

An “A” paper responds to this assignment with fresh and persuasive insights.

- This essay focuses on comparing and contrasting a word/phrase/concept/figure/object in the two dream visions and argues persuasively a compelling, original, and insightful thesis.
- It is consistently directed to an audience who has read these texts but need to be reminded of the particular contexts in which the word/phrase emerges.
- Concise and fluid explanations of the word/phrase/concept/figure/object give the reader a sense of its importance to larger Chaucerian themes and tropes.
- The entire paper is sequenced around a thesis, rather than simply comparing and contrasting the two texts in the manner of a list.
- Passages that offer further evidence of the significance of the word/phrase/concept/figure/object are analyzed and explained.
- The style is fluent throughout; sentences within paragraphs are logically sequenced, and transitions within and between paragraphs are smooth.
- There are no serious or distracting mechanical errors or flaws. The paper follows the designated MLA formatting (includes a “Works Cited” page).
- It is evident that the writer has observed and analyzed the word/phrase/concept/figure/object carefully, and has presented ideas in an engaging way.

A “B” paper, like the “A” paper, is one that goes beyond a routine presentation of the word/phrase/concept/figure/object in the comparison/contrast mode. The thesis is fresh and compelling, rather than fairly obvious. What keeps it from the “A” grade could be lack of adequate development or minor, but distracting stylistic elements.

A “C” paper is one that adequately fulfills this assignment's objectives – it has all the pieces, but may develop them unevenly, giving the resulting essay a lopsided feel, reflect inadequate or underdeveloped insight about its subject.

- This essay may include a description of the word/phrase/concept/figure/object that gets overly detailed or is not well developed.
- The interpretation may lack enough evidence to become fully persuasive.
- The paper does not provide enough context for the significance of the word/phrase/concept/figure/object to be understandable to the audience.
- The paper may lack focus, or the paragraphs may not transition into each other fluently.
- The lead and the wrap-up may be present, but are perhaps more perfunctory than memorable.
- This paper may contain some errors in grammar, punctuation and usage, but most of these mistakes do not seriously interfere with the reader's understanding of the essay at large.

A “D” paper is one that responds to this assignment in an inadequate or general way.

- Its thesis may become obscured by serious mechanical/stylistic problems or it may be undeveloped to the point where the reader becomes disengaged.
- It may provide only a vague focus and be more intent on simply describing the texts.
- It may start out with a focus and lose it.
- It may base its interpretation solely on subjective opinion and fail to provide adequate evidence.
- It may, alternately, provide an overly detailed description and an underdeveloped interpretation.
- The content is so derivative of a secondary source that the writer's voice isn't established.