

Example of literature review on produce final essay: world literary works compari...

[Family](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Abstract

Three types of examples from the genres of world literature are integral to the strength of investigating the works of different periods and cultures. Different eras represented sweeping views of war, the sacred, the secular, and expressions of stories that culminated in philosophical lessons or important pieces in historical sagas. This essay develops a critique based upon the prompt which looks at the literary works of: (a) Homer's "The Iliad", (b) Dante Alighieri's "The Divine Comedy - Inferno", and (c) Elphinstone Dayrell's "Nigerian Folk Stories". The richly contrasting nuances of the literary comparisons provide a marvelous rubric and background from which to pursue the height of the Grecian Bronze Age culture (Iliad), Florence, Italy's fourteenth century poetic writings (Dante), and the early 20th-century Sacred Texts of philosophical African allegory proverb tales (Dayrell). While this essay is not argumentative, the exploratory theme dramatizes the vastness of world literature archives that span the imaginations of learners and lovers of reading throughout all eras of time, and global regions.

1. The assignment prompt chosen focuses on discussing the works from three different cultural periods, and involve direct quotes from each piece. The three pieces directed and captured my curiosity because they are so different from each other, and approach creative literature in ways unique to their own time and space. The chosen works include: Dante's Inferno, Nigerian Folk Stories, and The Iliad. The reason why I felt this mix of literature was important to examine is that it includes the Iliad, which although is considered a classic its literary analysis has been overdone and

<https://assignbuster.com/example-of-literature-review-on-produce-final-essay-world-literary-works-comparison/>

rehashed almost to the point where it can become boring – in the student’s mind. But since there are always fresh discoveries to be made, I thought it would be useful to pair the Iliad with African folklore written in a later period (1910) when global industry was booming, and Dante’s Inferno – in keeping with the classic Christian view of a punitive eternity of hellfire.

2. I chose Dante, the Iliad, and Nigerian Folk Stories due to the interesting differences and also to elaborate on the universal theme that humankind enjoys thinking about. For example, no matter what culture or era in humanity’s existence there has always been a struggle to understand more about wars, love, wisdom, and the afterlife.

3. I feel the main strengths of the essay involve the kaleidoscope of choices in literature, in the first place. The main strengths distribute an awareness of the various cultures, and eras, represented by each piece. A sensitivity to each work in its rightful context help to give the essay a weighty significance that otherwise might be missed, if you ignore the different cultures in which the works were originally created.

4. The parts of the essay that may represent a weakness or highlight an area in need of more work, are the lack of a deeper understanding of how each culture actually operated in its period. It is easy to simply regurgitate accurate time zones of the different periods and cultures, but it is very difficult to actually firmly grasp what life must have been like during the days of when each piece was written.

5. I think I would like most feedback from the parts that discusses the Iliad because there were challenges in trying to approach it in an intelligent, thoughtful, cogent way that investigated the differences adequately in these

three literary works.

The Homer classically penned literature, written in 800 B. C. E. well before the European Renaissance period, the Iliad war tale occurs amidst the backdrop of the Trojan War in Greece. Scholars would argue over whether the Trojan War really took place, especially since supposedly it lasted a full ten years when the Iliad dramatizes the last part of that decade. Its literary style obviously reflects the culture of poetic beliefs in a multitude of gods and goddesses. The opening scene appears to be leading into a fight, and the poetic expressions speak of the need for revenge when it states " Sing, O goddess, the anger of Achilles son of Peleus, that brought countless ills upon the Achaeans. Many a brave soul did it send hurrying down to Hades, and may a hero did it yield a prey to dogs and vultures, for so were the counsels of Jove fulfilled from the day on which the son of Atreus, king of men, and great Achilles, first fell out with one another" (" Apus World Literature, Vol. 1, The Iliad"). Although the situation is not funny at all, nor comical (because there is nothing more serious than war and death) but the language employs very flowery and poetic arrangements - which is difficult for the modern English reader to grasp.

However, as an ancient literary work the Iliad helps people to understand that the people in the Grecian culture at that time perceived that literature should be framed in long narratives. The story-telling the Iliad can be exciting if you concentrate on the twists in the plot, realizing that much of the animosity involved King Agamemnon wanting (and taking) the beautiful woman Briseis from King Achilles. However, to backtrack a bit, a literary similarity exists between the Iliad and Dante's ' Inferno' since both pieces

assume the existence of a literal burning hellfire, located down there in the earth. Just as in Homer's Book 1 of the Iliad refers to souls 'hurrying down to Hades' Dante states, apparently during his tour of Hell in receiving a reply from the 'Master' in describing the place "These no longer any hope of death; And this blind life of theirs is so debased, They envious are of every other fate. No fame of them the world permits to be; Mercy and Justice both disdain them. Let us not speak of them, but look, and pass" ("Apus World Literature, Vol. 3, Inferno," 610). In Dante Alighieri's time in 1300 Florentine Italy were considered the so-called 'High' middle ages. The idea of heaven and hell as literal places in sacred beliefs based upon Christian ideology held firmly.

Since Dante's period and culture were greatly removed from the ancient days of when Homer's Iliad was contrived, people were not entertaining the intense interference and participation of many different gods and goddesses as in the ancient Greek culture. Dante's Inferno reflected biblical theology in terms of the afterlife in a general sense. Dante actually travels through various levels, stages, and regions of parts of Hell overlapping a 'Purgatory' zone, which does not exclusively adhere to classic Christianity – according to one scholar, Barrus, who adds "it is necessary to either ignore or explain away these discrepancies, which is perhaps a great mistake" (1). Barrus' point in other words, is that Dante's portrayal of Hell as varying levels of heinous atrocities and punishments acted as a kind of literary device to emphasize the philosophical deepness of the poem. Also, even though Dante lived in an updated Italian culture as compared to Homer's ancient Greek setting at the end of the Bronze Age, both works were actually poems. One

great difference is that the Iliad entailed a hero set in an epic drama, while Dante's Inferno did not. There is no hero to be found in order to escape Hell, which is why it is 'Hell' in the first place.

A familiar theme of both Homer's "Iliad" and Dante's "Inferno" are themes of calamity and violence that permeate from anger. In the ancient "Iliad" the anger rages on between the two kings in the poem, Agamemnon and Achilles. The anger in Dante's poetic tale rides on a wave's crest of "religious orthodoxies" as Barrus puts it, and whether his Inferno stems closer to a blend of Roman Catholicism than straight-up Christianity seems to be the case (1). Having now posited thoughts pertaining to the Iliad, and Dante's Inferno, we turn to an investigative analysis of bringing Dayrell's "Nigerian Folk Stories" into the conversation. Whereas the Iliad represents a literary work in the latter part of the Helladic Greek period, of which history one expert describes a king's setting "The palace of Mycenae was built to express the power of the king that ruled from it. The walls of the palace were built of massive stone blocks in a style known as Cyclopean construction, so-called because later people who viewed such ruins believed only giant creatures such as Cyclops could have built on such a scale" ("Mycenaean Civilization," 1). The Nigerian set of folktales emerges from the Southern Nigerian culture in Africa.

In pronounced, stark contrast there are no colossal towers of over-sized castles of massive stone and marble in Southern Nigeria during the period when Dayrell's folktales appear in 1910. This set of world literature cultivates its richness from a plethora of charming, brief stories that have a message of warning and wisdom. The use of language in the literacy device is very

simple, straightforward and not at all flowery, yet the characters are fantastic! Tortoises that can speak, and engage with human interactions represents just a single example of these extremely interesting Nigerian folktales. But the stunning quality that characterizes them is the fact that each story always has a moral to it - that is, a pearl of wisdom that correlates to having learned a lesson from its telling. The culture in Nigeria did embrace the historical reality of kings, in terms of a ruling monarchy. But the king within African culture appeared to have more human contact with the people in his society, and unlike ancient Greek or Florentine Italian Middle Ages, was not sequestered off somewhere. The African kings had consistently garnered respect and were held in high regard amongst the people, but he might sit on a large stone outside in a natural, public clearing in order to speak to his subjects in rendering a decision on this or that. Money, in terms of a means of the exchange of goods, were considered in pieces of fine-woven and or dyed cloth, palm oil, livestock such as goats or cows, and the like.

In the story of Nigerian Folk Stories, entitled ' The Tortoise with a Pretty Daughter' the king of one nation-kingdom had given his princely son fifty beautiful wives, but the son did not love any of them. His father, the king was very upset about this. The king declared a law then, that if the son should ever meet a beautiful woman and fall in love with her, her parents and the girl shall be killed. Eventually, the tortoise, who was a king in his own right and kingdom, had a gorgeously pretty daughter. The prince saw her one day and instantly began speaking with her, and gave her parents, the royal tortoises, many gifts of dowry to wait until she grew up. The beauty

was only three years old when he first laid eyes on her. Later, to shorten the recounting of the tale, the prince confessed to his parents of his great love for her and brought her to meet the king. The king was instantly smitten with her beauty, and banished the law. Henceforth, the moral of the story: Always have pretty daughters, even if you are poor, because the king may one day fall in love with her - enfolding your family into a royal priesthood. As one commentator suggests, these Nigerian Folk Stories from Africa are rare, and strange in their adventures offering an appeal to almost anyone who reads them.

The African stories often contain magical respects and nuances about them. By comparison, the Iliad's magical components revolve around their beliefs in the mythological gods and goddesses. The African tales by contrast, often utilized a literary device wherein animals could talk and reflect humanlike attributes such as wisdom, peacefulness, or ferocity. In the case of the 'Tortoise' tale, the tortoise was said to be the wisest of all. If you think about how slow a turtle or tortoise actually conducts its movements, maybe the key to such wisdom by inference is having the quality of patience.

In conclusion, these three tales come from widespread periods, cultures, and styles of life in various geophysical settings. The human core of commonality divulges that all human beings need to express themselves creatively, with literature, to explore the values of what is important about their lives. One observer, in discussing the African folklore, states " In the fables of the world, speaking animals, human in all but outward aspect, are the characters" (" Introduction - Folk Stories from Southern Nigeria - Sacred Texts"). While it is true that certain societies in their respective eras and

cultures may be religious or secular, at the end of the day we are all human beings.

Works Cited

Barrus, Roger M. "Dante's Introduction to the Comedy: An Analysis of Inferno 1."

Conference Papers -- New England Political Science Association (2011): 1-21.

Political Science Complete. Web. 20 Dec. 2014.

"Introduction - Folk Stories from Southern Nigeria." Sacred-texts Sacred Texts - Africa, n. d.

Web. 20 Dec. 2014.

"The Iliad A Practical Approach." Yale. edu Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, 2009. Web.

20 Dec. 2014.

"Mycenaean Civilization: The Culture of Bronze Age Greece." Saylor. org The Saylor Academy,

Overton, William. (Ed.). APUS ePress World Literature Anthology: Through the Renaissance.

Vol. 3. La Vergne: American Public University Electronic, 2011. Electronic.

*{Dante's Inferno}.

Overton, William. (Ed.). APUS ePress World Literature Anthology: Through the Renaissance.

Vol. 2. La Vergne: American Public University Electronic, 2011. Electronic.

*{Nigerian Folk Stories}.

Silva, Linda. (Ed.). APUS ePress World Literature Anthology: Through the Renaissance.

<https://assignbuster.com/example-of-literature-review-on-produce-final-essay-world-literary-works-comparison/>

Vol. 1. La Vergne: American Public University Electronic, 2011. Electronic.

*{Homer's The Iliad}.