How to Read Novels Like a Professor Outline Assignment

1. Chapter 1: “Pickup Lines and Open(ing) Seductions, or Why Novels Have First Pages
   a. What the importance of page 1 in a novel?
   b. Many literary elements are introduced in page 1 (even paragraph 1)...KNOW THESE in case of a pop quiz...hint hint....
      i. Style, Tone, Mood, Diction, POV, Narrative Presence, Narrative Attitude, Time Frame, Time Management, Place, Motif, Theme, Irony, Rhythm, Pace, Expectations, Character, etc

2. Chapter 2: “You Can't Breathe Where the Air Is Clear”
   a. Reading is an interaction between two imaginations: the ______________________ and the _________________________
      i. Nowhere is this more important than in __________________ (understand the essential artifice of the novel: it is a made up work about make up people in a made up place; all of which is very real)
      ii. The responsibility of ________________________ is to the characters in the story

3. Chapter 3: “Who’s in Charge Here?”
   a. Types/Definitions of Narrators and Point of View
      i. Third Person omniscient
         1. (define)
      ii. Third Person limited
         1. (define)
      iii. Third Person Objective
         1. (define)
      iv. Stream of consciousness
         1. (define)
      v. Second Person
      vi. First Person Central
         1. (define)
      vii. First person secondary
         1. (define)
   b. Why is it important to trust your narrator?

4. Chapter 4: “Never Trust a Narrator with a Speaking Part”
   a. Problems with first person narrators
      i. Stop believing narrator when you see "I"
      ii. Often times character-narrators simply don’t know what’s going on or can’t fully process what they see.
iii. First person narration is the perfect vehicle for offering something less than the whole truth and nothing but the truth

5. Chapter 5: “A Still, Small Voice (or a Great, Galumphing One)”
   a. How writers use voice and why matters to you, the reader
      i. If point of view is about which cat is telling the story and whether he’s looking at the world from on top of the rock or under it, then ___________ is about what sort of cat he is. It’s about WORD __________. And WORD ___________.
      ii. Differentiation is required for multiple voices in a novel (you must keep them sorted out!)
      iii. How do you characterize the speaker? (and different speakers?)
      iv. _____________ is meaning; what a narrator says and how he says it changes the story being told.

6. Chapter 6: “Men (and Women) Made out of Words, or My Pip Ain’t Like Your Pip”
   a. The reader plays a big part in creating the characters
   b. We create our own versions of characters based on our own experiences and history and knowledge
   c. What makes us so invested in a character? “Caution: what follows is made up and only ever happened in the mind of the writer and, should you continue, in your mind as well.”
   d. Internal Consistency is one of the main things an audience demands of a literary work
   e. Authors don’t fully develop characters purposefully
      i. Only tell you as much as you absolutely need to know…why?
      ii. Iceberg Theory: keep characters mostly under the surface

7. Chapter 7: “When Very Bad People Happen to Good Novels”
   a. Evil Characters!
   b. Distance from reader to novel that makes the evil things in a novel bearable
      i. “anti-heroes” (define)

8. Chapter 8: “Wrinkles in Time, or Chapters Just Might Matter”
   a. What are the purposes of chapters in a novel?
      b. Chapters can be whatever the novelist wants them to be; help teach us how to read the particular novel
         i. Beginning-middle-end
         ii. Mini-narratives
         iii. Plot twists
         iv. punchy finishes
      c. Just think: Can the chapters be freestanding stories that make sense out of the context of their novel?
      d. Just think: Do they focus on single events or chains of occurrences?
      e. Just think: Do the mini-endings allow for upticks in tension, suspense, or revelation?

9. Chapter 9: “Everywhere is Just One Place”
   a. “____________” doesn’t exist in a novel; but ______________ themes are everywhere
   b. The reader matters; they are at the heart of every novel
   c. How is the novel about ordinary life; middle-class, working-class, or down and out?
      i. Why is this important?

10. Chapter 10: “Clarissa’s Flowers”
    a. Characters are revealed by their actions and words; the items that surround them, too
       i. Character ______________
          1. Can form a sort of motif in their repetition
          2. Typically reveal aspects of his personality as well as key ingredients of the story: plot, significance, idea, motif, theme
       ii. Readers are the ultimate arbiters of meaning in a work; (writers can suggest meaning and significance, but ultimately, readers make the final call)
   a. We know authors by their words
   b. Word choice and placement define a writer’s style, tone, diction, etc.
   c. Add readers, add meaning

   a. No length requirement for sentences except _________________________________________________________________
   b. Make connections between style and story

   a. All representations of consciousness are ________________ and __________________
   b. S of C aims to get inside characters’ minds
      i. Thoughts will go where they will, leap in ways that defy logic, and take on a life of their own; whole
         jumble of thought, instinct, pre-thought, reflex and response to stimulus which the character is
         subject
      ii. Humans experience time subjectively
   c. It is impossible to see into another mind, so writers therefore employ devices that create the illusion of
      consciousness

14. Chapter 14: “The Light on Daisy’s Dock”
   a. To understand characters, you have to know their ____________________ …the desire usually finds
      an emblem to give it tangible expression
   b. What are the characters’ ultimate goals? Not always easy to spot!

15. Chapter 15: “Fiction About Fiction”
   a. What is “metafiction”?
   b. Self-referential writing
      i. Some writers choose not to emphasize the “made-ness” of the book; this emphasis is called
         “_________________”; literary realists tend to do this to the story and relegate the messy
         business of artistic self-awareness to the background
   c. All novelists/novels are influenced by other novels (whether they know it or not)
   d. Fiction cuts itself loose from the moorings of reality so that it can give pleasure, so that the imagination can
      run free of any constraints but its own.

16. Chapter 16: “Source Codes and Recycle Bins”
   a. Novel is both counterfeit and authentic
   b. Novels come from authors’ personal experiences, history, media (current events), and other books they have
      read
   c. Writing and reading grow out of experience
   d. One of the most important things is a writer’s ability to see what’s flawed in society. And what’s funny.
   e. The Law of Novel Paradox: Novels grow out of ____________________________, which writers then must
      make ______________________ and _______________________ to readers.

17. Chapter 17: “Improbabilities: Foundlings and Magi, Colonels and Boy Wizards”
   a. Novels let us become people we aren’t; we become the characters
   b. Novel is about US. Come at a time of the rise of the middle class
   c. We become the characters in the novels.
      i. Novels want an emotional investment of their readers.
      ii. Goal: make us love (or hate) the characters
      iii. Characters: persons we can react to, relate to, accept or reject, identify with, suffer over
      iv. Readers choose the degree to which they identify with characters

18. Chapter 18: “What’s the Big Idea—or Even the Small One?”
   a. Doesn’t matter how good the __________________________ is if the __________________________ is lousy
   b. For many, novel is as close as we will ever come to philosophy
   c. Novel is the perfect medium for capturing individual existence, and in turn for capturing the experience of the
      group (What does it mean to be human? How can we conduct our lives to best effect?)
   a. Best way to organize a novel is the way that makes the most sense for THAT book
   b. Novel = new
   c. Novels are told differently; many no longer follow a linear storyline

20. Chapter 20: “Untidy Endings”
   a. The degree of closure in the ending of the novel is in direct proportion to the eagerness of the novelist to please his audience
   b. Openings tell us where we’re going, endings tell us where we went!
   c. Even novels about real people are inventions
   d. Popular genres stick to the ____________ endings; novels usually end in two ways, though: leaving the protagonist hanging, or ending with unfinished business

   a. Every novel is a wrestling match between the h________________________ and ______________________ forces of its own time (sometimes the history is apparent, sometimes it’s not, but it’s always present)
   b. The thing about history and the novel is that readers have to put in the ______________________ themselves

22. Chapter 22: “Conspiracy Theory”
   a. Novels ASK to be read, and tell us how to read them
   b. Meaning in fiction is the result of a conspiracy between two ______________ and two __________________
   c. Without an audience, novels have no meaning
   d. All novels are ambiguous
   e. Law for All Reading: ______________ the novels you read
   f. Novel should be INTERACTIVE in the fullest sense.