Blogging Guidelines

Course Blog URL: https://envisioningotherworlds.wordpress.com/
Password for protected pages: amstudies316

As discussed on the syllabus, the course blog will serve as an interactive space outside of the classroom for reflecting on course readings and questions. The main purpose of this blog is to develop and strengthen your close reading skills collaboratively. However, since this class is about "21st Century Expression," I hope that you will also use it as a forum to share texts and objects you encounter in your daily lives that are related to the course theme and questions, including the occasional news article, youtube video, blog post, event announcement, etc.

At the beginning of the semester, I will invite you to join the blog as an **"author"** on the site, which allows you to write, upload photos and other media, edit, and publish your own posts. You should receive an email from **wordpress.com** with instructions on how to create an account and join the course blog. More detailed instructions on the basics of creating and publishing posts and comments are available below.

*Please email me if you encounter any issues accessing or navigating the site.

Blogging: For almost every class, you will be expected to make a contribution to the course blog either as a **poster** or as a **commenter**.

Posting: Throughout the semester you will be required to compose two blog responses, which must be uploaded by no later than **5:00pm the day before class** so that other students will have ample time to comment. You will select your response dates at the beginning of the semester, so please mark them clearly in your calendar. Responses will be graded on a ✓, ✓-, ✓+ scale. Late responses cannot be made up.

This blog response should offer a close reading of a passage (5-10 lines of typed prose) from one of the assigned readings, which is to be re-typed at the beginning of your post. (If you are close reading a scene from a graphic novel or film, you should offer a brief 5-10 line summary of the scene in lieu of the typed passage). Your response should provide careful, detailed analysis of the passage/scene, paying particular attention to the author's use of language and literary devices, aesthetic techniques (lines and shading, color, lighting, costumes, etc.) as well as the larger themes, issues, and questions the passage/scene raises. Responses should be well thought out and organized, but do not have to be written as formal papers. They will be evaluated on the depth of your engagement with the text.

Formatting:

- Responses should be approximately **250-500 words** long (excluding the passage text)
- Provide a **clear and informative title**, e.g. Mary's response to "First Contact"
- Your post should open with a passage from the text you are responding to (5-10 lines of typed prose). It should go on to provide a **detailed close reading** of this passage (*not* a summary or personal anecdote)
- Quotations and passages referenced should be accompanied by parenthetical citations with the appropriate page/line numbers, if applicable.

Comments: During classes where you are not responsible for writing a blog post, you are expected to comment on at least one student's close reading response. Comments are due by no later than **9:00am the day of class**. Late comments cannot be made up.

Your comments should demonstrate careful engagement with other students' ideas. As a commenter, you may do one of two things:

1. Extend another student's close reading of the text by drawing out additional details, themes, and/or questions that have not yet been addressed by the original poster or subsequent commenters.
2. Alternatively, you may introduce an additional passage/scene from the text that is related to the original poster's close reading analysis. If you choose this option, please quote/ summarize the passage/scene you have selected and offer a brief explanation of the connections between them.

Formatting:
- Comments should be approximately **50-150 words** in length
- You should sign your name at the end of your comment

Blogging Basics

Accessing the course blog:
- Go to **wordpress.com** and "log in" with the username and password you created after receiving the invitation to serve as an "author" on the course blog.
- You will be redirected to a "Reader" page. On the top of the screen, click on the **"My Site"** tab, which will take you to the general data page for "Envisioning Other Worlds."
- If you want to see the front page of the blog, click on **"View Site"** on the left-hand toolbar.
- If you want to create a blog post, click on **"WP Admin"** on the left-hand toolbar, which should redirect you to the blog's "**Dashboard.**"

*Alternatively, to access the course blog, you can type in the URL printed at the top of this document. This will allow you to read and comment on each other's blog responses, but keep in mind that in order to post a new blog entry, you will have to log in.

How to post a new blog entry:

- When you are on the blog's **"Dashboard,"** which should be indicated on the left-hand toolbar at the top of the screen, scroll down to **"Posts"** and click **"Add New."** This will redirect you to a blank template for your blog entry.
- You can fill in the title and type up your response here. When you are done, click on the blue **"Publish"** button on the right-hand side.

Adding media and/or links to a blog entry:
- To add media, including photos and videos, to a blog post, click on the **"Add Media"** button on the toolbar at the top of the post you are editing. This will redirect you to a screen that displays our collective **"Media Library,"** which contains all of the documents/photos/videos we have uploaded as a class.
- If you want to upload pictures/documents from your computer, click on the **"Upload Files"** tab at the top of the screen.
- If you want to insert images or text from a **Tweet, YouTube**, or **URL**, you can click on the corresponding link on the left-hand side bar.

*Alternatively, to insert a link into your blog entry you can click on the small "link" icon on the toolbar of the post you are editing. (It is next to the align-right button).

How to post a comment:
- To post comments, you should be on the **front page of the blog**. (You can get here simply by typing in the course blog URL. Or, if you are on the blog's dashboard, scroll over the word "My Site" at the top of the screen and click on "View Site").
- On the front page of the blog, you can scroll through and read your classmates' responses. When you have decided on which post you want to comment on, click on the **"Leave a comment"** link at the bottom of the blog entry. It should redirect you to the **"Leave a Reply"** area with a blank text box you can use to type up your comments.
- When you are done, click the **"Post Comment"** button.