***Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* (1893)by Stephen Crane**

*How does environment influence behavior?*

**Stephen Crane: A Brief Chronology**

* Born on November 1, 1871 in New Jersey.
* Lived to be only 29 yrs. old, died June 5, 1900.
* Family: last of 14 children, son of Methodist minister who died when he was nine. He also moved three times when he was a child in the New York area.
* He never cared for schooling, attended Syracuse University for one semester where he was most noted for playing baseball.
* Began writing for newspapers in 1891 when he settled in New York where he developed his powers as an observer of psychological and social reality.
* Eking out a hand-to-mouth existence while living in the Bowery, Crane rewrote a novel he had drafted in college. In 1893 Crane self-published (because no publisher would print it) *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* under the pseudonym Johnston Smith.
* After he wrote *Red Badge of Courage*, in 1895, he was hired as a reporter in the American West and Mexico.
* Red Badge of Courage earned Crane international acclaim at age 24.
* He later covered the Spanish-American War for Joseph Pulitzer’s New York World.
* Crane moved to Jacksonville, Florida when he was 27. His boat The Commodore sank off the coast and he wrote about the harrowing adventure in The New York Press.
* In Jacksonville, he took up with a woman named Cora Taylor. She was the owner of a favorite night spot, the Hotel de Dream, and had a shadowed and unhappy past — two failed marriages and only one divorce. But she was intelligent, charming, patient and loyal.
* Crane covered the Greco-Turkish War and later settled in England where he and Cora set up housekeeping as husband and wife and he made friends with famous writers of the time including H.G. Wells and Henry James.
* During the last few years of his life, he began writing furiously because he was in debt and suffering from tuberculosis. He later died while he and Cora were in Germany, where she hoped to take him to a sanatorium in the Black Forest, having gotten financial help from their friends.

**Background**

*Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* was Crane’s first published work of fiction (it was published as a novella or short novel). Due to its scandalous and unconventional themes, Crane was forced to pay for the publication himself. Furthermore, in an attempt to avoid the critical and public backlash he expected to receive, Crane published the first edition under the pseudonym “Johnston Smith.” In brief, *Maggie* depicts the destruction of an innocent young girl in the Bowery, which was at that time a poverty-stricken neighborhood in Manhattan. Her descent into prostitution--not to mention the forthright depictions of the neighborhood’s squalor, unsavory characters, and rough language--made the topic of the novella quite controversial. Crane “was describing a modern slum-world, ferocious and sordid, with … fidelity” (Berryman 58-59). Only one bookshop consented to sell the book. It bought twelve copies from Crane--and returned ten. Yet, the work caught the critical attention and praise of William Dean Howells, a respected author and literary critic. Today, it is regarded as one of Crane’s most notable works due to its realist yet artistic depiction of life in the American slums.

Crane’s *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* was an early example of a literary movement that became popular toward the turn of the twentieth century—Naturalism. Naturalists believed that actions and events resulted from biological or natural forces or from forces in the environment. They presented characters who had little or no choices; their decisions were predetermined by their environment, their biological makeup, or both.

***Maggie* Evidence of Learning Portfolio**

Due: Monday, November 5, 2012

**I. Bloom’s Quizzes** (to be completed daily). You will create a Bloom’s partner quiz related to the assigned reading for each day (for a total of FOUR student-created quizzes). Include five questions total—four recall/comprehension level questions and one open-ended higher order thinking question. You will trade papers with another student at the beginning of class each day, take his or her quiz, return it, score it, and submit it to me with your evidence portfolio.

**II. Six Word Story** (use this as the cover page for your portfolio). Legend has it that Ernest Hemingway once won a bet by crafting a six-word short story: For sale. Baby shoes. Never worn. Provide an objective summary of the text by creating your own short story version of *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* using six words or less (ELACC11-12RL2).

**III. Novel Questions** (to be answered after you finish reading the novella). Be sure to cite strong and

thorough textual evidence to support your analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain (ELACC11-12RL1).

1. How would you characterize or describe Crane’s writing style? How does his style contribute to the overall tone of the work (ELACC11-12RL4)?
2. How does the characters’ environment influence their development?
3. Examine the relationship between Mrs. and Mr. Johnson. How does Crane portray the power relationship between them?
4. Why was Maggie attracted to Pete? Why didn’t their relationship work out?
5. Why did Maggie’s family (Jimmie and her mother) reject her when she tried to return home? Explain why you think her life turned out the way it did.
6. Does Crane reject or endorse the sexual double standard which allows men like Jimmie to impregnate and then abandon women while at the same time condemning his sister to life on the streets for sexual activity?
7. How did Crane’s choice concerning how to structure the novel contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact (ELACC11-12RL5)?
8. Why is *Maggie* a work of Naturalism?
9. Why do you think Crane wrote *Maggie*?
10. Answer **one** of the following:
11. What role does religion play in this novella? How do the various characters use religious language and approach religious themes? How does the narrator seem to feel about organized religion? Be sensitive to analogies, similes, or metaphors using religious vehicles (for example, "shrieking like a monk in an earthquake"), and to everyday language that employs clichés with religious origins.
12. Obviously, the characters in this novella speak in the dialect of lower Manhattan, and Crane makes an attempt to preserve this dialect. Think about the use of dialect in the text: how does it make the reader feel about the characters? How is it intended to make the reader feel? Think especially about the relationship between how the characters sound and what they are saying
13. Maggie may be the title character of this work, but it is certainly arguable that the real subject of the novella is the city of New York, and more specifically the Bowery neighborhood. How does the narrator treat New York and the Bowery? What do you think the attitude of the narrator is towards the Bowery? You should make reference to the work's several extended descriptions of the neighborhood, bearing in mind, in most cases, that these are far longer than Crane’s descriptions of actual people

**IV. Primary Source Analysis** (read the letter below and answer the question that follows)

**A Letter from Stephen Crane to Miss Catherine Harris November 12, 1896**

Thank you very much for your letter on Maggie. I will try to answer your questions properly and politely. Mrs. Howells was right in telling you that I have spent a great deal of time on the East Side and that I have no opinion of the missions. That—to you—may not be a valid answer since perhaps you have been informed that I am not very friendly to Christianity as seen around town; I do not think that much can be done with the Bowery as long as the [word blurred] are in their present state of conceit. A person who thinks himself superior to the rest of us because he has no job and no pride and no clean clothes is as badly conceited as Lillian Russell. In a story of mine called “An Experiment in Misery” I tried to make plain that the root of Bowery life is a sort of cowardice. Perhaps I mean a lack of ambition or to willingly be knocked flat and accept the licking. The missions for children are another thing and if you will have Mr. Rockefeller give me a hundred street cars and some money I will load all the babes off to some pink world where cows can lick their noses and they will never see their families any more. My good friend Edward Townsend— have you read his “Daughter of the Tenements”?—has another opinion of the Bowery and it is certain to be better than mine. I had no other purpose in writing “Maggie” than to show people to people as they seem to me. If that be evil, make the most of it.

1. How does your reading of this letter influence, change, or support your interpretation of the text? Include specific evidence from both the novella and the letter to support your response.

**V. Product** (create one of the following after you have finished reading the novella)

1. **Crime Scene Report**

Use the directions below to help you construct a crime scene report related to Maggie’s death. As most of the circumstances surrounding her death are unknown, you will have to be creative and inventive as you fill in the details in addition to making inferences from the text.

* 1. Identify the type of crime that was committed.
  2. Include the exact or approximate time and place of the crime. Provide the address of the crime scene, as well as its description.
  3. Include the names and contact information of everyone involved in or affected by the crime, and explain the reason for their presence at the scene.
  4. Describe the appearance of the scene, and give specific details about property damage related to the crime. Include information about how the crime was discovered and reported to the authorities.
  5. Describe injuries that were sustained as a result of the offense, and include the victims' names. Make a list of stolen or damaged belongings, and provide the value of each item.
  6. Organize the report in sections and include photos of the crime scene.

1. **Maggie’s Obituary**

While obituaries have appeared in newspapers as early at the 18th century, they didn’t become commonplace until the mid-1800s. Many early obituaries were very brief, merely mentioning that Michael Brown died as his home on Saturday last.” Others resemble mini-biographies. The details included in obituaries vary greatly across the years and across geographic locations. The prominence of a person within a community may also dictate the amount of space and detail included in an obituary, but you will ignore this fact as you construct a detailed obituary for Maggie.

1. **Character Map**

Create a visual representation that symbolically represents each character and highlights the relationships and conflicts between and among characters.

1. **Propose a Product** (must be approved)

**VI. Interdiscipinary Connection**

Make a connection between the novella and another discipline, such as history, mathematics, science, philosophy, psychology, sociology, economics, music, art, etc. In a response of no more than 250 words, demonstrate how the novella relates to the other discipline and discuss how your knowledge of the other discipline informed your reading of the text and enhanced your understanding of the setting, characters, conflicts, or themes therein.

**VII. Writing and Language Standards** (adhere to the standards below for all portfolio writings)

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| **Writing**  Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content (**ELACC11-12W2)** |
| 1. Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. |
| 1. Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience’s knowledge of the topic. |
| 1. Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts. |
| 1. Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic. |
| 1. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. |
| 1. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic). |
| **Language**  Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking (**ELACC11-12L1)**. |
| 1. Apply the understanding that usage is a matter of convention, can change over time, and is sometimes contested. |
| 1. Resolve issues of complex or contested usage, consulting references (e.g., *Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary of English Usage*, *Garner’s Modern American English*) as needed. |
| Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing (**ELACC11-12L2)**. |
| 1. Observe hyphenation conventions. |
| 1. Spell correctly. |
| 1. Produces legible work that shows accurate spelling and correct use of the conventions of punctuation and capitalization. |

**Reading Schedule** (ELACC11-12RL9)

As there is only one class set of these books, you will not be issued a text and reading will be completed in class. Those who are unable to keep up with the pace of the reading schedule should take advantage of electronic versions of the text that are available online.

* Monday, October 29, 2012: pgs. 1-10

(parts I and II)

* Tuesday, October 30, 2012: pgs. 10-34 (parts III-VIII)
* Wednesday, October 31, 2012: pgs. 34-62 (parts IX-XV)
* Thursday, November 1, 2012: pgs. 62-75 (parts XVI-XIX)

***Maggie* Evidence of Learning Portfolio Rubric**

Due: Monday, November 5, 2012

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Component** | **Missing**  **(0)** | **Incomplete**  **(3-4)** | **Inadequate**  **(5-6)** | **Emerging**  **(7-8)** | **Proficient**  **(9-10)** |
| **Bloom’s quizzes** (4) |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Six word story**  (cover page) |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Novel questions** (1-10) |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Primary source analysis** (11) |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Product** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Interdisciplinary connection** |  |  |  |  |  |

The designation of **missing** indicates a component has not been included. The designation of **incomplete** is reserved for partially completed components. The designation of **inadequate** is reserved for components which are complete but do not meet all the component requirements or reveal limited evidence of comprehension, critical thinking, and analysis of the text. The designation of **emerging** is reserved for components which are complete and meet all of the component requirements and reveal emerging evidence of comprehension, critical thinking, and analysis of the text. The designation of **proficient** is reserved for components which are thoroughly completed, meet all of the component requirements, and reveal strong evidence of comprehension, critical thinking, and analysis of the text.