

Formal and Technical Points

1. **Length:** Essays for a *große Schein* should not exceed 5,000 words (about 13-15 single-spaced A4-pages), not counting references; those for a **kleine Schein** should be no longer than **2,000 words** (5 A4-pages), again excluding references. Special rules can apply to essays in BA –course classes.
2. **Footnotes:** at the **bottom of the page**. Don't forget the **page numbers**, not least in the **table of contents**. Use **short titles** for books etc in the main body of your essay, but give **full details in the bibliography/ references** (see below point no 9). Leave a **right-hand or left-hand margin of 2 cm** for my use. If you put my name on the title page, use **Dr. M. Pätzold**.
3. Students are advised to make at least **two copies** of their essay: Professors have been known to lose student essays. Handwritten work cannot be accepted. If you use a computer, please hand in **a hard copy/print-out and a 3,5 inch diskette** with your essay on it. Essays are to be in **ONE** file only (no separate files for table of contents, introduction, bibliography etc).
4. Please write an (email) **address and telephone number** on the first page of your paper where you can be reached at **all times**.
5. **Deadlines:** proposal for paper : 3 weeks from end of term; table of contents plus sample paragraph : 2 weeks from end of term; **summer term** papers are due **by 30 September**; **winter term** papers are due not later than **31 March**.

General Points

Above all: **Make sure the individual parts of your paper present a coherent argument. Ask yourself what function the parts have for each other and for your paper as a whole**, and spell these things out in the **introduction**. Include a **summary**, in which you review the **most important results** of your essay. Make sure your thoughts hang together. How do you get from one sentence, or paragraph, or section, or chapter to the next? Make this **explicit** for me - I cannot read your mind and you have to tell me in so many words. Use headings/descriptive labels. **Be redundant**. Force yourself to use **sentence connectors** like *on the other hand, however, moreover, again* etc. Write **linking sentences** for larger textual units (e.g. sections, chapters).

1. In the case of literary –critical essays: (Long) **essays are meant to relate to work done in class**. You should include a brief **plot summary** (not more than 400 words) of the text(s) you write about. **Compare** your text with one or more other class texts.
2. I expect you to know, and use, relevant **technical terms** (of linguistics or literary studies) .
3. **Always** note down **your own thoughts first** before you consult books.
4. **Bibliography:** It is, on the other hand, an indispensable part of scholarly work to find out what other people think about your topic/text/author etc. and to be able to give brief summaries of those of their views that are relevant to your

argument. The books on the reserved shelf are only a start. But remember: first your own thoughts, and then go to the books for confirmation, or refutation. This way you will get more, and more relevant, information from the books.

5. **Intellectual property:** If you should decide to adopt or adapt other people' s ideas **you must acknowledge all your sources**. It is irrelevant whether you have found them in a book, on the Web or heard them from a professor in a course.

6. When you make a **generalization** (about a text or an author, her/his works, a whole period, language, literature or history in general) **you must give some evidence for it**. However, it is usually best to avoid such sweeping statements altogether.

General Note: Scholars want to play it safe and use downtoners like *would seem, usually, often, it can be said that*.

7. When you give a **quotation**, always be sure it does what you mean it to do. Do not just go on to your next idea or paragraph, but **explain in a sentence or two** what you think the quotation shows.

8. **Language Check:** Is this your first paper in English? Have you read sufficient linguistic/literary criticism on which you can model yourself? Have you copied useful phrases from books and articles? **If not, do it now**. Also, it is a good idea to read your paper out aloud to yourself or a friend before you hand it in.

9. **Scholarly conventions:** It does not matter much to me what style you use for references, footnotes and quotations. But: be **consistent** in your use of the conventions. **Take a book or article for your guide**.

When you talk about language, the piece of language talked about needs to be put in quotation marks (e.g. "...he calls them ' gutter creature' ")

References: Use abbreviated references in your footnotes. At the end of your paper references should be given in full, with the author's first/given and second names, date and place of publication, title of work, series, journal etc.

Language: When you write in English: see also point 8 above.

1. Strategy: write your paper, give it a rest for a week and then go back to check again on its language.

2. Criticism of literary works of art is done in the **present tense** where the works, the characters and the plot are concerned. When you talk about the author(' s life and activities) you must use the past tense if (s)he is dead.

3. Other well-known **difficulties** include:

> **complementation** of nouns, adjectives and verbs (e.g. infinitive or -ing-form; phrase or clause complements; prepositions); **prepositions**

> **collocations** (noun-adjective/verb; adjective/adverb/verb plus adverb).

> avoid too informal or slang expressions; do not use **repetitions**; write in sentences, not telegraphese; use language only, no symbols; watch your **spelling**; remember that pronouns refer to the noun (phrase) nearest to them; do not change the standard word order subject-verb-object (SVO) unless you have a very good reason; **do not use words or constructions that you are not**

absolutely sure about; use **few participle clauses** (not more than two in any 400 words) .

Dictionaries: For *quick structural information* see Benson, M., E. Benson and R. Ilson, *The BBI Dictionary of English Word Combinations*. New, expanded edition. Amsterdam 1997. Also very useful are

*- *Oxford Phrasebuilder Genie*. Oxford 2002 (contains *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* and *Oxford Collocations*, the best dictionary for word combinations)

- *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*. 4th edn. Harlow 2003

- *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*. 6th edn. Oxford 2000

- *Cambridge Advanced Learners Dictionary* . Cambridge 2003

For linguistics : M. Markus and M. Pätzold, *Linguistik Deutsch + Englisch/ Linguistics German + English*. Essen 1999;

For literary criticism: E. Werlich, *Wörterbuch der Textinterpretation*. Dortmund 1987 (1969); W. Rotter and H. Bendl, *Analysis and Interpretation of Narrative Prose*, and *Your Companion to English Texts*, both München 1989; M. Pätzold and M. Markus, *Literaturwissenschaft Deutsch + Englisch/ Literary Criticism German + English*. Essen 2001