

## English 126 Short Story Study Questions

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### Directions:

Keep in mind that a “journal” is not synonymous with a “diary.” I am looking for detailed answers in a structured, well thought out form. All work must be free of grammar, punctuation, mechanical, and spelling errors. Textual evidence for some of your answers -- and therefore parenthetical and a works cited page – will be required as needed. **Further, I strongly recommend that you re-type the question, and identify the subsections where appropriate. Finally, your journals must be typed and conform to basic MLA format.**

Your journal will be graded based upon the following criteria:

30% of your grade will be based upon organization. In order for your writing credits to transfer to a four year, you must complete two composition sections; as a result, everything that you learned in 101 will be utilized, added to, and expanded upon. Topic sentences, key/main points (minors), transitions, and a logical flow of ideas will be graded based upon a 126 level.

70% of your grade will be based upon interpretation and the development of such. Unlike your 101 class, you chose to be here. You chose to take a class in which we deeply delve into the subtleties and nuances of literature; as a result, simply restating your in-class notes will not earn you that elusive “A.” Class discussions are like maps; they are designed to guide you in the right direction so you can find your way home. There will be times in which I will clearly state “pick a side, any side” and prepare to defend it. Then there will be times in which I will double check that you haven’t taken an oblique turn somewhere and you are now heading in an incorrect direction. Finally, based upon your status as a student learning the ropes of analysis and/or criticism, each journal will be graded on an interpretive slide. (What would have earned you an “A” on your first journal, that same level would award you an “A-” in a later one.) The expectation is that you will utilize and exhibit your expanded learning curve as the term progresses.

To break this down into more tangible terms, each question is worth 20 points. 6 points will go toward organization and the remaining 14 points toward development.

	Mastering (6 pts.)	Developing (5 pts.)	Emerging (4 pts.)
Organization 6 pts.	Both the topic sentence and the key ideas have all the necessary information and the answer flows.	The topic sentence is missing information.	Both the topic sentence and the key ideas are missing information.
	Mastering (14 pts)	Developing (13 pts)	Emerging (12 pts)
Development 14 pts.	Identified critical thought beyond class discussion and proved it in sups.	Either didn’t develop beyond class discussion or didn’t prove it.	Both occurred.

### John Updike's "A & P"

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Write a short answer essay on characters:

What do Sammy, Stokesie, Lengel, Queenie, and the shoppers represent?

Write a short answer essay on the narrator and the POV.

Write a short answer essay on whose values does the story seem to endorse and whose are criticized?

### Katherine Anne Porter's "The Jilting of Granny Weatherall"

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Write a short answer essay on characters:

What do Granny, Cornelia, John, George, and Hapsy represent?

Write a short answer essay on who or what jilted Granny for the second time in her life.

Write a short answer essay on how Stream of Consciousness is used and for what purpose.

### William Faulkner's "A Rose For Emily"

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Write a short answer essay on characters:

Interpret the narrator's POV and account for the use of the pronoun "we" by the narrator.

What do the three primary characters represent? (include North and South here)

Write a short answer essay on setting:

What are we given earlier in the story that foreshadows things to come?

What is meaningful in the final detail that the strand of hair on the second pillow is iron-grey?

Why do you suppose Faulkner calls his story *A Rose*. . . ?

### Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper"

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Write a short answer essay on the narrator and POV.

Write a short answer essay on the primary characters:

What do the names suggest?

What kind of relationship do they have?

Write a short answer on setting – include both inside and out.

How do these objects reflect tone?

### James Joyce's "Araby"

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Write a short answer essay on the narrator and POV.

Write a short answer essay on the primary characters:  
What did Joyce want his countrymen to see?

Write a short answer essay on setting:  
Include the room where the priest died, North Richmond Street, and the bazaar.

Write a short answer essay on tone:  
How does Joyce contrast light and dark?  
How does he contrast the beautiful and romantic with the ugly and banal?  
How does religion tie into this?

### Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery"

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Write a short answer essay on setting – think big.

Write a short answer essay on tone:  
What does she show about mass psychology?  
What ironies are involved in the villagers' ideas of fairness?

Write a short answer essay on symbols – think small.

### Raymond Carver's "Cathedral"

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Write a short answer essay on tone:  
What do we learn about the characters?

Write a short answer essay on setting:  
Include the dinner table here.

Write a short answer essay on symbols:  
Why does the husband refuse to open his eyes?

### John Steinbeck's "The Chrysanthemums"

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Write a short answer essay on setting:  
What details of imagery and physical description serve as evidence of Elisa's frustration in her role as homemaker?  
Of what importance is it that she and the stranger share laughter at the beginning of their conversation?  
How does the dog fit into this?

Write a short answer essay on tone:

Who or what is ultimately responsible for Elisa's troubles?

Write a short answer essay on symbols:

closed pot

yellow stubble fields

clear as water

chrysanthemums

fence

fights

shower

Eudora Welty's "A Worn Path"

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Write a short answer essay on her quest. Like the narrator of *Araby*, Phoenix Jackson is on a quest. What is the symbolic significance of her path? Which objects are her obstacles, her temptations, and which give her inspiration and a sense of purpose?

Write a short answer essay on what characteristics or traits does she represent? How is this reflective of her name? How is this reflective of the images used to describe her? How can we come to terms with these seemingly contradictory ideas?