

Major Discussion in “Major American Authors”

Oral Component

For the six authors we engage this semester, I will ask you to argue *for* or *against* each writer’s inclusion in a discussion of “Major” American authors. In a two-minute oral presentation I want you to establish your stance and clearly define the values you use to adjudicate each author’s major-ness. Values such as historical/literary impact, continuing resonance, your personal affective response(s), and cultural popularity are examples of values you may use to substantiate and organize your response.

Your response will primarily be scored on the clarity and persuasiveness of your argument. I will also provide notes to help build your skills as a public speaker over the course of the term. Review your notes on public speaking tips from our class discussion. Be particularly mindful to:

- Speak slowly
- Enunciate clearly
- Project your voice (imagine you are speaking to the people in the back of the room)
- Breathe (always breathe to the end of your thought; don’t let your ideas trail off mid-sentence)
- Inflect your ideas as a statement (remember not to let your inflection go “up” at the end of a thought as if you are asking a question; be confident in making a statement)
- Avoid vocal fry (allowing your voice to slide into the back of your throat)

Written Component

As your classmates are speaking, make note of *at least* ten comments or thoughts that you find provocative. Tell me *why* you agree or disagree with your classmate in one or two sentences.