Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Finished Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**AMERICAN LITERATURE 251 ESSAY** **ASSIGNMENT I**

**TOPIC:** Choose one or more of the selections from your text and answer one of the following questions in an essay format. DO NOT offer a summary of the selection; any discussion of the plot or information imparted should actually come in the form of an example used to illustrate some observation that you have previously expressed in your analysis.

**Option 1:**

Discuss the similarities and differences in the ways two of the early authors (Bradford, Smith, Winthrop) present Native Americans. Is one more sympathetic than the other? Give examples to illustrate your points.

**Option 2:**

Compare the poetry of Bradstreet and Taylor. What does each writer primarily focus on in her/his work? How does that focus determine the imagery and tone of each writer’s work? Use specific examples for illustration.

**Option 3:**

Discuss the intensity of faith and expression shown in the work of Jonathan Edwards and one of the following writers: Bradford, Mather, Taylor, or Bradstreet.

**Option 4:**

Discuss the similarities and differences in the ways two of the early authors use Nature to reveal character and/or important messages in their work.

**FORMAT:** The final draft should be 400 – 600 words, double spaced (or every other line skipped), and stapled. You may type it if you wish. You also need to give it an interesting and appropriate title (Essay 1 does not qualify on any level). It must also be written in ink.

**SOURCES:** Do not use outside sources other than your notes or handouts; the only other source you should use, other than your own thoughts, is your book, which must be cited using MLA format.

**AUDIENCE:** Your classmates will serve as your audience, so you do not need to summarize the information contained in the selection(s) about which you have chosen to write.

**You will be graded on the following essay components:**

* Organization of ideas into solid paragraphs, an introduction with a thesis statement, a body with supporting points, and a strong conclusion
* Standard punctuation, grammar, spelling, use of transitions, vibrant verbs
* Format adherence
* Varied sentence structure (no run-ons or fragments)
* Use of third person point of view (avoid using I, me, we, us, our, you, your)
* Verbs should be in the present tense when writing about literature unless you are referring to some incident mentioned in the story that occurred before the action itself happens
* State the name of the author and the title of the story somewhere in the first couple of sentences
* The title of your essay is just that; it is not part of your first sentence, so information contained in it must be repeated if necessary in the introduction
* Refer to the author by his or her last name, not the first. You don’t know any of these writers personally, so speaking about “William’s essay” is highly inappropriate; however, “Bradstreet’s poem” is correct.
* Cite each bit of information you get from the story properly (see the attachment)
* Don’t rely too heavily on quoted material, but if you use direct quotations, be sure to quote the material accurately, including spelling.
* Prove the point of your thesis; don’t critique whether the story is good or bad and don’t summarize the plot.
* **YOU MAY USE YOUR BOOK**. Good luck.