

Explication 2: DUE 12/01
ENGL 4650; Fall 2015

Overview: Explications are exercises in *close reading*, one of the primary skills necessary for literary analysis.

The word "explication" comes from the Latin term *explicare*, which means "to unfold"; accordingly, an explication unfolds or unpacks the meaning and workings of a literary text. Explications typically examine a text intensively, *line by line*, so they are usually used to interpret either short poems or short passages from longer works of fiction or drama.

An explication should account for all or most of the lines of the poem or passage, paying attention to whatever devices (connotations, allusions, metaphors and similes, symbols, rhythm, sounds, etc.) seem important. Explain how they relate to each other and to the overall meaning and/or effect of the work of literature. Your explication should have a strong thesis, and the rest of the paper should clearly support that thesis (think of your thesis statement as answering the question, "What is this poem or passage about?").

Instructions: Choose a quote from *Under the Feet of Jesus* to support an argument about the novel. You can use the questions below as a general guide toward formulating an argument. Make sure you explain the significance of the given quote as well as relate the quote to the rest of the novel. Write between 400-500 words, double-spaced, 12pt. times new roman font.

Questions about *Under the Feet of Jesus*:

1. What does this novel argue about crime and laws?
2. What does this novel argue about gender and environmental justice?
3. What does this novel argue about health care?
4. What does this novel argue about education and the American Dream?
5. What does this novel argue about immigration to the U.S.?