

Goodman, English 122, Section 2326, Fall 2007  
Formal Essay Assignment Two: **Synthesis Essay**

Draft in 3 copies due in class on Thursday, September 27<sup>th</sup>.  
Final version due in class on Thursday, October 4<sup>th</sup>. Use your double pocket, lightweight folder. Put drafts on one side and the final on the other. Please clearly label the final “final.”

Your final essay should be 750-1000 words. Choose two of the following readings in the “Making Choices” unit: Coles, Kidder, Ascher, Hedges, Dubus, Gerber, Baum, and Orwell. We have discussed some of these in class; others you have read on your own. You may have chosen to write reading responses to some – you may write again on those here.

Using the 2 of the above readings, discuss one of the themes and issues listed below and arrive at your own idea about it. While you will likely be using some comparison and contrast techniques to address your theme or issue, this is NOT primarily a comparison contrast essay assignment. Rather, the emphasis here is on arriving at you own ideas about the theme or issue at hand in the 2 essays. The hard part will be discovering your thesis question (the answer to this will generate your thesis). Choose a question to which you do NOT know the answer at first – that will help you create a deep, interesting essay because it will force you to analyze both the readings and your own reactions and ideas. Although it’s always hard to strictly categorize essays by rhetorical type, think of this as an exploratory, expository essay that will arrive at a main idea and some sub-ideas about your theme or issue. You will be arriving there by analyzing what the readings (the texts) have to say and combining this with your own thinking and experience. **Your essay should have an explicit thesis. Use at least 5 quotations from the readings.**

*Themes/Issues:*

Responsibility for/to others  
Sense of purpose/meaning  
Heroism  
Pull of personal glory  
Pull of violence/aggression/death  
Pull of love  
Empathy  
Economics and moral choices  
Language and reality  
Work  
Fear

Note: There may be other themes/issues that interest you and that arise out of the readings. Please see me if there’s something else you want to pursue. You have to get my okay first.  
**Use full MLA form. See your handbook and bring questions to class.**