

What does a Turnitin Originality Report look like?

When your work is uploaded to Turnitin, the markers will get an Originality Report similar to the one reproduced below. Your assignment text will have been compared to text maintained within a vast corpus of digital material taken from published work (both print and internet) as well as from student assignments submitted all over the English-speaking world. Any strong similarity between your words and those in the database will be flagged up to the markers and colour coded to at least one source. This source may or may not be the one used by you in your assignment, as the words could already have been borrowed or quoted, legally or illegally, by a different source, which is the one that Turnitin has found.

Fig. 1

THE UNIVERSITY OF
BUCKINGHAM

Academic Skills and Resources: Avoiding Plagiarism

Department of English
Student ID: 00000000

3
Approaches to Literature II (Spring Term)

Write a detailed critical account of one of the set short stories, highlighting the critical approach(es)* that you think is most appropriate to an effective reading of the text.

The short story on which this 10 y will be based is 'Fat' by Raymond Carver, which was first published in the collection *Will You Please Be Quiet Please?* in 1976.¹ A brief overview of this extremely short short story might run something like this. In the story a fat man comes into the restaurant, but we see this event from the waitress's point of view, for the story is dominated by her first-person narration. The waitress and the fat man have a long conversation, but during this conversation Carver keeps his authorial presence well out of view: he demands of us, as readers, that we try to make sense of what is happening emotionally during the conversation for ourselves. After the restaurant has closed the waitress goes home with her husband or partner, Rudy, but there seems to be something anticlimactic here: as readers we begin to be puzzled about where the story is really taking us.

Raymond Carver was born in 1938 and according to the American Dictionary of National Biography he was 'the son of Clevie Raymond Carver, a sawmill worker, and Ella Beatrice Casey, a retail clerk and waitress. Like his "companion soul" Anton Chekhov, Carver was a child of the working poor.' In what he called his 'first life' as an unsuccessful working class person, he married a girl called Maryann Burk at nineteen, and they had two children before he turned 21. In pursuit of higher education he moved his family to northern California in 1958. He took creative writing with John Gardner at Chico State College. He received a BA degree through part-time study from Humboldt State College in 1963. A year of graduate school at the Iowa Writers' Workshop followed. During these years of 'unrelieved responsibility and permanent distraction' Carver struggled to write while labouring as a delivery man, mill hand, and hospital janitor.

The critical approach I am going to apply first is called narratology, which developed in the twentieth-century, partly out of the New Criticism practised in British and American universities. But narratology tries to uncover some deeper structures about the way a story (or any narrative) is being presented. As Peter Barry puts it in his book *Beginning Theory*, it is a

¹ London: Harvill Press, 1995. All references will be to this version of the text.

1) Some numbered sections show similarity that is perfectly acceptable. In Fig. 1, numbers 3 and 10 relate to the essay question itself (already in the database from other assignments submitted for this module) and the title of a published collection of work, which has been properly presented as such.

2) However, number 2 shows a long chunk of text that is presented as the candidate's own work, but which—see figure 3—can be traced to an internet source published by the University of Buckingham (in fact, the Writing Guide for the Department). This has not been acknowledged or referenced in any way, and is an example of academic misconduct.

3) The third paragraph is mainly biographical information. The opening sentences have been reasonably clearly referenced to the American Dictionary of

National Biography, by the use of inverted commas, but the second half of the paragraph has not. Turnitin has NOT in fact spotted this—it is not infallible—but your markers may well recognise it, or find it, if their suspicions about the referencing of the essay have been raised by the passages which Turnitin HAS recognised.

Fig. 2

THE UNIVERSITY OF BUCKINGHAM Academic Skills and Resources: Avoiding Plagiarism

branch of structuralism, but it has achieved a certain independence from its parent. It takes much of its character and some of its terminology from linguistic theory. So, what would a narratological account of 'Fat' look like? In the first place, it would add to the summary of the story given above, the fact that the waitress is telling the whole account of the fat man to her friend Rita some time after the events of the main story. In other words, Carver is making use of a 'frame narrative' (also called 'primary narratives'), which contains within it 'embedded narratives' (also called 'secondary narratives'). For instance, the main story in Henry James's *The Turn of the Screw* is embedded within a frame narrative of a group of people telling ghost stories around the fire in a big country house at Christmas time. Here we are using terminology recommended by the important French narratologist Gerard Genette, in his great book called *Narrative Discourse* Basil Blackwell 1972.

The distinction between 'story' and 'plot' is fundamental to narratology. It is useful to think about these terms. Genette uses yet another set of equivalent terms, these being *histoire*, which has the same meaning as 'story' or *fabula*, and *recit*, which means the same as 'plot' or *sjuzhet*. When thinking about the connections between *fabula* and *sjuzhet*, it is very useful to consider Hemingway's theory of omission. He said about his new theory that you could omit anything if you knew that you omitted and the omitted party would strengthen the story. One could argue that Carver's inherits this idea. He believed that it's the things that are left out, that are implied, the landscape under the smooth surface of things that gave meaning to a story. Bethea argues that this is a key connection between the aesthetics of Hemingway and Carver. The differences in their styles has an effect on the narration, instead of slowing down narration, Hemingway's style accelerates it.

What part does Rita play in the narrative structure of the story. The narrator tells us 'I am sitting over coffee and cigarettes at my friend Rita's and I am telling her about it.'² At key points Rita reappears in the story. 'What else? Rita says. This story's getting interesting now, Rita says.' This is an instance of where the embedded tale is occasionally interrupted to revert to the frame situation.³ What makes Carver so compelling is, in the words of Arthur Saltzman, that 'Carver's characters inhabit the world immediately recognizable as proletarian America, a terrain of fast food, used cars, and garish billboards.'³

² Raymond Carver, 'Fat', in *Where I'm Calling From: The Selected Stories*, (London: Harvill, 1993), pp. 50-54
³ 50. All references will be to this edition
³ Arthur M. Saltzman, *Understanding Raymond Carver*, (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1988), p.4.

4) On the second page (see Fig. 2) Turnitin reveals most of the writing to derive from published sources. Although some secondary sources are mentioned (Genette in para. 1 and Bethea in para. 2) these are for the most part not properly referenced. Whole phrases and sentences from others' writing have been introduced but are presented by the candidate as their own. Quotation marks, and much clearer sourcing (with dates and, depending on the referencing style adopted, page numbers) are needed.

5) Only the final paragraph on the page—where footnotes are used and sources and page numbers given to the primary text, and to Saltzman's essay—is properly presented, and is an example of good practice. The rest is an example of academic misconduct.

6) At the end of the essay (see Fig. 3), the Similarity Index is given, along with a breakdown of where similar/identical material has been detected by Turnitin. Each source can be expanded to the point where its origin can be traced.

7) Note that part of the Similarity Index represents properly referenced and legitimately quoted material, and will be considered part of the strengths of the essay. A good essay **ought to have** a Similarity Index of 10% or more, representing the secondary materials that have been consulted, cited, and properly referenced.

8) However, a notable percentage of this essay derives from material that has been illegitimately presented, and will normally cause the marking team to raise an allegation of academic misconduct, to be investigated and potentially sanctioned as per the University's Policy and Procedures.

Fig. 3

Sample_Essay

ORIGINALITY REPORT

44% SIMILARITY INDEX
 37% INTERNET SOURCES
 0% PUBLICATIONS
 19% STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

| | | |
|---|--|-----|
| 1 | homes.ieu.edu.tr Internet Source | 13% |
| 2 | www.buckingham.ac.uk Internet Source | 12% |
| 3 | Submitted to The University of Buckingham Student Paper | 7% |
| 4 | Submitted to Canterbury Christ Church University Turnitin Student Paper | 2% |
| 5 | Submitted to University of St Andrews Student Paper | 2% |
| 6 | mattresspad.mundua.com Internet Source | 2% |
| 7 | Submitted to Nottingham Trent University Student Paper | 2% |
| 8 | english3.fsu.edu Internet Source | 2% |
| 9 | jsse.revues.org Internet Source | 1% |