

For your major grade on this unit, submit a paper of no less than 750 words (not including Works Cited) in response to one of the prompts below. You may cite outside sources in support of your claims, but your paper should primarily reflect your own analysis and interpretation of the text. If you do use outside sources, use books and/or authored articles and criticism found in scholarly journals, not general websites. A good starting point to find legitimate criticism is <http://www.scdiscus.org>. Avoid consulting sites like Sparknotes, etc.

Formatting requirements: Times New Roman 12, 1" margins, double-spaced, MLA style. For information about MLA guidelines, see the Purdue Owl link in the *Bedroom*.

The due date will be announced in class and posted by Gregor in the *Bedroom*. Papers must be printed, stapled, and submitted in class. Please do not e-mail your paper unless you are absent on the due date. Late papers will not be accepted.

Prompts:

1. The conflicts between the Japanese and the Portuguese occur in political, economic, and religious contexts. Examine each of these conflicts as they are presented in *Silence*, concluding with which of them, in your opinion, is most important, and why. Note: This paper by necessity should be longer than 750 words. You may consult outside sources but only briefly to establish or confirm your claims; stay focused on the novel.
2. Consider the following: Juan de Santa Marta recovers from his infirmities and finally sneaks into Japan in the year 1666. In a short time, he is arrested; the night before he is to be suspended in the pit, he is visited by Okada San'emon, in the same way that he himself was visited by Sawano Chūan. Write the scene. Note: Your scene should not be parallel to the one in the novel, in structure or content, since Rodrigues and Ferreira are different people with different views. Also, do not use MLA format for this paper; instead, include endnotes in superscript and attach a page referencing the text for each note. For example:

¹ San'emon's statements here are based on Rodrigues' conversation with Inoue, in which they discuss Christianity as a plant and Japan as an unsuitable soil (see pp. 117-18).
3. Assess the philosophy of Inoue. What are the strengths and weaknesses of his argument? In a way (*ding!*), could Inoue be justified in his opinions? Does his behavior support or undermine his argument?
4. Endo was a finalist for the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1994. For the purpose of this assignment, assume he had won; write the acceptance speech he might have given about the importance of literature in the modern world using ideas from *Silence*.
5. *Silence* is filled with vivid imagery. Is it possible to derive a theme from the novel that is exclusively supported by this imagery? Write a paper exploring this idea under the title, "The Sights and Sounds of *Silence*."
6. It is often suggested that the title of the novel refers to the silence of God in the presence of human suffering. Does Chapter 10 and the Appendix, together, suggest other possibilities?