

Formal Paper 2 – The Ethics of War

This assignment focuses on ethical issues that concern war. In class we have discussed how war is not a simple case of right or wrong, black or white. Rather it is a serious dilemma that encompasses multiple factors and perspectives, both personal and social. With that concept in mind, write an essay that uses two war poems we have studied, focusing on how the speakers in the poems address the moral issue of war. In addition, you must search your own conscience and present your own ethical beliefs on this topic. A major point to consider is how much personal responsibility you bear in creating an environment that is peaceful or aggressive when it comes to considering armed conflict against another country.

Length: 600-700 words

Selections

Use Thomas Hardy's, "The Man He Killed," 511, and ONE of the following poems:

Gwendolyn Brooks, "First Fight. Then Fiddle," 644

Wilfred Owen, "Dulce et Decorum Est," 723

Yusef Komunyakaa, "Facing It," 728

Wislawa Szymborska, "The End and the Beginning," 729

Organization and Format

Use the handout, "Personal Responsibility Regarding War" (WORK SHEET), as a template for composing your paper and follow the order and writing prompts outlined there. Your first three paragraphs should address the Thomas Hardy's poem and the one you have selected. Identify the works by using the authors' names and titles of their poems. Explain the way they address aspects of war. Be alert for the speakers' attitude, tone, and language. Document any major ideas and/or direct lines from the works. Provide a Work Cited page. Use MLA citation format.

The last two paragraphs listed on the handout apply to you. Be sure to give them as much thought as you have to the speakers' ideas in the first three paragraphs. Remember that now you are dealing with your own ideas, so you need to clearly address and explain with examples YOUR convictions about war and the consequences of those values and beliefs.