



## *The Scarlet Letter: Essay Assignment*

To receive full credit for this assignment, you must both a writer and an editor be (bonus points to anyone who can identify that literary allusion, and I'm not kidding).

First, you are going to write a literary analysis of *The Scarlet Letter*. A literary analysis is just what it sounds like: "analyzing" (dissecting, breaking down, examining the parts of) a work of literature. Begin with a plan: I need to see some sort of prewriting, whether it is an outline, a jot list, a web, or something else that works for you. You must write at least two drafts. After you finish your first draft, ask a peer to read and edit it for you.

Part of your job for this project is also that of editor. Using the Ratiocination process (see Ratiocination handout), edit another student's work. Note also what they did well or what you liked about their writing as well as what they could improve (aside from the Ratiocination guidelines). **Sign their first draft.**

Look over the comments your editor has made and decide which revisions to implement. Type a final draft: double-spaced, size 12 font, normal font face, 1-inch margins (that's the default on MS Word and Word Perfect).

I assume you know the standard lecture regarding plagiarism. Since this is mostly "out of class" in the drafting and revising stage, I cannot stand over you like a hawk and force you to be honest in your writing as I could if we were writing in class; however, I know my way around the web and standard academic literature. Consider that a friendly reminder. Word of advice: most of those papers for sale on the Internet are absolute rubbish. You could write circles around those hacks on your worst day. Just in case you're still not convinced, anyone caught plagiarizing will have to wear a scarlet letter P.

If you are stuck for topics, consider one of the following:

- ❖ Examine one of the novel's many symbols.
- ❖ Trace the development of one of the characters.
- ❖ Examine how Puritans are represented in the novel.
- ❖ Compare and contrast two characters: Hester and Chillingworth; Hester and Dimmesdale; Dimmesdale and Chillingworth.