English 11

**Short Story Essay Topics**

Write a clear, thoughtful, and well-supported literary essay of at *least* five paragraphs on ONE of the following topics. (You will be required to formulate your own **thesis**.):

1. Discuss *how* the experience of rock climbing is a **metaphor** for Barry and Moira’s relationship in “Saturday Climbing”, by W.D. Valgardson.
2. Discuss *how* and *why* **choice** is a central theme in “The Boat”, by Alistair Macleod.
3. Discuss the role of **setting** in “The Painted Door”, by Sinclair Lewis. (Specifically, examine how the physical setting contributes to the *tone* and *mood* of the story, as well as how it relates to Ann’s emotional experiences in the story.)
4. Discuss *how* **fear** is a key motivating factor for the choices of the parents in “Once Upon A Time”, by Nadine Gordimer.
5. Discuss the use of **symbolism** in “Things That Fly”, by Douglas Coupland. (Specifically, *how* does it help develop the central theme(s) of the story?)
6. Discuss *how* “In Another Country”, by Ernest Hemingway, can be read as a **critique** of the experience(s) of war on soldiers.
7. Discuss *how* “A Very Old Man With Enormous Wings”, by Gabriel Garcia Marquez, can be read as a **critique** of both human nature and societal institutions (such as government and organized religion).
8. Discuss *how* and *why* **communication** (and lack of communication) influences Ted’s relationship with his daughters, Leslie and Anna, as well with as his wife, Heather, in “Fishtail”, by Theodora Armstrong.

**OVER →**

**Marking**

**Overall** (quality of written expression; depth of insight into the story; strength of evidence for your analysis): **/18**

**Quotes** (at least 3—a minimum of one per body paragraph—correctly integrated and used as effective evidence for your ideas): **/6**

**Mechanics** (no comma splices, run-ons, sentence fragments or usage errors): **/6**

**Total:** **/30**

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Reminder: This is NOT a research essay. *All* analysis and ideas are meant to be *your own*. Any ideas or analysis from outside sources will count as **plagiarism**, and will result in a mark of **zero**. In any instance of plagiarism, there will be no make-up assignment given.