**Studies in American Literature**

**Berthiaume**

***The Scarlet Letter***

**Essay Topics**

* **Use the following topics in showing how the novel *The Scarlet Letter* is an allegory. Use the definition provided in class to guide and shape your introduction and in dealing with the following prompts/questions.**
* **Choose ONE topic.**

**1.** Discuss the function of the actual scarlet letter in the novel. How is it symbolic? What is its meaning? What is its function? How does it change over time. How is this symbol an essential piece of this allegory?

**2.** Pearl is both a blessing and a curse to Hester, and she seems at times to serve as Hester's conscience. Explore the character of Pearl in great detail. Explain her function in the novel and the role she plays in driving the plot of the novel. How is she an essential piece of this allegory?

3. Explore the character of Hester Prynne. How does her character exhibit characteristics of allegory? What makes her such a unique individual? How is her character an essential piece of this allegory?

4. Explore the character of Arthur Dimmesdale. How is he conflicted? What does he symbolize? How is his character an essential piece of this allegory?

5. Describe Chillingworth's "revenge." Why does he choose to torture Dimmesdale and Hester when he could simply reveal that he is Hester's husband? What does this imply about human nature? What does this imply about a sense of justice? How is his character an essential piece of this allegory?

6. Any other topic you may find “allegorical”—just check with me.

* ALL essays must be uploaded to Turnitin.com
* Use specific examples and direct quotes to support your views. MLA format, please.
* Length—5 paragraph minimum

Due:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_