Critical Context Essay analysis, presentations and application to the stories
Use these outlines to aid your understanding of the critical essays. Then add your notes and notes from other members of your group to create your overview for your class presentation.

Then have this sheet handy as you read each story in the Disasters and Apocalypse section, looking for parts that apply.

“The Uncanny” by Sigmund Freud

Points of View and Perspectives
Our unconscious fears and desires both intrigue and terrify us
Is an animate being really alive. Is a seemingly lifeless thing really animate?

Thesis
The better oriented in his environment a person is, the less readily will he get the impression of something uncanny in regard to the objects and events in it. (p. 429)

Supporting points

• The Uncanny is that which is connected to the familiar yet arouses dread and horror
  o Heimlich—familiar, native, belonging to the home
  o meaning both that which is familiar and that which is concealed and kept out of sight. (p. 431)
• Fear of losing sight is one of our greatest terrors
• The idea of the “Double”
  o same face, character-trait, twist of fortune, same crime, same name
  o insurance against destruction to the ego, an “energetic denial of the power of death” (p. 437)
• Repetition compulsion
• We fear our secret intention of harming someone may become the act of harming someone (p. 441)
• If psychoanalytic theory is correct in maintaining that every emotional effect, whatever its quality, is transformed by a repression into morbid anxiety, then among such cases of anxiety there must be a class in which the anxiety can be shown to come from something repressed which recurs.—and therefore is uncanny (p. 442)
• In the second place, if this is indeed the secret nature of the uncanny, we can understand why the usage of speech has extended das Heimliche into its opposite das Unheimliche for this uncanny is in reality nothing new or foreign, but something familiar and old — established in the mind that has been estranged only by the process of repression.
• The uncanny is something which ought to have been kept concealed but which has nevertheless come to light. (p. 442)