 'as.' To complete this paper, you will endeavor to answer the following question using the texts that you've read so far: ***how does metaphor obscure or illuminate our understanding of suffering, pain, disease or illness?***

To answer this question, you will need to carefully consider the readings you've digested and discussed in Professor Miles-Perez's course to demonstrate your understanding of, and engagement with, those texts. Your response to this question will come in the form of an **expository essay**. The expository essay is a tool commonly used in academia to investigate and explain an idea, evaluate evidence, and argue an issue. In doing so, it can present reasons, definitions, explanations, comparisons, or steps in a process, but does so in a clear and concise manner. In your essay, use the texts you've read to support your answer to the above question.

A clear expository paper will:

- * **Present your analysis** of a trend, idea or issue (here, your answer to the question).
- * **Summarize *only* those aspects of literature** needed for understanding your analysis.
- * **Synthesize several different elements** (here, two metaphors), putting ideas from two or more texts in conversation with one another in order to support your claim.
- * **Provide a clear, well-articulated thesis statement** that presents your position on the issue based on the analysis of the text and synthesis of metaphors.
- * **Support your position with a clear explanation of your answer to the question.**
- * **Provide adequate explanation, analysis and discussion for your reader to understand your argument, your support for it and how you reached your conclusion.**

Specifically, your expository paper will draw on **two or more concrete examples of metaphors** from the texts that you've read for class. **To complete this assignment, you will a) articulate and precisely describe the two things being compared in each metaphor and b) discuss how each metaphor works to shape our--the reader's, but also society's--understanding of pain, suffering, disease or illness.** Do the metaphors accurately reflect societal understanding of the given topic, or are they outliers? In developing a clear and concise paper, you should not only be able to better understand the subject matter, but also how individual experiences relate to a shared universal experience. Your interpretation of these metaphors will build your analytic skills and clarify how this tool shapes our imaginations and understandings of the world.