



Jon Stansell

Writing the True Self

**A Character Approach
to Authorship**



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A Letter to Students: Writing Yourself

Although other approaches to writing assume that writing skills originate in the teacher and are transferred to you, this book is organized to increase your awareness of the writing abilities you currently have, and to build on them. The topics we will explore in this course relate to your life, which has already taught you a lot of the skills and values that we use in writing. The first three assignments ask you to draw from your own personal experiences, to describe your music preferences, life lessons, and a planned career path. Assignments 4 and 5 encourage you to develop a vision of your ideal self. The final assignment is a research paper that takes your vision into your chosen career field. These topics build on each other in meaningful ways.

Writing something significant forms a bridge from your past to your future. In the diagram below, you will see that the steps in the writing process require certain actions of you. What I hope you see in the course of this semester is how writing can actually help you to develop your values, leading to the outcomes that you desire, not only in this class, but also in your life generally. For instance, *discovering ideas* leads to *conviction* and a *sense of purpose*. In a recent research study conducted on this course, the author found that student writing had particular effects on their personal lives. Specifically, students were dealing with problems, voicing their experience, seeing a unified self, and discovering their true nature (Stansell 2012).



Writing Process	Writer Actions	Learning Values	Learner Outcomes
Prewriting	Discover ideas	Conviction	Sense of Purpose
Drafting	Form meanings	Realization	Personal Power
Writing	Create paragraphs	Expression	Individual Voice
Revising	Develop readability	Direction	Discerning Vision
Publishing	Complete essay	Operation	Idea of Self-Worth

This course focuses on personal development like some “Freshman Experience” courses, but its primary goal is your growth as a student writer and as a successful, life-long learner. You can give a C effort and write boring essays, or you can decide to give more. As Irish author George Bernard Shaw once said, “Life isn't about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself.” Through writing, you can “create yourself” as the issues you explore activate values within you. To the extent that you make your writing personally relevant, you will not only construct A-level essays, but you will also make your life more meaningful. Topics throughout the course build on a foundation of self-awareness and move towards your educational and career goals.

Why Learn to Write?

Writing can be an activity that respects and encourages the development of individuals. At college, you will have new experiences, learn job skills, and share the friendship and support of others. However, you should also focus on internal aspects, such as opening your heart and mind, committing to core values, and becoming secure in your identity. In this course, writing is presented as a bridge between the outer world and your inner self. Writing promotes coping with loss, loosening the grip of trauma, and showing others that you care.

Writing also helps you to dedicate yourself, focusing through personal core values that anyone can discover, to envision the present and future with insight and inspiration. That personal connection enables you to express yourself in your own voice, which contains a strength of conviction and self-mastery. The dual aspects of vision and voice are central to this curriculum, and in your class, you will open your eyes and free your voice, answering these questions.

- “What does my song mean to me?” A song analysis helps you to open up and share.
- “Who am I at the very core?” A belief statement communicates your values.
- “How did I become interested in my job?” A career narrative explores your voice.
- “What lessons can I take from history?” A position essay on Viktor Frankl can help.
- “What is my vision of the future?” A vision board collage shows what you stand for.
- “How can I make a difference?” A research essay literally puts your beliefs to work.

The search for true self starts with identity and creativity, develops through self-expression and dedication, and ends with some type of benevolent action. In this class, we'll follow that process together in a journey to discover your character as an author, to write ideas that make sense, and to connect with your audience. Good writing does all of these things.

The five units covered in this book correlate to the five writing assignments listed above. The advertising unit will be supported by teacher lectures, videos, and handouts. This textbook has been organized to increase student awareness of the creative experience of writing, through these topics. In each subsequent unit, you will learn about the writer actions, which are Discovering, Formulating, Creating, Developing, and Completing. These accompany the writing process. We use a general action like “discovering” instead of a term like “prewriting,” so that you can make connections to your personal values more easily, i.e. you're “discovering ideas and convictions,” not just “prewriting a paper.” It also helps you to draw from life experience.

In other words, writing with voice and vision can help you to bring your true self into your life, which leads to personal power. You're not just writing papers; you're writing yourself. However, before we dive into the first unit, let's discuss where the writing values come from.

The Learning Values

In the diagram above, learning values of Conviction, Realization, Expression, Direction, and Operation connect actions to outcomes (p. 3). The first letters of these values spell a Latin word: *CREDO*, which means “I believe.” None of these principles will do anything of themselves without being activated by a personal belief that they are truthful, and that they can guide your progress. With this basis, you can determine your own philosophy of writing and expression, not simply take the teacher’s word. Test the values and see what happens in the real world.

Conviction and Realization

One writing teacher who has championed authorship and the philosophy of individual writing is influential master-teacher Peter Elbow, author of *Writing without Teachers* and *Writing with Power*. The writing values in the bridge schema above are all present in Elbow’s writing, beginning with those that relate directly to the self, conviction and realization. Of the first principle, Elbow stated, “Thinking and action is necessarily based on underived first principles and premises” (Elbow, 1968a, p. 991). In other words, realized and unrealized values or sometimes false premises form a basis for the all of the work you will do in this class.

Utilizing convictions means moving beyond stereotypes and “believing in yourself, in your work, and in the act of writing.” A student who is thusly “committed” can generate work that is worthwhile and meaningful, and create “meanings that are blended at a finer level, integrated more thoroughly. Not merely manipulated by his mind, but rather sifted through his entire self” (Elbow, 1998, p. 8). This phenomenon is called realization, and it is a primary step in many self-help, enlightenment, and learning paradigms. Likewise, it is part of your process towards authorship and the true self. Conviction and realization leads to honesty and self-awareness.

Expression and Direction

When it’s actually time to write, authors follow their “voices,” writing down what their self “says” inside their head. This isn’t just a proposal for novice writers or students – all powerful writing is voiced, or “alive in this primary sense—it contains not just propositions but a person” (Elbow, 1968b, p. 122). Expression of your voice is a major part of the connection you make with your readers. But it has to go somewhere, having some logical, moral, or artistic vision. Writers who find their voice “know that they are on their way to more than mere non-offensiveness” (Elbow, 1998, p. 303). Identifying your direction will give your writing potential.

Operation

An operation is action taken towards your objective. Once you’ve identified your direction, you must take action to finish the essay properly. If you mostly want an A, then you should edit and share, but this course encourages you to do more. Elbow said that a writer’s ability to take action relies on character, courage, and resolve: “If ethos is nothing but implied... it loses all power” (Elbow, 2000, p. 214). If authors allow their voices to emerge, they are “set free to feel more deeply, to think more cogently, and above all, to act more courageously” (Elbow, 1968a, p. 93). In your search for voice and self, writing is only the gateway to personal action.

Unit 1: Discovering Your Personal Voice

In this unit, we will talk about your favorite song, a text that you actually enjoy, understand, and can talk convincingly about. Since ancient times, songs have referred to cultures, languages, and peoples, but music transcends all of these and touches the core of being human. Songs are an invitation from the artist to make personal interpretations from your life experiences. In your essay, you will be asked to find three or four themes from the song lyrics and explain how they are related to episodes in your own life. The assignment follows.

Song essay - Choose a favorite song and analyze why it is important to you. Use information such as the artist, music genre, themes, social issues, and personal ideas to support your main idea. You must 1) make claims that are interesting, 2) discover themes and ideas, and 3) quote lyrics directly from the song to support your points. The goal is to analyze each verse in individual paragraphs, as well as the chorus (see handout). Each verse's discussion will be done in 2 paragraphs. The first will be a discussion of what the theme of the verse is and what the lyrics mean universally. The second paragraph should discuss how the theme and lyrics relate to episodes from your personal life. Therefore, if your favorite song has 4 verses and a chorus, the body of your essay will contain 10 paragraphs with a total of 12 paragraphs for the essay. The paper is to be a minimum of four pages, double-spaced and typed, in Cambria 11.5 point font.

Over the next few class periods, we will discuss the kinds of conflicts and issues that make up the songs we listen to and read about. We will take notes and do some prewriting, which should help you to analyze your favorite song and identify the life experiences that form the context you will use to explore its meaning. When you analyze each verse, you should also refer to an audience and cultural context in your paper in order to understand the original meaning.

In this unit, we will discuss the initial steps of your writing journey towards discovering ideas, commitments, and voice. These steps all begin with C – conviction, consideration, and comprehension. Conviction is primarily for authors, who should find out what they believe in order to know where they stand. Consideration is for the audience, particularly their issues, concerns, and needs. Comprehension means thoroughly understanding the context and background of a topic in order to conceive of a good essay theme, as expressed in a thesis statement. The essay template for organization (29-31) will also be discussed.

Conviction

Know what you stand for



Before you start on your learning journey, it is important to center and ground yourself, finding your beliefs about yourself and your relationship to the world. Leaders need to have self-confidence, in addition to valuing others. If you aren't comfortable in your own skin, facing desires and fears with an eye of hope, then people will not trust you. You should look forward to the change and growth that will come from each new endeavor, and you must eventually believe the journey is worthwhile before you convince others.



Know yourself

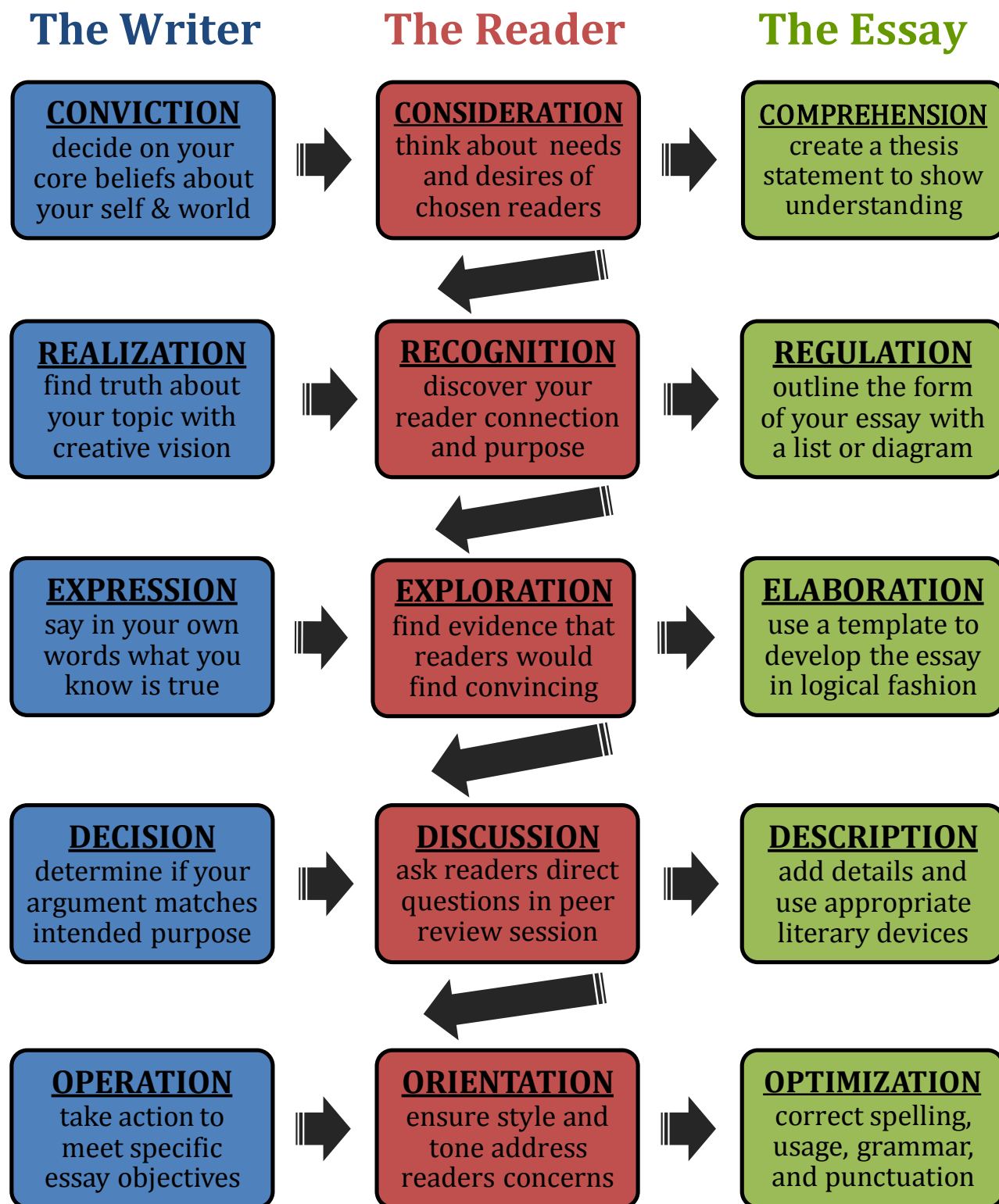
Coming to recognize your beliefs is crucial for power in writing. Don't underestimate feelings: you have to find them. You may want to try putting yourself in a past situation and feeling it as something that happened "in you," not "to you." You'll be getting closer to your essential self. Another technique is to cut out the 'formality'; just focus on being authentic and true.

Know your convictions hold power



Professional writers have beliefs that resonate through their writing, much like sound echoes through a cave. All people have this emotional capacity, but most are intimidated by it or ashamed of it. Writers tend to be motivated by their sense of creative emptiness, and writing that comes from this place fills the reader with perceived truth. Writing with conviction emerges from within an author. Convictions have the capacity to integrate aspects of a writer's character, not reconciling them, but allowing them work together in order to move others.

Principles of Good Writing



Song Analysis Worksheet and Sample Thesis

"Don't worry. Be Happy."	Don't worry about these issues	Episodes from life
<p>Verse 1 Here is a little song I wrote You might want to sing it note for note Don't worry be happy In every life we have some trouble When you worry you make it double Don't worry, be happy</p> <p>Verse 2 Ain't got no place to lay your head Somebody came and took your bed Don't worry, be happy The land lord say your rent is late He may have to litigate Don't worry, be happy</p> <p>Verse 3 Ain't got no cash, ain't got no style Ain't got no girl to make you smile But don't worry be happy Cause when you worry Your face will frown And that will bring everybody down So don't worry, be happy (now)</p> <p>Spoken Here I give you my phone number When you worry call me I make you happy Don't worry don't do it, be happy Put a smile on your face Don't bring everybody down like this Don't worry, it will soon pass Whatever it is Don't worry, be happy</p>	<p>General troubles McFerrin's own opinion i.e. pay close attention (this seems simple...) we – everyone is in it together two worlds: reality and mind inside and outside world balanced</p> <p>One's house homelessness is huge problem doesn't really matter who did it repeating the idea again tenants vs. owners and others getting others involved is usually a bad sign</p> <p>Power, Identity, Love this is what society values loneliness without companionship "but" is a more direct connection these things are even more selfish nothing can change unless it starts with attitude / need friends (now) close by, not turned off</p> <p>Loneliness and self-centeredness really? the top-40 artist wants his fans to call him? A gesture? he makes us happy with music but this spoken part is like he's on the phone with us personally not just us, though, "everybody" not just now, tomorrow not just these things, anything it's like a mantra for meditating</p>	<p>I've had my troubles: At age 14, I was too concerned about trying to be cool, which was only making a tough situation worse...</p> <p>I've had rent problems: At age 19, I moved into a house that bums had occupied and lived there with a friend who later went homeless...</p> <p>I've been dumped: At age 22, I had return- ed from Europe to find that my girlfriend, who had written letters to me for 2 years, wanted to break it off...</p> <p>Happiness is shared: Whenever I am happy, I try to share it with other people. A phone call can make things a lot better...</p>

In his one-hit wonder song, "Don't Worry, Be Happy," Bobby McFerrin tells modern adults about the importance of being happy. Specifically, we should overlook life's little troubles, issues with one's house, and problems with personal power, identity and love. All of these things are temporary, but especially we should not dwell on self-centeredness, because we are all in this together. In my own life, I have also seen the importance of this idea whenever I feel sadness, stress, and loneliness.

Consideration

Think about the team



When you start on your journey, it is your responsibility to seek out the types of people that you will want to bring along with you. Difficult expeditions experience challenges and unexpected troubles, which cause members of the party to pull together. Each of your fellow-travelers must have a vested interest in completing the journey, and you can only take them as far as they want to go. You should show consideration to party members by recognizing their ethnic and cultural backgrounds. This will help the group to feel grounded and purposeful.



Understand them

Everyone who writes has an audience, usually one that they can relate with. Your first audience is the teacher, so be sure to read the assignment. Then consider who might be your second audience. Most of us write with an understood “we,” or “you,” but we just don’t admit who that person is. Think of a person who might read your paper. Think of the type of connection you could establish with them.

Appreciate your audience



Have you ever felt that an article or presentation doesn't click with you? Maybe you're not in the intended audience. Addressing a narrow audience is very common in business, academia, and government. Most authors in these positions have an insider relationship with their audience. Because of this connection, their writing often defines a special-interest culture. Whenever writers begin to publish, finding a receptive audience is crucial to attaining success.

Connect with your Audience

J-Stone Remix of “Bling Bling”

Man, I got these broads iced up enough
 While my lil' J-Stone's ride to school on the bus
 But me personally playa' I ain't never had the luck
 So I'ma always show my cut that love
 Light the girls up when I hit the club
 'Cause Wootay, I'm high on fame like a drug

Medallion iced up, Rolex bezeled up,
 And my pinky ring has a platinum mount
 Earrings trillion cut and my grill be slugged up
 All my playa's always flossed out!

I don't gotta strut, Beef, I don't discuss
 A brother outta line better watch his mouth
 Stack my cheese up as I gut my bus
 Cause one day I'ma make this street life count

Bling bling!
 Every time I come around yo' city - Bling bling!
 Pinky ring worth about fifty - Bling bling!
 Every time I buy a new ride - Bling bling!
 Lorenzo's on Yokohama tires - Bling bling!

I be that playa' with the ice on me
 Fellows wear shades just to stand next to me
 Folks say, "Take that chain off, boy, you're blindin' me"
 They like, "Look at the Benz on all that chrome"
 My money long, cuz I'm the J-Stone
 An' the ladies, they never wanna leave me alone

Ice worn by everybody in my clique
 I got the price of a mansion 'round my neck and wrist
 All day my phone is ringing, bling bling bling!
 See my earrings from a mile away, bling, bling, bling!

Repeat chorus

Lyrics provided for educational purposes by B.G. Artistically envisioned with a new groove by J-Stone.

Identify your teacher's expectations

	6	5	4	3	2	1
Command of Topic Score: _____	Essay addresses the assignment, demonstrating understanding of the literal meaning of the text while also providing insight or meaning beyond that literal meaning.	Essay addresses the assignment, and provides critical analysis of the literal meaning of the text.	Essay attempts to address the assignment, but misses some element of the literal meaning of the text.	Essay attempts to address the assignment, but fails to move beyond summary into critical analysis.	Essay attempts to address the literal meaning of the topic but misses much of that meaning.	Essay does not directly address assigned topic.
Conventions and Style Score: _____	Essay demonstrates mastery of the conventions of academic writing and uses appropriate style to strengthen the authority of the argument.	Essay generally shows facility with conventions of academic writing and generally uses appropriate style.	Essay shows small problems in following conventions of academic writing or using appropriate style that may hinder reader understanding or writer credibility.	Essay presents problems in following conventions of academic writing or using appropriate style that often hinder reader understanding or writer credibility.	Essay presents problems in following conventions of academic writing or using appropriate style and hinders reader understanding or writer credibility.	Essay is unacceptable in its style or ability to follow conventions or is unacceptably brief.
Argument Development Score: _____	Essay convincingly asserts an analytical thesis and thoughtfully develops related ideas in coherent, sequential paragraphs, providing compelling textual and other evidence.	Essay asserts an acceptable thesis and develops related ideas in coherent, sequential paragraphs that provide acceptable evidence.	Essay presents a recognizable sequence of ideas, although stated thesis may be weak/unacceptable or paragraphs and structure are faulty or at times lack evidence.	Essay presents a recognizable sequence of ideas, but does not present a clear thesis and lacks adequate evidence.	Essay relies on unrelated generalizations, vague argument, or uncertain information, or is not fully developed.	Essay is not coherent, showing little development of or relationship among ideas or is unacceptably brief.
Control of Mechanics Score: _____	Essay shows mastery of grammar, spelling, usage, & punctuation, in regards to clarity and precision.	Essay uses proper grammar, spelling, usage, and punctuation, with very few minor errors.	Essay uses proper grammar, spelling, punctuation, and usage with several minor errors.	Essay has many grammar, spelling, punctuation, or usage errors.	Essay is marred by grammar, spelling, punctuation, or usage errors that make it difficult to understand.	Essay has serious and persistent errors in word choice and mechanics.

Overall Grade: _____ Comments:

Adapted from the CSU English Placement Test (EPT Scoring Guide, by M Wardell and S Haro) <http://www.csusm.edu/lwap/lessessayrubric.html>

Comprehension

Plan your course



As the expedition leader, you are responsible for understanding where you're coming from and where you're going. This will likely involve some reading about your point of origin, destination and mode of travel. To plot the course, orient yourself to at least three visible landmarks, along with your estimate of how far you've come. A crucial point is that none of the landmarks be very close to each other. Along the way, you must triangulate your coordinates relative to those positions in order to show exactly what your course was in order to know how to get back. You have to help others grasp what your objectives are and how you intend to take them there.



Generate ideas

Find out what you understand about your topic by brainstorming ideas and writing a list of facts known as an idea map or cluster. When you're doing so, it is important to write down concrete, simple things. These strong, specific examples will support the larger ideas that emerge from them. The point is idea generation, not organization. Get some things on paper and you'll figure out if they are important as you progress.

Create a map



Tour guides understand that people want to know where they are going and why. If everyone on a trip wants to enjoy the journey, not just get to the destination safely, each one of them has to understand this individually. Similarly, essay readers like to predict what's coming up next in a paper. A thesis statement of purpose supported by good topic sentences in each paragraph is like a turn by turn map for your readers. Describe your position as it relates to your three or four main points in your thesis statement. Then lay out your "plan of action," a clear and specific discussion of exactly how you will explain and support the thesis. As you write more, see how these ideas relate to each other.

Clarify your intentions

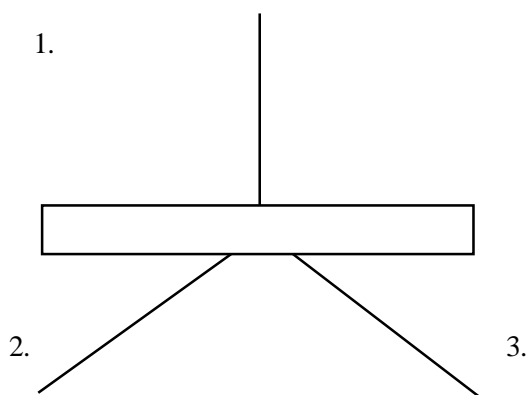
Thesis Development



Mountain climbers often become disoriented in snowstorms, lost in high winds, and turned around. Sometimes, it is not clear in which direction the summit lies, so they must take care to find out exactly where they are. They often know how far they have traveled, but they could be miles off course, and they need to know which direction to go.

To do this, mountain-climbers use a method called triangulation. They calculate the distance from camp, and estimate their distance from two other known locations, such as the tops of neighboring mountains. They can then “triangulate” their position, relative to the other places. It takes at least three points to precisely calculate location.

Finding out your position and your direction when you write an essay is just as important. In English, authors often use a similar method for arguing their opinions; they use three main points to support their position. Most importantly, as with the mountain, these points must be very different from each other in order to give an essay a position and direction. Make a list of twelve things you would like to discuss. Then put them into categories (for example, concepts, values, and events) by similarity. You may only find two categories and have to look for a third, which is the key to having a direction for your essay to go.



From Thesis to Essay

In his 1909 text, "Composition: Oral and Written," Charles Baldwin defined the essay as follows: "An essay is an exposition by paragraphs of a single controlling idea... [using] orderly, logical, development... [to] carry a reader through a definite course of thought to a definite conclusion." This single controlling idea is expressed in two ways: through a thesis and a plan.

A thesis is a proposition laid down in a declarative sentence or two, which establishes an essay's theme. Placed near the beginning, a thesis defines the essay as an argument. Such essays are generally based upon pro-con, problem-solution, part-whole, or cause-effect critical thinking, and use information, analysis, narration, and description for support or evidence. The thesis is usually accompanied by a plan that previews and organizes the essay point by point. In some essays, this includes even the type or character of evidence to be presented.

In addition to the thesis and plan, an essay includes several other features that set it apart from other forms of writing. Particularly, there is a topic sentence in each paragraph that connects to the thesis either by implicit suggestion or explicit statement. As the essay progresses from one main point to another, the author must include summaries to indicate whenever one point is ending, and transition phrases or sentences to show that another topic is about to begin. Finally, the introduction and conclusion set the essay in a proper context.

Essays are composed of paragraphs, which have their own structure, content, and logic. According to Maurice Fulton, "Judicious paragraphing is an important element in successful exposition. Each paragraph should contain only such material as is logically justifiable as a unit by itself. It must have one central thought [located in the topic sentence] to which all the ideas and facts making up the development of the paragraph shall be properly subordinated." (XXV)

Perhaps most useful was his categorization of paragraphs, which holds for essays of any length:

- 1) introductory paragraphs in which the subject of the composition is stated
 - 2) outlining paragraphs in which a proposed line of treatment is briefly set forth
 - 3) developing paragraphs which treat in detail a certain part of the subject
 - 4) transitional paragraphs used to pass from one part of a discussion to another and to show the connection of parts
 - 5) summarizing paragraphs in which a review or recapitulation of points discussed is given
 - 6) concluding paragraphs which gather into themselves the force of preceding paragraphs
- Type (3) is encountered most frequently, and is the "normal form" of a paragraph. (74)

A typical 5-paragraph essay is: [1, 3, 3, 3, 6]. Paragraphs type 2, 4, and 5 would be sentences. A 14-paragraph essay (4 pages) could be: [1, 2, 3, 4, 3, 4, 3, 4, 3, 4, 5, 5, 6]. (See essay template.) A book chapter (10 pages) might be: [1, 1, 1, 2, 2, 2, 3, 3, 4, 3, 3, 4, 3, 3, 4, 5, 5, 4, 5, 5, 6, 6].

Understanding paragraph form and order will help you to write more effectively.

Unit 2: Formulating Lessons from Life

In this unit, we will talk about the lessons you have learned from your life experiences. All cultures have stories that express the lessons they learned from history, and in similar form, you will tell short episodes from your life's troubles and joys and make sense of them in a belief statement. We will explore core beliefs of some of America's most successful and interesting people. They have made meaning out of their lives, their beliefs functioning to guide their choices and lead them to self-fulfillment. In your essay, you will examine your past, "profile" your true self, and discuss your core belief, the overarching idea that helps to make sense of the three or four most significant stories of your life. The assignment follows.

Life essay/ powerpoint speech – Identify a belief that reflects who you are as a person and recall a significant life experience connected to that belief. Describe the experience in a series of episodes, to anchor the belief in reality, and show how the belief developed. You will have to use specific stories from life as well as general discussion of their significance. Explore the website thisibelieve.com to find an essay that expresses your belief. Using the experiences from your own life, as well as information from the website, examine in a four-page essay how this belief has developed you into the person you are. Double space and type the paper, in Cambria 11.5 pt. font. Develop your essay into a four to six-minute persuasive speech with a powerpoint. Be professional. Use notecards. You will participate in a group exposition and a whole-class competition.

Over the next few class periods, we will discuss the ways that different beliefs encourage people to follow various paths in their personal and professional lives. We will examine these credos, seeing how to apply these ideas to our own statements of belief. We will do some free-writing to explore your life stories. This activity will help you to see the important values that actually emerge from your own life. As you "unfold" your past, issues will emerge, sometimes hidden or confused by hurt. This is part of the worthwhile process to find your commitments.

In this unit, we will discuss the next steps of your writing journey. These steps all begin with R – realization, recognition, and regulation. Realization is primarily for authors, who should think positively, remember details, and open themselves to insights. Recognition is the way an author focuses the needs of a chosen audience into a writing purpose. Regulation refers to the constraints that the essay places on the author's expression, and the requirements of the research process, which we will begin to discuss in anticipation of the final paper.

You will also share a powerpoint of your credo with a small group. Feedback will be given to indicate whether the group is convinced that the speaker is sincere. Groups will vote on the winning speech and two "wild card" presenters will be chosen, based on personal ability and skill, for a total of six. On a subsequent day, and for bonus points, the chosen six will attempt to convince the whole class that the belief is worthwhile, and invite them to do something.

Realization

Listen to your heart



Realizing the truth of something can be profound, not simply in an intellectual or emotional way. The moment of personal vision or clarity, a “leap of faith” is crucial to your journey of discovery. Some feel this moment as an integration of mind and heart. Others say it simplifies what was once complex, which allows common things to be held “in common.” This feeling of the universal can also enable you to have a deep introspective resonance with others.



Follow truth

Personal realizations can give your piece of writing deeper meaning and direction. Let your ideas flow without trying to filter them, thinking things that you might not have ordinarily, following your voice. Think about what appeals to you and what makes sense to you. Use your reflections to free your mind. The proper frame of mind will make all of the difference when it eventually comes time to actually write.

Hearing a voice



People talk about the voice inside their heads. Sometimes it's full of negative comments, but at other times it tells them what to do or say in a positive way. This idea of a better self is as old as time, even though it shows up in modern psychological theory as the superego. Knowing what you have to say is a gift, not a right. In the past, writers listened for a "muse" that would tell them what to say. If there's too much negativity in your writing process, try stillness.

Creative Visualization

Dorothy Sayer, a well-known British essayist and aesthetic theorist, talked about getting in touch with her insight through creative visualization, with a perspective on truth and beauty. According to her method, you begin with some simple meditation. You must calm yourself, removing any concerns, distractions, and hang-ups. If you have to write for a few minutes about the problems of the day in order to get clarity, do that. It's important that your mind be at peace. Be in a place of solitude and get into a posture that is comfortable. The position of your physical body pre-conditions the thoughts you will have – sit up straight to channel peace.

Then begin paying attention to the details of your surroundings, appreciating and accepting the changes in your environment, in your physical body, and in your inner self. Into this stillness, picture in your mind the topic. However you can, try to project yourself outward, "being in a place with the topic." This means that you are trying to actively participate in an imagined *event* about this issue. Then, you must "convert the event into an experience." Stop seeing the event as a thing that is happening "to you" and begin thinking of it as "something happening *in you*." This shift is a huge difference. Internalize and feel on your own skin those thoughts and feelings you want to communicate to others. This is the moment where inward vision can occur.

Insight happens as you become able to express in words, to your own mind, the feelings that you're having. Sometimes these are feelings of warmth, of color, of motion – your body has become an instrument through which perception is flowing. All the different ways that your body has of experiencing things first-hand can become subtly engaged as you re-experience something or create a new experience. You may hear yourself talking, or imagine yourself moving. Then the words come, to describe these imagined, created ideas in a way that feels like an expression of first-hand experience. It feels like a real person – it feels like you. After the language comes to your own mind, you can relate the meaning and message to others.

If you project yourself into the center of your experiences and concerns, you can write them from the inside out, not from an external perspective. Whether or not it ever actually happened to you in life, it is happening *now*, within you. The focus is not on explaining it to another person, but on appreciating your life for its inherent meaning before you start generalizing the force out of it. If you remember and tell specific details through your six senses, then the writing will sound real because it reflects more of the moment when you realized the truth.

Take a balanced approach

The following tables illustrate differences between effective and ineffective messages. In order to have a convincing essay, you must be reasonable, trustworthy, and caring. The first table lists the negative ways that writers compromise their logic, integrity, and compassion. Issues that are located on the same row are related, often occurring in the writing of people who are insecure or who have a conflict of interests. Thus problems of logic can manifest themselves in the areas of character and emotion. The second table shows how combining positive practices across the table can make your voice powerful, moving, and believable.

Negatives Tendencies in Writing

Logical Fallacies	Ethical Delusions	Emotional Insecurities
Not enough evidence	Insufficient authority	Inhumane or unfeeling attitude
Drowning with evidence	Has a god-complex	Bathos – too much emotion
Does not represent reality	Conflict of interests	Self-centeredness
Doesn't hang together well	Reputation is untrustworthy	Loving and hating all at once
Hiding opposing positions	You just can't trust anyone	No one else understands you...
Arguing against x, not for y	Mudslinging – disparaging	Demonizing the enemy
Only two alternatives	Do you believe him or me?	Do you love him or me?
Evidence is too simple	"Come on! Just trust me..."	Impulsive decision-making
Conclusion proves itself	Egotistic & Self-justifying	Manic-Depressive swings

Positive Practices of Writing

Logical Reasons	Ethical Truths	Emotional Certainties
Enough evidence for proof	Sufficient authority	Humane, caring life outlook
Reasoning is sound	Trustworthy reputation	Loves unconditionally
Represent situation as it is	No conflict of interests	Acts in the interest of society
Multiple fair alternatives	Many authorities on subject	Lots of people care about you.
Conclusion proved by facts	Has several good referrals	Balanced, centered orientation
Complex, reliable evidence	Certifications, tests, degrees	Ruled by intuition not impulse
Arguing for a position	Speaking well of opponents	Caring for one's enemy
Showing opposing positions	The truth is out there	Others will reflect your light
Presented comprehensibly	Understands limitations	Feelings connect us together

Recognition

Find your team's needs



Your objectives may now be clear to you, but you need to discover what your fellow-travelers need in order to journey together successfully. Logical choices, clear goals, emotional support, and inspiring words are all necessary to the success of an expedition. But they also need a sense of adventure, which only a leader can provide, which causes the best leaders to prosper, and mediocre leaders to fail. A real audience makes for a better author. However, you have to present yourself with courage and conviction in order to gain their respect.



See the problem

Audiences want to be addressed and see that writing is focused on their concerns. So profile your audience. Teen readers are searching for their identity but they fear control. They are more upset over deceit than abuse. You need to recognize where your audience stands, and how they might respond. If your readers can integrate your words into their thoughts, you will be persuasive.

Address their concerns



It is important to know your readers and care for their concerns. When parents or teachers go in front of children, they know what type of thing they want to hear. A story about a frog is funny, but cutting up a frog for analysis is gross. Stories are informal, soft, indirect, and fun, while arguments are formal, hard, direct, and difficult. Comparisons are artistic, metaphorical, accepting, and gentle, while analyses are scientific, logical, excluding, and harsh. Knowing which method to use becomes important as you grow to understand audience expectations. In order to address multiple needs in one document, you must balance logic, self, and caring.

Methods of logical development

There are four general types of paragraph logic: Narration, Classification, Analysis, and Argument. Each of these general types has a basic, moderate, and well-developed variant.

1: Description

Florida's O'Leno State Park is a wonderful place to visit. It has some sixty-five campsites, eighteen cabins, and a pavilion for group meetings. A long, winding nature trail for bike-riders and hikers alike gives great views of the best park attractions, sand hills, wildlife, and native plants. Covered by hardwood trees and hammocks, the park has one primary feature, the Santa Fe River, which vanishes mysteriously into a broad pool, slowly swirling into the granite caverns beneath. After appearing in scattered ponds, the river rises three miles downstream in a swampy area, then continues on to meet the Suwannee River and the ocean. Along the river, canoeists can see cypress trees with walls of foliage mirrored in its waters. Sudden sinkholes open in the swamplands rich with ferns. Farther down the river, an expanse of longleaf pine stretch across rolling hills. Campsites are remote and primitive, with plenty of privacy.

2: Symbolism

The attractions of O'Leno state park have a deeper meaning, according to the Seminole Indians, original inhabitants of this area. At the largest bend of the river is a traditional long house. Called "Soli natu," meaning "strength of sky" this site was the meeting place of tribal councils. The forest trail was walked by braves on vision quests, approaching manhood through fasting and physical trials, in order to find their spirit animal. An encounter with eagles was preferred, but woe to the seeker who found a crow. The ancient trees were considered a manifestation of the Sky god's will, bringing light and warmth to his people through fire. Only fallen or dead branches were taken, unless a canoe was to be made, which required a special ritual of inner purification to accompany the burning and chipping of wood. But most significant of all was the river itself, known as "Mat Lakontu" or "waters of fate." An Indian maiden seeking a husband would dye sticks different colors, each one representing a village youth, releasing them into the swirling pool. Her kinswomen would wait with her downstream to see the will of destiny.

3: Narration

Jack woke up suddenly, his skin crawling in the musty chill of the night, and he grasped the edge of his sleeping bag. Out of the vast forest expanse, two soft hoots from an owl were the only sounds in an oppressive stillness. The 100-foot canopy of trees above him blocked all light from the crescent moon and stars in an expansive, thick, cave-like darkness. Jack took the cool, heavy flashlight from beside his bunk, pushed the button and waited for the familiar glow that usually accompanied the click, but the batteries were dead. He unzipped the bag and swung his legs out, leaving his wife Cheryl in bed as he walked over to the light switch by the camper's screen-door. As he approached it, something disturbed the pile of leaves just outside the window, only a few feet away. A woody, dank smell filled his nostrils as he dropped to a crouching, wary stance. The textured metal ridges of his light dug into his hand and reminded him that he had a weapon. The animal moved again with a heavy, deep-crackling sound, displacing too many leaves to be simply a rodent or snake. Jack inhaled sharply, cocked his arm back and whispered "one, two, three," kicking open the door and letting fly with a rush of force, tumbling steel cracking against fur and bone between a pair of slitted, luminescent eyes...

1: Comparison

To help you make the decision to visit O'Leno Park, let's see how it compares to another place you're more familiar with and most likely have visited on many occasions, a park in a typical Midwestern city. Both are outdoors areas set apart for enjoyment and a feeling of natural contentment in a hectic world. They have picnic tables, a pavilion, and restroom facilities – all you'd need for a family or corporate get-together over sandwiches, side dishes, and sodas. There's also plenty of parking and easy access from main roads. O'Leno has the jogging path and bike trail you're used to. Maybe your city park has a softball diamond. Well this can be found at O'Leno State Park also, but only in the recreational area. Volunteers and a few employees help to keep these parks clean for the public, but it's important not to litter – leave the place neater than you found it. In your city park, all of the trees and flowers are there for you to enjoy, but not to take home. Similarly, in O'Leno, only small amounts of dead plant material can be removed, except by authorized botanists. Tread softly through our natural world, and it will be there for generations to come. So if you like your city park, driving the extra distance to come to O'Leno State Park will give you everything you've come to expect.

2: Contrast

But O'Leno is also better than what you might anticipate, offering a variety of special features. Let's focus on two state parks and recreation facilities that are total opposites in order to highlight what O'Leno has to offer. Ancient hardwood forests and a meandering, warm-water river are the main attractions at O'Leno State Park. In contrast, the newly-renamed Mizell-Johnson State Park in Hollywood has the broad, white-sanded Dania Beach and the restless Atlantic Ocean. Hikers can venture a few yards off the trail at O'Leno and be completely lost in the pristine, verdant wilderness. At Dania Beach, however, you have to weave around waves of vendors and visitors, stepping over sand castles, coolers, towels, and tanning chairs. Whereas O'Leno features so much quiet that you can almost hear the branches rustling, Dania Beach is packed with excited sunbathers out swimming, surfing, jet skiing, and parasailing. At night, O'Leno is serenaded by the song of crickets and owls. Some nights, Dania Beach is busy with fishermen almost until sunrise. If strolling down the boardwalk or immersing yourself into an urban beach environment is appealing to you, Dania Beach is the place to go. But O'Leno is the park to visit if you want the perfect retreat for getting in touch with your inner self.

3: Classification

Over 200 state parks in Florida are classified according to the type of camping and lodging that they offer. Many other aspects of a park, such as level of comfort, food availability, facilities, and price, relate to this general category. For instance, the most prestigious park, Edward Ball is the only state park in Florida with lodges, and visitors enjoy a taste of refinement. Because of the price and status, soft beds, catered breakfasts, and Jacuzzi tubs are standard. "Rustic" cabin camping is available throughout the state, with better offerings in close proximity to cities. Cabins tend to be well-maintained and easy to access, often featuring ovens and microwaves, and sometimes multiple bedrooms. Most state parks allow RV or travel trailer camping with facilities including water and electrical hookups. Recreation rooms and sporting equipment rental are standard at these campsites. Finally, there is tent camping, which ranges from full facility campgrounds including showers and pools to primitive sites with zero amenities. Accommodations can also be made for pets, large groups, or a youth-only group. Regardless of your vacation needs and your budget constraints, Florida state parks have something to offer.

1. Definition

O'Leno State Park is a large, natural area managed by the fish and wildlife department for the purpose of wilderness preservation and public recreation. Eighty-six percent of its land consists of original Florida terrain in a natural condition, filled with a wide variety of wild animals and birds. Plant communities are rich and exceptionally diverse. All of these attributes make the experience of O'Leno deeply immersive and authentic to the feelings early explorers might have had in these environments. Ranger-led activities are extensive, and the historical site of Keno town is informative. Fishing is permitted, but other "consumptive" uses, such as rock collecting, animal hunting, or plant harvesting are prohibited, in order to maintain the unique characteristics of this landscape and to diminish artificial shaping of the ecosystem.

2. Division

Five distinct primary ecosystems comprise O'Leno State Park. From wettest to driest conditions, these ecosystems are 1) the Santa Fe River, 2) swamp, 3) fen, 4) temperate mixed forest, and 5) human-impact grassland. The river system consists of fresh water draining very slowly from a slight elevation towards the sea. The underlying geology consists of basaltic limestone caves, which enables the river's unusual behavior of "sinking" and then "rising." The swamp alongside the river has permanent shallow water with large aquatic plants and a hardwood forest, but enough water flow to inhibit peat accumulation from dead plant material. Further away from the river is a narrow band of fens, full of peat but still perpetually moist with mineral-rich groundwater. At slightly higher elevation, the soil becomes firmer, giving place for taller needle-leaf and broadleaf trees, which allows for a large diversity of animal species. The final ecosystem is not natural, but with twelve percent of public ground being artificially maintained as grassy areas, it is significant. These areas are kept from becoming 'wetlands' through dikes, ditches, and other structures, but they do not meet the criteria for a "grassland" environment, which are periodic drought, fire, and low soil fertility.

3. Analysis

In the O'Leno State Park biome, the various ecosystems work in a natural symbiosis, supporting each other through resource sharing, animal migration, and borderline interactions. The river brings its primary resource of water to the swamp, and enables fish spawning into the habitat. On the border of swamp and river, algae clean the water through exothermic reactions. The swamp collection of plant matter migrates slowly inland and the rich basaltic minerals in the water enable the fen to generate peat, an incredibly rich soil type. Snakes from the swamp lay eggs in the peat, and the heat of decomposition provides a wonderful place for hatching. As mentioned, the fen gives way to mixed forest, in which the nutrients of the peat are drawn into the tree roots. Leaf fall from the trees contributes to firmer soil where worms and other insects break down the woody plants. Fen dwellers such as white thrushes cross into the woods to forage. Further up the hill, the human impact of concrete and glass begins, utilizing the rich forest soil for artificial lawn growth. Human guests mimic birdsongs, chirp at the squirrels, and wonder aloud at the diversity of life. They only partially understand the vast system of interactions that enable the upstream water and nutrients to impact not only their physical world, but also their own sense of symbiosis. In the end, this is the purpose of O'Leno park – to help the humans have an idea of harmony with their natural surroundings and feel the need to interact more kindly on the borders of their environments with animals, plants, and their fellow man. The lessons of this biome are both practical and profound.

1. Cause and Effect

You might just wonder where O'Leno park came from, the reasons and explanations for its creation. You must first understand the rise and fall of a little town called "Leno." In 1824, John Bellamy, a wealthy plantation owner, built the first federally funded Florida road through this area, which carried hundreds of travelers and settlers from Pensacola to St. Augustine. A couple of decades later, one of the way stations along this road grew into a small settlement. But immediately the lowlifes and varmints of frontier America, prostitutes, con-men, and gunslingers began infesting the settlement, turning it into a small town. River men called this town "Keno," after a card game they played in its raucous gambling district. By 1870, Keno had a general store, a hotel, clinic, blacksmith and public stable, all signs of a stable and prospering community. But in 1876, the government denied Keno a post office due to "moral corruption." Town fathers changed the name to Leno, but this convinced no one, and Keno was still a sinner's paradise. Over the next dozen years, nearby Mikesville grew in size, bringing religion and education to the area. All of the 'decent' Leno townspeople left for greener pastures. In 1894, the railroad from Lake City bypassed the town and the river could not sustain its economy. Leno became farmland by 1900. However, in the 1930's the CCC revitalized this area as a natural haven, creating O'Leno, the oldest state park in Florida.

2. Process

O'Leno State Park has an unusual river, the Santa Fe, which completely disappears into a large sinkhole and flows underground through caves, reappearing three miles downstream. The river's unusual course shift follows a fascinating process. In its initial state, the Santa Fe River is slow-flowing, meandering with the landscape of occasional, slight hills and valleys. Towards the southern end of the park, the river hits a large sinkhole. Because it is moving so slowly, the water does not continue above-ground, rather it courses into underground caves consisting of basaltic granite. The water flows through an underground channel worn down over time into this rock. Because the underground caves have a fixed volume, with only a minimal number of side passages, the water does not seep into the ground and dissipate. Three miles downstream, in a swampy lake, the river water rises up from the caves and spreads across the surface of the marsh. From sinkhole entrance to exit, it takes water approximately three hours to move through the caverns. These unique characteristics make the Santa Fe an interesting anomaly.

3. Argument

Because O'Leno is a study in creation and dissolution, ebb and flow, border interactions and symbiosis it is the perfect place for people to come who are going through difficult life struggles. Aside from its extensive trail system and canoeing, the sand-hill hiking and other outdoor sports can help anyone have an exhilarating active lifestyle in the natural world. Studies show that physical activity helps to regulate stress and generates endorphins, the body's own feel-good hormone. Often those who have experienced loss will write the name or trouble on a piece of bio-degradable paper and watch it sink into the pool. Others will go to the center of old Keno town and slide a token of remembrance through the floorboards of the casino, willing it to fade into the past. On certain points along the trail, some visitors find their own spirit animal, look out over the distant hills and contemplate their place in creation. For this reason, AA and other addiction recovery programs use O'Leno as a locus of platitude in the difficult transition back into life. For anyone who can appreciate the beauty and history of this wonderful place, O'Leno State Park is a one-of-a-kind vacation spot not to be missed.

Methods develop through stages

Stages of NARRATION

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| 1. Give sensory details | (description) |
| 2. Make connections to meaning | (symbolism) |
| 3. Tell how a person experienced it | (narration) |

Stages of CLASSIFICATION

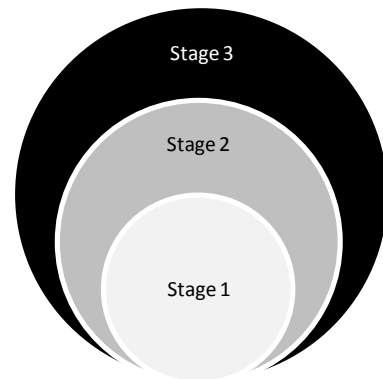
- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Connect similar examples | (comparison) |
| 2. Separate different examples | (contrast) |
| 3. Characterize the examples | (classification) |

Stages of ANALYSIS

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Say what it is specifically | (definition) |
| 2. Separate out its aspects | (division) |
| 3. Explain their relationships | (analysis) |

Stages of ARGUMENT

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Indicate dependencies | (cause/effect) |
| 2. Describe steps in a process | (procedure) |
| 3. Add claims and evidence | (argument) |



Twelve Steps in the Research Process

- 1) Come up with search words and phrases for topic
- 2) Go to Library of Congress Subject Headings to find the words they use
- 3) College Library webpage – research databases (for background info)
 - a) CQ Researcher, Facts.com with Issues and Controversies, Opposing Viewpoints
 - b) General encyclopedias and subject encyclopedias (look in index)
- 4) College Library webpage – electronic books to define your words
- 5) College Library webpage – catalogs and search in ‘subject’ field (for in-depth info)
- 6) Get the books, paying attention to publication date, table of contents, index
- 7) Look for reference books with call numbers similar to your regular books
- 8) College Library webpage – research databases (for current info)
 - a) Infotrac with Expanded ASAP and Ebscohost with Academic Search Elite
 - b) FirstSearch lets you pick three databases: Wilson Select, PerAbs, and ArticleFirst, or use Eric for Education, Medline for Medicine, ABI Inform for Business.
- 9) Find older references in the Paper Index to periodicals (newspapers, magazines)
- 10) Search the College Library catalog for the location of periodicals on the shelf
- 11) Google it at google.com, Google directory, or the Librarian’s Index to Internet at lii.org
- 12) Ask an expert, do interviews, check with government offices

Regulation

Get things together



Great leaders in history have made their empires based on organization and logistics. Now you need that aspect in your own journey. You know what you have, and it's time to get your things together. What more are you going to need on this adventure? Focus on your goals while coordinating your team, yourself, and your resources. This is the first place where all three come together. As you foster teamwork, you will discover opportunities to grow and learn.



Organize yourself

It's difficult to write a good college essay. After you know what one looks like, i.e. the essay template, you have to make clear distinctions between the facts from your sources and your opinions. For instance, an analysis paper starts by selecting important phrases from the text, putting them within quotation marks, then discussing them relative to some context. Underlining passages, drawing brackets to coordinate ideas, and taking notes on the text helps to generate ideas and interpretations.

Follow good advice



In life, there are always gatekeepers of information that help to coordinate the activities of individuals with different roles. They understand the expectations and needs of the community. For instance, teachers coordinate writers and the classroom audience. Managers help to regulate a wide variety of goods and services. Leaders have consideration for public image and values. One must develop good relationships with these type of advisors in order to become a responsible member of the community. Particularly when the time comes to write a research paper, finding reputable, knowledgeable, and accessible advisors becomes crucial.

Organize your essay properly

Your name

Instructor name

ENG 101 Sec. 00

The Due Date

A Creative Title; see last paragraph for ideas:

A Specific Subtitle; what you did; i.e. analysis, comparison, etc.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this template is to make sure your papers are formatted exactly the same as everyone else's. It is MLA format, and you will use it in all of your papers.

DETAILS OF FORMAT: This font is not Times New Roman 12, as you may be used to. It's Cambria 11.5. It is double-spaced, 1-inch margins, 0 points before and after paragraph returns.

NOTES ON MLA STYLE: Leave only one space after periods or other punctuation marks. Use italics throughout your essay to indicate titles of longer works and, only when absolutely necessary, to provide emphasis. Put punctuation marks inside of quote marks.

NOTES ON MICROSOFT WORD: Be sure that your grammar checker is set to "grammar and style," so it will catch anything that doesn't sound formal. Turn on the contextual spelling checker, and it will show you with a blue line if something isn't spelled right in context.

ESSAY TEMPLATE:

The “Hook” Paragraph uses action verbs and descriptive adjectives to connect with the audience. From simplest to most complex, the “hook” types are: 1) background, 2) fact, 3) statement, 4) rhetorical question, 5) illustration, 6) quotation, and 7) narrative.

The Thesis paragraph contains your essay’s main claim, a statement of opinion about the “text” you are analyzing or “issue” you are discussing. Then preview your essay concept by concept and put in a context. The thesis should explain 1) when & where, 2) who did what, 3) how & why. If necessary, you can have a third paragraph for audience/ background/ context.

Description-Interpretation paragraph 1 contains the first set of evidence supporting the thesis statement. The topic sentence states the organizing concept of the paragraph. Here are some categories of textual evidence: literary devices, arguments, claims and evidence, cause/effect, facts and figures, stories, comparisons, descriptions, definitions.

Contextualization-Evaluation paragraph 1 connects the first concept to the chosen context and says why the evidence is compelling. Here are some concepts that people seek: love, friendship, admiration, security, family, awareness, and independence. A context is an 1) audience, 2) time, 3) culture, 4) media, 5) person, 6) place, 7) event, or just 8) yourself.

Description-Interpretation paragraph 2 contains the second set of categorized evidence supporting your claim. Movie types of evidence include plot action, special effects, interaction of characters, facial expressions, dialogue, costumes, changes in characters, props, sets, lighting, sounds, performance of work, who “wins” in the end, body language. To conceptualize it, say what the evidence means, in one word or phrase. It must be very different from the first point.

Contextualization-Evaluation paragraph 2 connects the concept from the examples to the chosen context and says why it is compelling. Concepts people fear include loneliness, deprivation, abandonment, being wrong, hatred, failure, weakness, or not knowing enough.

Description-Interpretation paragraph 3 contains the third set of evidence and its conceptual category. Often this concept is the most difficult to figure out, but the three concepts will follow an order. Visual types of evidence include color, layout, background, details, intersecting or leading lines, images, overlapping elements, cultural icons, personalities, blank space. Musical evidence can include melody, harmony, stress, tempo, duration, lyrics, etc.

Contextualization-Evaluation paragraph 3 connects the third concept to the chosen context and says why the evidence is compelling. In an argumentative essay, be sure to use ethos (character appeals), pathos (emotional appeals), and logos (logical appeals) in order to have a balanced and well-proportioned argument. If you need to write a longer essay, just repeat the last two steps with a fourth concept and set of evidence.

Discussion paragraph 1 is the place to bring in your outside experience, synthesize the three main points, and give not only a realistic understanding of the whole situation, but also your evaluation of it. Discussions focus on the concepts as they work together, are relevant in the minds of the audience, and operate in the context that you have chosen.

Discussion paragraph 2 is where you let yourself express whatever has come to your mind. Your voice should come through and be seen as an advocate for the context you have chosen. Say everything you think or feel about the topic, and you have license, if you've fairly treated your topic, to use your imagination to make a point.

The Conclusion works to bring you forward into a new reality based on the journey you've taken in this essay. It gives the audience a sense of accomplishment, without pretending to answer all the questions, and it allows you to leave a lasting impression. You must answer the question, "Why should I care about what you wrote?" Conclusions include 1) summary, 2) rephrase thesis, 3) refer to intro, 4) generalize, 5) call to action, and 6) argue for change. Sentences should vary in length and structure. Paragraphs should be 6-8 sentences long.

Unit 3: Creating Your Career Profile

In this unit, we will discuss the subsequent steps of your writing journey, creating one paragraph at a time. These steps all begin with E – expression, exploration, and elaboration. Expression focuses on authors, particularly the moments when writing occurs. Exploration is a way for writers to think through their ideas rationally and develop their logic methodically. Elaboration is about bringing appropriate evidence to the text and supporting claims with solid proof. Perhaps the most important argument you will make is to your prospective employer, and the topic is you. We will talk about your career and the episodes of work and play that prepared you for it. In your essay, you will argue why your career choice makes sense, based on significant encounters with your chosen field or its ideals. The assignment follows.

Career Profile – You will write a career profile, which is an account of how you chose and will enter your intended career. It should include your background/ interests, your innate abilities, and your commitment to the field. Don't just tell me, show me! In order to be more than a story, the essay must defend the choices you made, utilizing effective categorization, analysis, and argument. In the second half of the essay, give an overview of your desired field, requirements for employment, a description of your educational program, and plans to enter the field. Double space and type the four-page paper, using Cambria 11.5 pt. font.

In the next few classes, we will discuss how to tell compelling stories about ourselves, as a way to influence others. Different career approaches will be discussed, referencing one's innate traits, aspirations, self-concept, searches for meaning, and life stories. We will start with your "x-factor," a character attribute that makes your participation at work unique and valuable. We will explore key figures that appear in common stories, discuss the attributes of memorable stories, and see how using stock themes can make career stories more memorable. We will read "The Baker's Just Desserts," which I wrote as an allegory about creative expression through writing and the difficulty of truly connecting with readers. We will also discuss imagery, symbolism, theme, and metaphor.

Expression

Connect with voice



In any journey, one person must be responsible for decisions. Natural leaders acquire personal power from expression in an authentic, compelling, and trust-inspiring voice. A strong voice comes from deep within the resonant chambers of the heart as well as the clear, bright corners of the mind. That voice contains power and identity. Expression is a means to self-discovery for “broken” people to integrate their character through the daily decision to follow a dream.



Express your voice

You have to take whatever opportunities may come your way to develop your own expressive, real voice. The first step is freewriting. Write for ten minutes straight, without stopping. Then use one sentence as a starting point and go for another ten minutes. Repeat until you have something truthful. Practice expressing your voice, in order to tap into your own power. Your readers will be more likely to believe you. Don't waste your time being someone else.

Discover your voice



Developing a unique, powerful, true voice takes a long time, and it occurs as you gain self-confidence through dialogue with others in letters and face-to-face discussions. You will propose a lot of awful, silly, stupid arguments and generally make a fool of yourself before you create something truly beautiful. The best gardens are fertilized with this refuse, so if you can admit that your writing has all of those qualities already, then you can get started. Allow a seed of caring to fall into your heart, fertilized with the trash of your life, nurture the young plant, and keep a sense of wonder when it grows. Just don't call the first thing you write "profound."

Listen to other voices

The Baker's Just Desserts

Long ago, in a country village nestled in the far-off hills, there lived a Baker who was destined to cook for royalty. Unfortunately, the strangest problem plagued his village: no one could taste food, and no one could smell it, either. They could not tell the difference between soup and soap. What was the Baker to do? That is the telling of this story, and I intend to tell it.

This village had a curse put on them by a fairy fifty years previously. Arriving uninvited to a midsummer's eve feast, this fairy, in disguise as a gypsy beggar-woman, had decided to test the village's reputation for hospitality. When the beggar-woman asked to be seated, the manager of the feast refused to escort her inside the banquet hall, an exclusive area for the mayor and his invited guests. Instead, he directed her through the village's main square, past the tables of merchants and townspeople, to the "stranger's table," a shabby row of stacked-together crates on the most poorly lit area of the square. He sat her across from a drunken fool and gave her a bowl of unsalted corn-mush. She made pleasant conversation with her table-mates as spoonful after spoonful of the dry, bland, and slightly spoiled stuff went into her beggarly mouth.

When she had finished eating, the fairy excused herself from the table, threw off her shanty-town rags and stormed into the banquet hall with a cold fury – her white riding cloak and boots shimmering, silvery hair flying, eyes gleaming slate-grey, and a delicate, elegant finger pointing blame at the mayor. She thanked him for the meal and assured him that it was the only thing keeping her from drying up their crops and burning the village to the ground. They had not given her the treatment she had expected, so she wove an intricate spell: "From this day forward," she proclaimed, "no villager shall ever go hungry, but the food and drink shall become nothing to you. This spell shall only be broken if everyone in this village learns to be hospitable, as you once were, that everyone deserves a seat at your tables and a fine dinner instead of a bowl of mush that fills the stomach but not the heart. Until this changes, neither you, nor your children, nor your children's children shall ever taste or smell food again!" In a flash of light and thunder, she vanished, and the air shimmered with a pale mist of rosewater.

From that fateful night onward, the villagers could not enjoy food as we do. Eating became a chore, a solitary event spent in silent moments. Families and friends met together less often, and everyone from the chefs to the blacksmiths and scullery maids forgot how to cook. For a few years following the event, the villagers continued to hold a midsummer's eve feast, inviting everyone to participate, dressing up the main square, and promising to undo the curse. However, people being who they are, the mayor's table still received meat and the stranger's table, mush. The fairy never returned to remove her spell, and after a short while, the banquet hall was abandoned altogether. Because the mush tasted the same as the meat to them, it was impossible to feel abundance, or even to maintain order at the tables with all the visual, audible, and touchable promises of amazing food but none of the taste and none of the smell.

Over the years, the countryside around the village became sparsely inhabited because rumors said the "tongue blight" was contagious. After some time, the village became a dot on the map that few people visited for any reason. What's surprising though, even after the feasts stopped and hospitality dried up, none of the villagers felt like leaving for a better place. Not only was their taste for food gone, but even their taste for fashion, the arts, and design. Visiting the wide world became pointless, as everything seemed pretty much the same as their own boring life at home. Whereas before, holidays had brought traditional celebrations of culture and creativity, now only apathy and melancholy remained. Although the first generation of villagers told its children about the fairy's story, the joy of tasting and smelling food, and the need to be hospitable to strangers, by the second and third generation, few villagers believed this to be true, calling taste an old wife's tale and hospitality a dangerous, uncertain thing.

In this most unlikely of places, our hero the Baker rose to prominence. Having no master to guide him, he learned to bake exceptionally well because he could not rely on taste to guide his decisions. He used all of his other senses, such as feeling the texture of the dough, watching the delicate mixing of flour and milk, and listening to the sizzles as his concoctions baked. He wanted the villagers to experience this too, so he set up shop on the main square, in the long-deserted feast-hall. He converted the enclosed space into a warm, inviting area, expanding the kitchen to flow seamlessly into the bakery's bins of baked goods, shelves of preserves, and tables filled with loaves, rolls, and baguettes. Villagers walking by could see the pastries, and would come inside to see the interesting shapes, textures, and presentation of his bread. He would even let them take fresh hot cross buns right from the oven, feeling a gentle warmth on their noses where a smell should have been.

Although the Baker had plenty of company in his store, he often felt alone because he had no apprentice to follow him. One early morning, when the sun was still behind the mountain and the village was still asleep, he was making food sculptures out of dough. These would become loaves of bread in the shapes of birds, flowers, and even faces. The last dough-face he made was so lifelike that, in spite of himself, he talked to her in the pan. He gazed into the glazed dark anise eyes and whispered into her left ear, hoping aloud that he would someday be able to taste the orange-rosehip frosting with which he had lovingly created her mouth. As an afterthought, he mused, "Why not everything else in the bakery, too?" But he had already spoken his wish, so he let it be. When he took the bread-face from the hot oven, the refined caramel eyebrows had raised, the full lips had become a laughing smile, and there was a gleam in the eyes that he did not expect. He put the bread-face in the window, and passersby were astonished at its beauty.

You might wonder how this Baker could go on like this, with so much work and so little reward. He found satisfaction in small victories – a young girl enjoyed a tart, an old man commissioned an anniversary bread pudding. This was only possible because the Baker felt it was his calling to be great and he believed what many other villagers could not, that taste was there for the finding, if he and his fellow villagers could become sensitive enough to it. The Bakery soon began filling with customers hoping for something that they did not even know they were missing. The oldest inhabitants of the village began to believe that they could taste pie again,

but others said it was old-timer's foolishness. Unfortunately, no one in the village could spread the word about the Baker's food, because they were so isolated, and because no one in the next county over cared what a tasteless person thought of anything. The village swarmed with gossip about the great creations coming from the Baker's oven, all revolving around the experience of his food through other senses. But something was missing, because after all of the presentation, the final test of a fruity tart is the taste, and nothing else.

Few travelers to this remote village stayed long enough to discover what the fuss was about, assuming that it was the Baker's cookies and muffins that caused the dreaded "tongue-disease" to begin with. But one day a Captain of the king's guard stumbled into the village, disoriented from hunger, dazed, and bedraggled from a long journey. The Baker's shop on the main square smelled wonderful, so he sat himself down to a complementary lunch, which tasted amazing. Even more astounding were the wonderful slices of pie, and he ate as much apple, peach, blackberry, custard, and current pie as he could bear, loosening his belt towards the end of his feast. The villagers stared at the stranger through the open windows as he ate. The Captain felt much more like himself again by the end of the meal. A young boy approached and asked if everyone on the outside got so hungry. He seemed confused when the Captain exclaimed that the flavor was astonishingly good, better than any the King's own baker had ever made.

Overhearing this comment, which the Captain in his authoritative, booming voice had intended everyone to hear, the Baker came to his table and said, "If I could bake for the king, I would be the happiest man on earth. However, even that would be nothing to me, if I could only taste what you taste." The Captain offered him a slice of his current pie immediately, but then he realized that the Baker did not want a taste of *his* pie, but to taste *any* pie. "This is incredible!" said the Captain. "You mean to tell me that you bake these things with absolutely no sense of taste? That would be like riding into a battle backwards! A disaster!" The Captain knew what he was talking about, and he perhaps had said too much. The reason he was in the village in the first place was because he had been showing off in front of his men. Because of a foolish wager, he had been riding his horse backwards when his whole squad of soldiers was ambushed by bandits. By the time the Captain had gotten the horse turned around so that he could see the fight, it was mostly over. He drew his shining broadsword and shouted, "Huzzah!" spurring his stallion to charge the enemy. The horse had run in the direction it was pointed, away from the battle and right into a nearby stand of trees. The Captain was knocked off the horse by a thick, low-hanging branch and his steed ran frightened into the woods. The thieves took everything, leaving him for dead. When he finally recovered, he started walking back towards the palace, barefoot, uniform torn, filthy, and stripped of rank, his face covered in mud and bruises. As he followed the dusty road, his one repeating thought was how to explain himself to the king.

So the Captain saw the Baker as a perfect opportunity to get back in the king's good graces. He had wanted, you see, to marry the king's daughter for his own. He immediately returned to the castle and explained the situation to the king and his court. The next day, a dispatched rider arrived in the village with a response from the throne, which he read in the village square: "Because you have been so long hidden in these green hills, you need a proper ceremony to

bring you back into the kingdom! In order to rectify this situation, the king invites you all to a party in one week. The midsummer's eve feast will not be held at the king's court, but rather at this village, in this square. Here are cooks, tables, servants, and feast-masters for you to begin making preparations. We have heard that your Baker is especially good. Do be sure to make food fit for royalty. Don't Disappoint Me, His Royal Majesty, the King." The villagers were astounded. "A feast again after so long a break?" said one. "Eating together? How weird is that!" said another. "I don't think we can do this," said a third. "Be calm," said the Baker. "I've got plans for this feast already laid out, and I'll show you how it's done."

The village turned into a hive of activity as the main square was repainted, plastered, repaired, and prepared for the coming of the King. In short, the rest of the square began to look much as the Bakery looked, with cheerful visage, bright flowers, ornaments, and the shop's wares prominently displayed. The Captain returned with a full complement of soldiers, and he began making a security perimeter, coordinating with the local sheriff. He generally tried to seem in charge, his injured pride at work. The cobblestone streets were leveled and the fountains were buffed and polished. A tent was erected over the square, stretching from the tops of the roofs to the refurbished streets. At the center was the bakery, with the king's table before it, and other massive oak tables running in parallel aisles from one side of the square to the other. A podium was set up for the master of ceremonies, which to the Captain's chagrin, was the Baker.

Finally, the big day arrived - it was midsummer's eve and no one in the village could remember having such a party. Everyone for miles around was invited, big, small, fat, tall, happy, sad, good, and bad. With the king's procession and entourage, the village square and the party tent was filled with laughter, good times, and jubilant feelings. Although only some of the people at the party could taste the food, it certainly looked delicious. Everyone enjoyed the festivities, the colors, and the excitement. The players played, the harpers harped, the pipers piped, the singers sang, the buglers bugled, and the Baker baked. He baked until the very beginning of the party, and during breaks, he pulled loaves from the stove to put on the tables. Hundreds of people, friends and strangers alike came together under the big tent to celebrate the rediscovery of this little village and welcome it back in style. Gone were the corners filled with stacked-together crates where the beggars once ate. According to the Baker's orders, everyone received meat, not mush, from the mayor down to the stranger, even though few of villagers ate their whole portions because they were so unused to enjoying their food.

After the meal was mostly finished, the Baker took the stand to say a few words:

"Many of you now know the trouble that our village has been in. We eat but we have no joy in eating. We have learned that eating can become something new for us again, but we must begin tonight. Some of you may remember the story of the fairy who cursed our village." There were groans from audience members. The Baker waved for silence, then continued, "Well, I think it is the only possible explanation for the predicament we are in today and it's foolishness not to try to appease her. So now in the presence of the king, let me tell you all what I have learned about hospitality and the taste, yes I said the taste of a warm meal, pleasantly served."

"Many of you cannot taste the pies I make, and so it seems strange to you that I would celebrate a pie that I also cannot taste. Let me tell you how I have learned to dream of tasting while never knowing the richness of food, and never smelling anything, either. It is appreciating the sight, the sounds, and the feel of food that makes me able to know what I may be missing. I know these things but I believe in the smell and taste of my food, and because I continue to do this, my creations are good. Whenever a person comes along that can actually taste and smell my pies, I have hope that I will too, one day."

"I find that when I see a well-proportioned table or rack full of baked goods, I have a sense of accomplishment and pride. I see patterns and personalities in each loaf of bread and every slice of pie. My bread sculptures are familiar to many of you, and I make them following an inner vision. So it is the inner eye that guides my thoughts, and the external eye that guides my choices when I put these creations together. I make landscapes, forests, mountains, skylines, oceans, and fields in the patterns of my bread, but in this whole world, I made a face not long ago that is especially precious to me."

With that, he pulled from the podium his masterpiece, a loaf of bread that looked exactly like the face of a beautiful young woman. It was the bread he had spoken his wish to several days previously, and it was just as fresh as the day he baked it. The king was astonished beyond measure, exclaiming, "For this, you will become my royal baker!" The villagers smiled at this creation, knowing that he had made many other treats to look like loved ones, for special occasions. The princess seated beside the king unveiled her face, and the Baker, who had previously never seen her, had captured her likeness perfectly, down to the full, slightly smiling lips, the amused brow, and the gleam in her eyes. The king asked the Baker to proceed.

"Next, let me tell you of the sounds of my baking. For those who are not bakers, I cannot fully explain why I enjoy these sounds so much. I hear the wooden spoon scrape against the bowl as I mix the dough, listen to the music of the milk or water as it trickles, splashes, and swirls into the pan, and hear the fruit hiss and sputter as it cooks inside the pie. When the pies are in the oven, I hear the crackling of the fire behind it, the opening and shutting of the grate to check the progress, and the sliding slap of the pie tins on the wooden cooling racks as I pop the pies out of the oven. I find myself singing and humming as I work, because I am filling my environment with sound, just as the food is surely filling the air with aromas that I cannot smell."

With these words, the audience broke into applause. One of them shouted, "Here, here, Baker!" Another bellowed, "Well said, my good man!" The villagers began to sense the earnestness of the Baker's feelings. It began to make sense to them why, during the hustle of the day, they would be so drawn to the bakery, where some of them paused daily simply to listen to the happy noises of the kitchen and the singing of the Baker. The king said, "My royal Baker, the princess would now like to sing for such a lover of sound, and I doubt you have heard anything in your bakery to rival her voice." The princess stood and sang a sweet song of morning dew on lilacs, of swans on a still lake, and of a love that lays waiting for its heart's mate. There were no dry eyes in the tent that evening, and the princess intoned, "Please continue, my dear Baker."

"Though some of you have five senses and think us villagers strange, to be sure there is only one sense left that can make the experience of food worthwhile. It is the sense of touch. While many of you are able to avoid touching your food, using knives and other silverware, it is part of my joy in life to hold and mold food in my two hands, knowing that the shapes and patterns I give it will be pleasing. The textures of baked goods are so varied, from an almost gravel-like consistency in my harshest, heaviest dark rye breads, to the creamy texture of a delicate pastry. The consistencies of the batters are likewise many, from thin liquids to dough so thick it must be wrestled with in order to be baked. I enjoy the feeling of the hot oven on my hands, the smooth wood on the counters, and the cooling breezes from the windows. They are all feelings, and I feel very connected to the food I make when I revel in the sense of touch."

With this, there was a great rushing noise, as the sound of many winds and waters, and a turbulent mist filled the tent. All in the audience went silent, the king and his attendants, soldiers, and followers vanished, and a fog obscured everything except the Baker and the princess. She threw off her veil and mantle, and standing before him was the silver fairy of so long ago, with slate-grey eyes, flying hair, and elegant features. The fairy spoke: "You passed the test, my dear Baker. You brought the village together in harmony with your creations, and you made them believe not only that food was worth experiencing fully, but that life was, as well. This has re-awakened their hospitality, and you have been an example to them. The old and young are reconciled, the poor are no longer enslaved to the rich, and the forces of apathy and depression have been overcome by joyful experiences. I now lift my spell against this town, removing from it the barriers and bondage of selfishness. I reawaken it to the world, and invite it to grow and prosper in peace. As for you, my dearest Baker, I have need of you in my faraway kingdom." With that, she grabbed the Baker in her arms and swept him up in a flowing, rushing train of silken, gossamer threads and vanished. Nothing remained but a fine mist, smelling strongly of roses, with a light scent of flour and the taste of orange-rosehip frosting.

Epilogue:

The villagers awoke from their momentary slumbers to see the tables, revelers, and party accoutrements disappear slowly in the mist. They found themselves seated on the cobblestones of a transformed, beautiful square even better than their preparations for the king had made it. The bakery now had crystal panes of glass and porcelain colored walls. Inside, the oven doors lay open, with a host of pies inside, waiting to be eaten. An inquisitive lad approached the first pie, and he laughed aloud, "I can smell it!" He plunged his two fingers into the warm center and put a gob of blackberry filling into his mouth. "I can taste it!" he yelled. "I can taste it!" The other villagers found their own pies and began eating them with their fingers. Before the meal turned into a feeding frenzy, the curious boy picked up the Baker's prized rolling pin and shouted, "I'm the new baker now! Take your pies and get out of my store!" He then proceeded to chase the other villagers down the street. Even to this day, the midsummer's eve feast is celebrated with unusual fervor and laughter in this village, in a place called Bakerstown.

Exploration

Discover main ideas



Good leaders find that all journeys ultimately coalesce into a larger movement of life. How will you get to where you intend to go, and what will you do when you get there? Opportunities may arise for short-cuts but they may not take you where you intended. No one will follow a wanderer for very long, but explorers are taking risks and discovering the unknown. Finding options, climbing mountains, and discovering new ways of thinking is the way to go.



Think about it

The freewriting, diagramming, and brainstorming exercises produce a lot of writing. Take these ideas and start exploring. Follow the questions for reflection and the reasoning diagram. Pull together things you know from your audience profile and the essay template. What is the overall direction of your path? How can you integrate these things into a thesis statement? Do you need another perspective or context? Don't just let your readers assume. Show them where you've been.

Finding your perspective



Making it in the real world takes some goal achievement and personal leadership. To understand your particular perspective in writing, you have to see the topics you keep coming back to, the ideas you can't get out of your head, the activities you still enjoy time after time. You have to know your backstage voice – the one you talk to yourself in, before anyone else listens, and listen to it. As the primary symbolic system of the mind, language makes sense of the world and consequentially develops your sense of self-worth.

Be true to your voice

Freewriting

Expression through writing involves our own real, personal voice. In order to move from mundane aspects of everyday life towards higher aspects, I recommend freewriting, which will help you identify your ideas, share your feelings, and let your beliefs flow. Write without looking at the paper, and without stopping yourself to think if what you're saying is right. Open yourself, think creatively, get everything out, and value quantity over quality. Freewriting comes directly from your heart instead of being filtered through your head, and because of this, it will have a real aspect. It will be coherent and integrated because of the interaction of your voice with your life experiences. A wise man once said, "Writers set out in apparent ignorance of what they are groping for, yet they recognize it when they find it."

It requires some trust to let yourself go, but when you do, you can discover unchallenged, deep beliefs. Just like a fish doesn't know that it's in water, we don't normally think about our basic ways of being and treating others. It's these core values or ideals that guide your actions whether you think about them or not. Unconsidered beliefs sometimes pop up in negative ways, as myopic stereotypes, false superstitions, and foolish decisions. If you let these feelings out, you can recognize them and grow wiser. When you write from the heart, you can recognize the imagery and significance in your actual experiences, seeing the truth about your life that usually gets ignored. The heart knows far more than it ever says, once you allow it to be free. Writing is a medium for a change of heart, which we also call spiritual growth.

One specific way to freewrite is to start your word-processor and turn off the monitor. Then divide your writing time, say an hour, into four sessions. Write for 10-15 minutes solid, without pausing, and without pre-judging your content. Just let it flow – it will become clearer as you go on, just like water through a stream becomes cleaner as it flows. Don't stop until your time is up. Then take your best sentence and copy/paste it onto the next line. Repeat the process twice. For the fourth, last writing session, look over the entire amount of writing that you have produced. Find the idea that best represents the whole direction that you are going, which you have creatively discovered through your freewriting process. Then write for the last ten minutes about this idea. You will have found the center of concern regarding the matter that has emerged from your writing. That's your position. That's your voice.

Answer some questions

1. Author: Why do you want to write about this text? What are your ultimate goals or intentions? Can you separate personal reasons from academic ones? Why is this topic important to you personally, in terms of your experiences, thoughts, feelings, and beliefs? Why would it be important for your readers? What is your initial evaluation, before going deeper?

2. Assignment: Do you understand the assignment and can you say it clearly in your own words? Since you're not addressing the professor, who is your intended audience? What is their need that must be filled? What do you want the audience to think, feel, or do? What types of evidence, such as values, opinions, or facts, could work to support your purpose?

3. Analysis: How will you divide the text into its significant parts? What are the major issues, ideas, character roles, or images? Does evidence support the thesis and other claims? How are events, people, places, and institutions significant? How does the author use Ethos, Pathos, and Logos? How does the text use stories (plot), descriptions (settings), or arguments?

4. Argument: How can you move past your first impression and read between the lines? How will you organize your argument? Which claims are shallow, and which are deep? Do you intend to praise, comment upon, or critique this text? What are its values, attitudes, or beliefs? How does your perspective distort the evidence? Would a reasonable person agree with you?

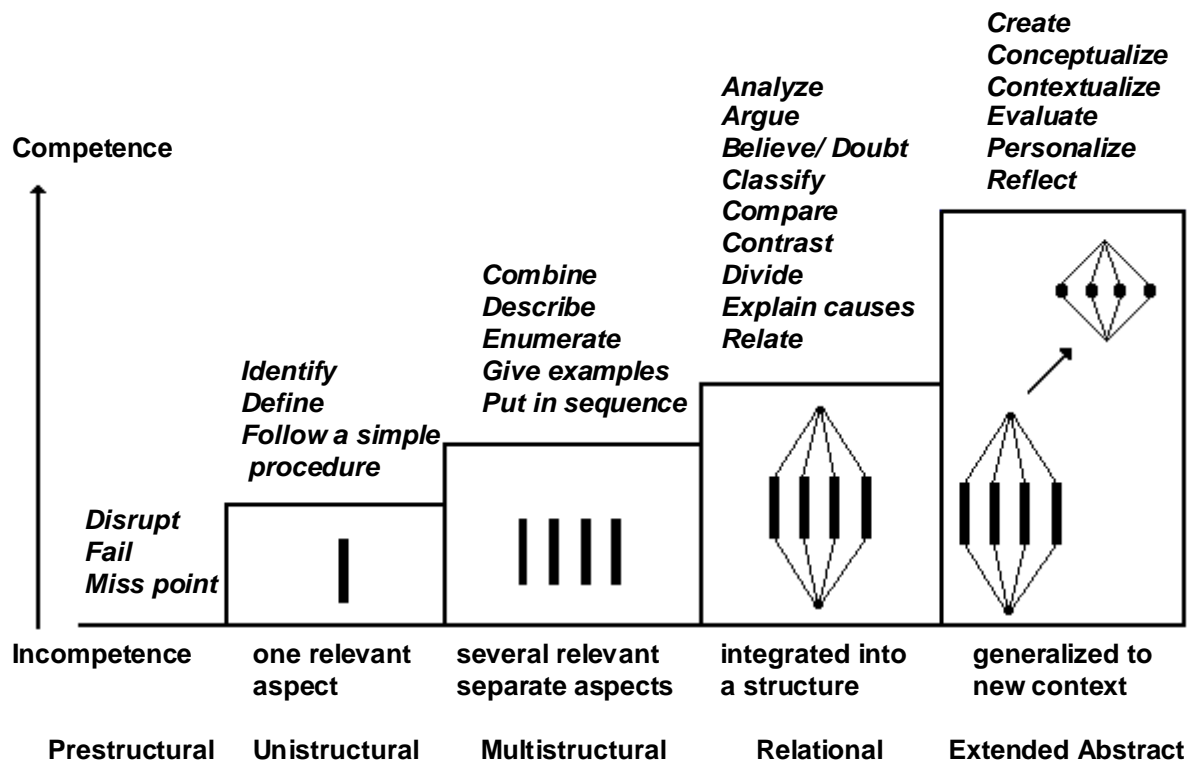
5. Concepts: What main concepts could be used as labels for significant parts of your text? How will they organize your essay? Some examples of concepts include things people want, such as friendship, or things people fear, like hatred. What organizing idea connects all of the concepts in your paper together and makes your analysis and interpretation work?

6. Contexts: What are the history, genre, and culture behind this text? Is there a shared understanding or schema that contextualize it? How does the author reflect real historical conditions, movements, and events? Is there a theoretical context, e.g. feminism? How is the cultural context relevant? Do premises or assumptions create false frames of interpretation?

7. Perspective: Whose point of view is represented in the text? Who is the Author? What can we tell about the persona from the style and content of the text? How does the author's perspective limit what he/she can show you? What are your point of view's strengths and limitations? Does your point of view create new directions that the author did not intend?

8. Consequences: How does this text make you feel or think? What is your evaluation of the text? Does it cause you to look at yourself, others, and the world in a different way? What do you see now that you didn't see before? How could this be meaningful in and affect the lives of others? What should your readers do, physically or mentally, to respond to your writing?

Think Critically



Elaboration

Be clear and specific



When you have others' well-being in your hands, you need to take care. Expeditions thrive on proper communication of expectations. Sometimes the difference between success and failure is one misspoken phrase or one detail. A mark of a good leader is supporting his or her claims with good, solid proof. Don't try to get by on charm. If they want answers, you have to provide them, which increases the buy-in of group members, and enables others to trust you.



Provide Support

The most common complaint of college writing teachers is that the students are not specific enough and don't give adequate support for their claims. The work is too vague and disconnected. It sounds like casual conversation, which is all right, but there's no accountability for what's said. Arguments need support, and when you elaborate on basic points with specific evidence and claims, your writing gains complexity and structure.

Consider consequences



Writing things down makes them count for something, because there's a real, physical record. If you are in a work situation, sometimes your memos or emails will be the main proof that you were following company policy or doing your job. Business people have to use a higher standard for their professional interactions, and elaboration is a skill everyone needs to have. Using a detailed, lively, and authentic style enables an articulate person to succeed.

Improve your arguments

Argument Creation

ARGUMENT = CLAIM + EVIDENCE

CLAIM - Maxine is a United States citizen.

EVIDENCE - She was born in the United States.

ASSUMPTION - People born in the U. S. are citizens.

SOURCE - The 14th amendment to the US Constitution.

REBUTTAL - If Maxine was naturalized elsewhere, she can't be a US citizen.

This model shows you the components of arguments so you can see if something is missing. Often, the problems in arguments are not in the evidence, but in the proof of the evidence. This point is where writers will often use unstated assumptions, prejudices, and deception to distort meanings and sidetrack unwary readers.

Find the claim, evidence, assumption, source, and rebuttal for the arguments below.

Because you look so run down, you should probably take a Carnival cruise. From what my friends and I have experienced, cruises are a good way to de-stress. Thanks for the advice, but I just lost my job, and a cruise is the last thing I need.

Because a majority of his party voted for him, Hitler was the people's choice for a leader. The World Book encyclopedia says that four out of seven original Nazis voted for Hitler. Winning by one vote shows that there was little popular choice in the matter.

Because Ford was the first US automobile maker, their cars are better than others. The commercial says that long years of experience make their cars better. Backing evidence using advertisements introduces a conflict of interest.

Unit 4: Developing Meaning in Literature

In this unit, we will discuss the penultimate steps of your writing journey towards developing meaning through readability. These steps all begin with D – decision, discussion, and description. Decision is the step where authors get serious about message clarity and focus. Discussion brings the author and audience together to find good and bad points of the text. Description involves using specific details and figurative language in the essay in certain places where the message needs to be improved. One individual in recent history has taken the ideas of personal focus and sharing with others to a new level, through his book *Man's Search for Meaning*. In this interesting, clinical, and heartfelt account, Viktor Frankl shows how each person is responsible for the meaning in his or her own life. The assignment follows.

Vision Essay – This is an analysis of literature essay. You will pick 4 quotes from Viktor Frankl's *Man's Search for Meaning* (see handout) that stand out to you for one reason or another, and figure out what they mean to you personally. The body will be structured as follows: For each quote, you will first analyze what you think Frankl means in the passage or how it relates to the book's main theme (1 paragraph). Second you will analyze what the quote means to you and why it is important to your meaning of life (1 paragraph). What can Frankl teach you about yourself and your future? Create a four-page essay that explores these issues. Double space and type the paper, using Cambria 11.5 pt. font.

In *Man's Search for Meaning*, Frankl not only told his story, but he also introduced a new psychology in which wellness is connected with understanding the meaningfulness of one's life. Frankl suggests that we can overcome despair and find hope for tomorrow, regardless of what our circumstances may be, taking another person's perspective in order to increase gratitude and improve attitude. Frankl was at Auschwitz concentration camp during WWII, and he saw the base, vicious, primitive aspect of the human condition, but he still clung to justice, mercy, and hope. Although he was under constant coercion and control, he discovered transcendent ideals. The meaning of life is not an answer, but a question that life poses to each of us. This class uses logotherapy, writing for personal benefit and self-realization.

Decision

Match plans to purpose



It takes some time working and walking with people to make an informed decision on where their talents can be best allocated. So shuffling responsibilities along the way makes sense to attain optimal party performance. Everyone has to know his or her role in the operation, and regular tasks must be allocated. Certain people or objects work together in compatible, compelling, positive, and supportive ways. Others aren't particularly bad, but they simply don't cooperate very well. Effective organization expedites proper communication.



Choose your path

For good writing to happen, it takes good ideas. It is easy to come up with ideas but putting those ideas into paragraphs was a challenge. Once you have paragraphs, you have to make sure that they are following a logical flow, not only in their own organization (see paragraph logic) but also in terms of essay logic. Track the argument across the paper and make sure that it doesn't waver from your decided outcome. If something doesn't match, you may have to rethink the logic of your essay and modify the preliminary statement of purpose.

Make writing count



In the real world, if you're not willing to make difficult decisions, you won't get very far. Knowing how to properly allocate and distribute funds, equipment, and people is a very highly sought-after skill. Individuals who must make crucial decisions in writing include web designers, technical writers, book index writers, journal editors, information system analysts, critical theorists, and newspaper managers. But even if you don't intend to go into one of those fields, matching a purpose to a plan and carrying it out is crucial for future success.

Decisive essay writing

Previewing main ideas

At this point, you should already have a solid draft of your essay, but you need to be sure that the final product matches with what you initially said you were going to do in the thesis statement. And although the essay template is helpful for you to plan your paper up-front, once you're finished with the conclusion, you can't just stop there. The worst thing for me is to read a paper with a nice thesis that organizes the first three pages, but then the last page feels like a tangent. So you need to make sure that your paragraphs are following your initial thesis.

To improve paragraph connection, go through your paper and write down the main ideas out to the side of the paragraphs in the margins. Look at your thesis and see whether you have previewed all of these ideas before you presented them in the text. If you haven't, it's time to add what many teachers call a "plan of action statement" (PAS), a few sentences that slightly elaborate on your thesis statement, previewing the whole essay and helping the readers feel comfortable with it. An effective PAS "maps out" your essay argument, particularly *the way* you explored the thesis, along with any new information or insights you couldn't have predicted up-front. For this reason, you can't really build one until *after* you've completed writing the paper.

Next, look back at all of your topic sentences throughout the paper. Do each of them introduce the paragraph adequately? Some students just write whatever they feel like writing in their first sentences and don't get around to the main point of the paragraph until the middle or end. This is sloppy, non-academic style. You need to make each topic sentence set up the main idea of the paragraph. This way, your paragraphs will be able to stand alone, without the context of the other paragraphs. Then check to see if your paragraphs flow like water, with effective transitions, and that they all are about the same length. Does the longest paragraph maintain focus in the middle? Is the shortest paragraph well developed? All of your main points should be treated equally, with roughly the same amount of energy and space given to them.

Now, polish the paragraphs so they are smooth and look at the sentence-level issues.

Introductions and conclusions

Effective Introductions

An effective introduction arouses the reader's interest and indicates the subject and tone of the essay. Introductions vary in length, but most papers over four pages have introductions containing two or even three paragraphs. The first paragraph, called the "hook," grabs the audience's interest and then focuses gradually until it points at the essay's general direction. The main paragraph, or "thesis," plans what the essay will say, explains how it will prove this, and ends with the thesis statement. A "background" paragraph, focusing on audience or some other context may also be necessary. You can write the "hooks" of introductions in a number of ways. Here's a way to remember the types of introductions – Baseball, for several reasons, is quite nice. **B.F.S.R.I.Q.N.** This list is in an order of effectiveness, simplest to most engaging.

1. Background information

Anyone new to the experience of owning a lawn, as I am, soon figures out that there is more at stake here than a patch of grass. A lawn immediately establishes a certain relationship with one's neighbors and, by extension, the larger American landscape. Mowing the lawn, I realized the first time I gazed into my neighbor's yard and imagined him gazing back into mine, is a civic responsibility.

Michael Pollan, "Why Mow? The Case Against Lawns"

2. Fact or detail (unusual or appropriate)

A new Census Bureau report predicts that there will be 383 million Americans in the year 2050. That's 128 million more than there are now, and 83 million more than the bureau was predicting just four years ago, when it appeared that the U.S. population would peak and stabilize at around 300 million.

Michael Kinsley, "Gatecrashers"

3. Statement (intriguing or controversial)

After smiling brilliantly for nearly four decades, I now find myself trying to quit. Or, at the very least, seeking to lower the wattage a bit.

Amy Cunningham, "Why Women Smile"

4. Rhetorical question (which you'll answer)

In a series of futuristic commercials, AT&T paints a liberating picture of your not-too-distant life, when the information superhighway will be an instrument of personal freedom and a servant to your worldly needs and desires. But is the future of cyberspace really so elegant, so convenient? Or does it represent a serious threat to your privacy and your freedom?

Erik Ness, BigBrother@cyberspace

5. Illustration (example of something)

Libby Smith knows what it is like to be a victim of gay bashing. First, there were the harassing telephone calls to her home. Then, one evening last March as she went to get her book bag out of a locker at the University of Wisconsin at Eau Claire, she was attacked by two men.

Mary Crystal Cage, "Gay Bashing on Campus"

6. Quotation (from a substantial person)

When the Reverend Jerry Falwell learned that the Supreme Court had reversed his \$200,000 judgment against Hustler magazine for the emotional distress he had suffered from an outrageous parody, his response was typical of those who seek to censor speech: 'Just as no person may scream 'Fire!' in a crowded theater when there is no fire, and find cover under the First Amendment, likewise, no sleazy merchant like Larry Flynt should be able to use the First Amendment as an excuse for maliciously and dishonestly attacking public figures, as he has so often done.'

Alan Dershowitz, "Shouting 'Fire!'"

7. Narrative (a story or anecdote)

As I walked out the street entrance to my newly rented apartment, a guy in maroon high-tops and a skateboard haircut approached, making kissing noises and saying, "Hi, gorgeous." Three weeks earlier, I would have assessed the degree of malice and made ready to run or tell him to bug off, depending. But now, instead, I smiled, and so did my four-year-old daughter, because after dozens of similar encounters I understood he didn't mean me but her.

Barbara Kingsolver, "Somebody's Baby"

Effective Conclusions

Conclusions are the last words that the reader sees, but some authors spend the least amount of time thinking about them, because the essay is already over. However, a bad conclusion can ruin an otherwise great essay. The conclusion often summarizes the main points very briefly and encourages the reader to action or further thought on the subject. For this reason, the main concepts should be clear in the body of the essay. An essay should not merely stop; it should finish with a sense of purpose and style. Some suggestions follow, which can be used individually or in tandem with each other.

1. Conclude by rephrasing the thesis.

Such considerations make it clear that it's time for schools to choose between real amateurism and real professionalism. They can't have a little of both. From now on, in college sports, it's got to be poetry or pros.

Louis Barbash, "Clean Up or Pay Up"

2. Direct the reader's attention to larger issues.

My antibody status does not matter to you. Certainly it matters--with absolute enormity--to me. But what I'd like you to remember is the blood on the subway, the click of the refrigerator door, the woman in black so elegant and uneasy, First Avenue at gritty, gorgeous dusk, the brilliance of that bad art in the examining room, the pores of the doctor's face--all of them declaring, by their very existence: As long and as well as you can, live, live.

David Groff, "Taking the Test"

3. Encourage your readers to change their attitudes or to alter their actions.

Our medical care system is in trouble and getting worse. While the experts try to figure out how to achieve utopian goals at affordable prices, let's do something practical about the suffering on our doorsteps. Primary care is the most affordable safety net we can offer our citizens. By all means, let's continue the debate about universal, comprehensive insurance to cover all medical costs, but, in the meantime, let's provide primary health care to all uninsured Americans--now!

Gordon T. Moore, "Caring for the Uninsured and Underinsured"

4. Conclude with a summary of the main points covered.

All our giving carries with it messages about ourselves, our feelings about those to whom we give, how we see them as people and how we phrase the ties of relationship. Christmas giving, in which love and hope and trust play such an intrinsic part, can be an annual way of telling our children that we think of each of them as a person, as we also hope they will come to think of us.

Margaret Mead and Rhoda Metraux, "The Gift of Autonomy"

5. Clinch or stress the importance of the central idea by referring in some way to the introduction.

Introduction

I read The National Enquirer when I want to feel exhilarated about life's possibilities. It tells me of a world where miracles still occur. In the world of The National Enquirer, UFOs flash over the Bermuda Triangle, cancer cures are imminent, ancient film stars at last find love that is for keeps. Reached on The Other Side by spiritualists, Clark Gable urges America to keep its chin up. Of all possible worlds, I like the world of The National Enquirer best...

Conclusion

So I whoop with glee when a new edition of The National Enquirer hits the newsstands and step into the world where Gable can cheer me up from The Other Side.

Russell Baker, "Magazine Rack"

Examples from Hodges, John C., et al. Harbrace College Handbook. Revised Brief Thirteenth Edition. New York: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1998.

Discussion

Talk to a friend



At appropriate resting points in your journey, be sure to consult with the members of your expedition team. The best decisions often come as a result of group thinking, so become familiar with your team members and take their advice. You will have to rely on them to help you when the trials of the path become too strenuous. Sharing some of the burden of leadership enables you to stay focused, gain perspective, and make better decisions.



Respond to peers

To make your papers the best that they can be, it takes sitting down with others and discussing how to improve them. Peer response can happen in class or with friends. Revising that follows this type of feedback helps to ensure honest, direct communication. So often we get caught up in our own minds and voices, and we don't really see how we're coming across to others. Peer revision addresses this concern.

Use expert readers



Every published book and all peer-reviewed journal articles go through at least two or three expert readers, so the editors can be certain that the content is correct. A mark of professionalism is the ability to take and give constructive criticism. Authors have transformed their works with suggestions from readers and editors, going on to great success. They never would have been published without the tweak that helped to make their unique vision into a masterpiece. Sharing with others can be a fun and rewarding part of the writing process.

Sentence Combining

Smooth long sentences are really combinations of short sentences. For example, if you wanted to convey the information in the series of sentences listed below, how would you write it?

1. The Torres family had a farm.
2. The farm was about 15 miles below Monterey.
3. It was on the coast.
4. The coast was wild.
5. The farm was a few acres in size.
6. The acres were sloping.
7. The acres were above a cliff.
8. The cliff dropped to the reefs.
9. The reefs were brown.
10. The cliffs dropped to the waters.
11. The waters were white.
12. The waters were the ocean.
13. The waters were hissing.

The original sentence from John Steinbeck's short story "Flight" is,

“About fifteen miles below Monterey, on a wild coast, the Torres family had their farm, a few sloping acres above a cliff that dropped to the brown reefs and to the hissing white waters of the ocean.”

The strategies proposed below will help developing writers to build longer and more complicated sentences, which, by their nature, make better arguments. Good writers use many different combining techniques in order to make their work interesting to read.

Strategy one uses a comma and a coordinating conjunction: and, but, or, nor, for, yet, so.

- *I want to help my roommate, but I've run out of suggestions.*
- *I like neither his sense of humor nor his personality.*
- *I'll come back later, and bring an RA.*

Strategy two uses a subordinating conjunction. There are three groups:

- 1) the pronouns: that, which, what, who, and whose
- 2) the prepositions: after, although, as, because, before, how, if, once, since, that, though, till, unless, until, what, when, whenever, where, wherever, why, and while
- 3) phrases: as if, as soon as, as though, even though, in order that, in that, no matter how

- *If I don't get some sleep soon, I'll just go crazy.*
- *I could crash at my parents' house, unless they've changed the locks already.*
- *Since I moved out, things just haven't been the same.*

Strategy three uses an -ing word group (an absolute).

- *Practicing every day, I am building up a fine repertoire of lame excuses.*
- *I have avoided studying, hoping to get by on my exotic looks and brilliant sense of humor.*

Strategy four uses an -ed word group (participle phrase).

- *Helen, elated by her essay grade, showed it to all her friends.*
- *She put the paper back in its folder, surprised by the stupidity of their remarks.*
- *Confused, she went to her room.*

Strategy five uses a word group that follows a noun+comma and renames it (appositive).

- *Max Power, one of Homer J. Simpson's alter-egos, flew to Tahiti on a corporate jet.*
- *Little did he know that the pilot, a former stunt flyer, was planning a detour in Tijuana.*

Strategy six uses an -ly word (adverb).

- *Jack Lantern crept swiftly and stealthily towards the unwitting trick-or-treaters.*
- *He lept from the bushes and shouted menacingly at them, waving his arms wildly.*
- *Efficiently, they unloaded their pepper-spray canisters into his writhing face.*

Strategy six uses a to + verb word group (infinitive).

- *To succeed in this course, you must rewrite many papers.*
- *Use all of your best ideas to revise them.*
- *To write better, worry more about argument than questioning.*

Strategy seven uses prepositional phrases.

- *According to my advisor, I have no idea what I'm doing.*
- *After I graduated from college, something just snapped.*
- *In my subconscious mind, I wish I was back in kindergarten.*

Strategy eight uses words (especially verbs and adjectives) in a series.

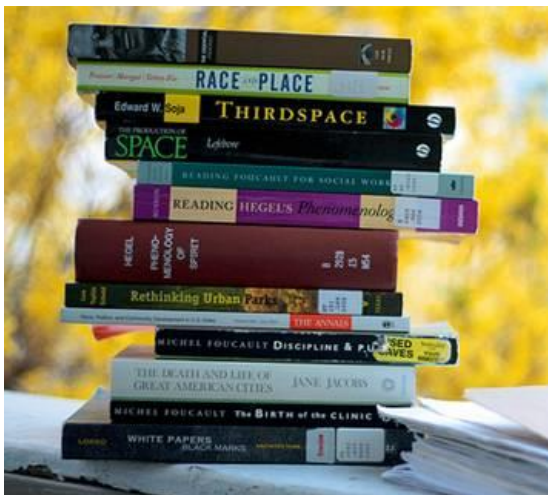
- *The tired, hungry manager forced his stubborn, petulant, bored workers to listen.*
- *The student's cell phone vibrated, flashed, and emitted a mind-numbing tune.*

Description

Make your text detailed



Aside from voice, which promotes individuality in writing, there are other ways to make your work artistic and unique. Using appropriate description, specific details, and conscientious literary devices, such as imagery, symbolism, theme, and point of view will increase interest in the work and also enable you to be more powerful in your writing. In this sense, it is also beneficial to examine sentence variety, word choice, and other stylistic issues.



Check your facts

In school, people use books, articles, and other documents to supplement their comprehension of topics they are interested in. This practice is called a review of literature, or more generally, “research.” All professions have a manual or handbook. The process of finding appropriate sources takes time. Each source should have something unique to say. Because multiple perspectives bring complexity to issues, you must be willing to open yourself and learn, while using your convictions to ground you.

Speak in real terms



Although it is important to cultivate a literary turn of phrase, this should add to description and not take away from clarity. You must develop the ability to bring metaphors and imagery in service of your overall point, not for their own sake. A variety of occupations require workers to communicate difficult concepts in a clear fashion. At some point, one person has to break through the "spin" and give the real answers. Job categories that focus on detailed explanation are technical writing, inspection, network support, business strategy, and events promotion. You should distinguish yourself as one who has developed the ability to articulate that vision.

Understand Literary Devices

Word Level

Diction - Word choice in writing, part of an author's style

Metonymy - Using an associated idea to name a thing

Symbolism - Words have a literal meaning and a deeper meaning

Phrase Level

Simile/Metaphor - Symbolic comparison to evoke a picture or image

Irony - Clash between what ought to be and what is, contrary to intended meaning

Imagery - Representation of things accessible through the senses

Sentence Level

Syntax - Non-standard structure of a sentence to emphasize something

Paradox - Self-contradicting statement that proves true from a different perspective

Personification - Referring to ideas, places, animals, or things as if they were people

Paragraph Level

Tone - Attitude of author that establishes a feeling

Allusions - Any reference to outside texts

Analogy/ Allegory - Symbolism/stories that compare unfamiliar with familiar

Book Level

Motif - Recurring element in the text, supporting theme

Foreshadow/ flashback - Shifting time to provide details about future/ past

Characterization - Physical features and personality traits that distinguish characters

Lucid Writing

The acronym LUCID enables students to remember the qualities of a well-revised paper. It refers to the two most important characteristics of good writing, because lucid means both clear and rational. Also, each letter stands for specific aspects that explain these two general characteristics. In a lucid essay, the language is unified and coherent, and important issues are developed.

L.U.C.I.D.	
Clear (understandable)	Rational (understanding)
Language is U nified and C oherent.	Important issues/ideas are D eveloped.

For each of these characteristics, check the box when you have considered them in each paper.

	Issue	Self	Song	Belief	Career	Vision	Choice
L	Language						
U	Unity						
C	Coherence						
I	Importance						
D	Development						

Develop your essays by reading them aloud and asking others to comment on problem spots. You should get to the point quickly, include details for general statements, improve word choice, use transition words and phrases, find logical connections between sentences, clarify the meaning of your arguments, focus on the important issues and ideas, and provide appropriate support for claims. As you develop a lucid essay, you will think and feel yourself more comprehensible, focused, purposeful, and directed. The outcome of a lifetime of such writing is a lucid mind and open heart. For now, you can start to see these things growing within you, as you nurture your own style.

Adapted from "CLUESS" *The Brandon Guide for Revising and Editing* Cengage Publishing, 2017

Unit 6: Completing a Research Essay

In this unit, we will discuss the final steps of your writing journey towards completing an essay. These steps all begin with O – operation, orientation, and optimization. Operation is the step where authors go beyond sharing to take further action on the objectives outlined in the paper. Orientation points the text towards the audience, improving the action verbs and adjectives. Optimization refers to the “optimal” text, which has proper punctuation and mechanics. Taking action on your beliefs is the purpose of research, particularly the type we will do in this unit, which investigates the concerns each person will face on the job. As we accept responsibility and accountability, we strive to improve our practices at work. The assignment follows.

Research Paper: This paper is an extension of who you are. Ask yourself, “What should a person who believes in my core value do about a particular issue in my chosen career field?” Write a research paper on that subject in proper MLA format. The subject must be controversial and debatable. Worn-out arguments like legalizing weed or criminalizing abortion are discouraged. Here are some ideas from A to Z: aging, beauty, culture, disability, entertainment, friendship, gender, housing, intolerance, justice, killings, lawyers, management, nurturing, obsession, power, quality, religion, status, teaching, understanding, virtues, warfare, x-ratings, youth, and zebras (Come on, who can resist zebras!). Create a six-page research paper, double spaced and typed in Cambria 11.5 pt. font. The paper must incorporate six sources: Reference book, book, journal article, news article, a personal interview, and something from the internet.

Taking action on a personally significant issue can give you a sense of empowerment and even happiness. To increase personal happiness, psychologists have suggested thinking about how one’s practices align with the six timeless virtues of wisdom, courage, humanity, justice, temperance, and transcendence. In practical terms, to get started on your research, you must choose a topic that seems interesting or otherwise feels right. Don’t get distracted by too many choices, because “shopping around” for ideas is over-stimulating and gives the impression of an elusive “perfect topic” that doesn’t exist. Commit to your topic and anticipate the benefits you will realize on your investment of time and energy. Keeping the rewards in mind, actively remove other topics from your mind by clarifying why your topic is the right choice.

Operation

Meet your objectives



The last five percent of any journey makes the difference between returning and never coming back again. Therefore, combine objectives with action and start operating like a person on a mission. The basis of personal change is the belief that it has a potential. Is this course personal for you, or is it a requirement with no real meaning? If this course has caused you to rethink your position, to let go of the past, or to think seriously about your future, then the journey has been worth it. Now see what you can do in your own way to bring change to the world.



Take charge now

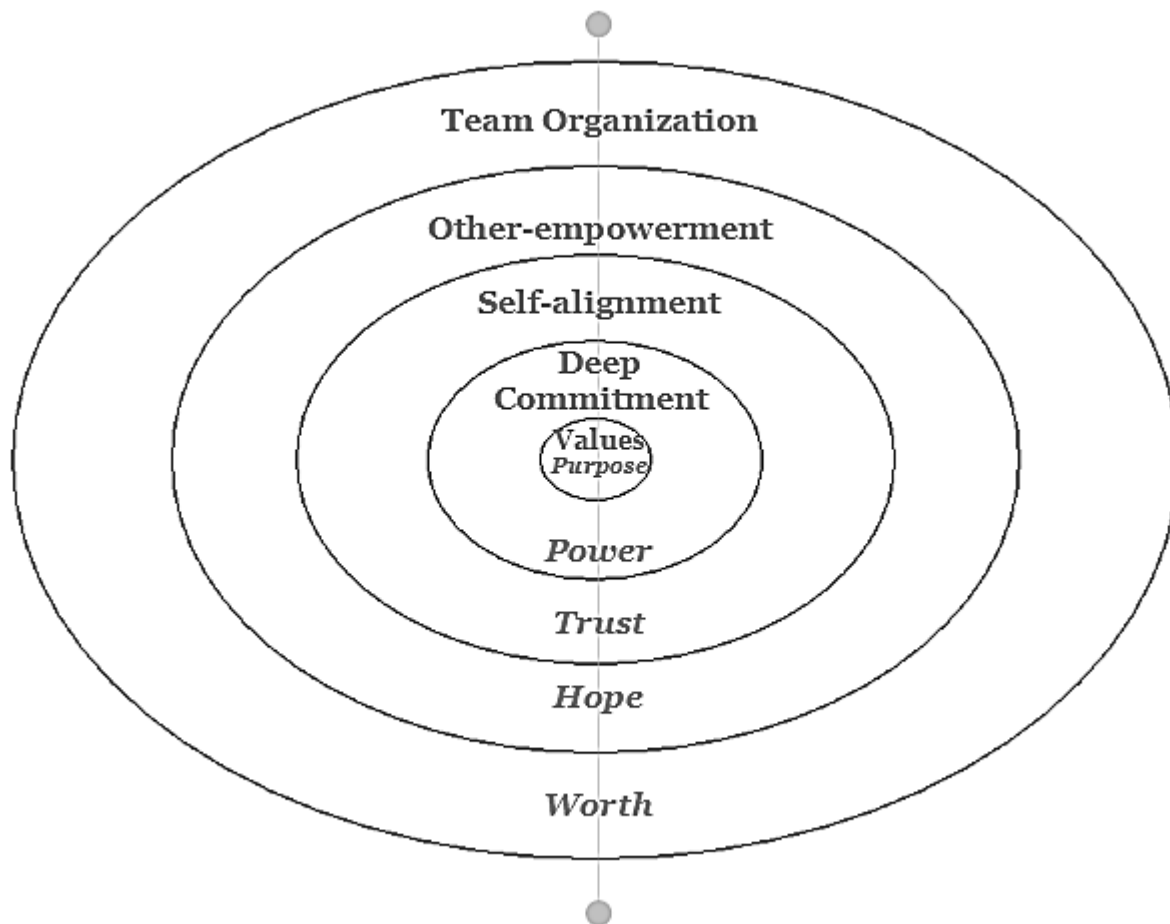
Many students feel that they lack opportunities to make a difference in the world. Much of college writing feels like a routine, or a drill, without any of the passion or drive that they put into chatting with friends. The difference is doing it for personal reasons. So taking action must be the end of personal writing. Students should feel that their papers are doing things for them in a concrete way, establishing their mission, creating portfolios, and making contributions to our knowledge. But it should also cause them to talk about issues with friends, connecting school to life.

Connect with life



Real-world writing does many things, making ideas proprietary, binding agreements, and informing readers. But for many adults, it functions as a bridge from the past to the future, from a dream or desire through the creative process, to an outcome first on paper, and then in the real world, which is the objective of the character approach to authorship. The true self is waiting to be actualized. It takes time, effort, will, and conviction, but writing can make you a better person than you are right now. Authorship is the road to a better tomorrow.

Progress in your goals



1. **Core Identity** – What do you believe about yourself and your ability to change?
2. **Personal Life** – Do people trust you at your word? Can you trust yourself?
3. **Family Life** – What is your support network? Can you count on your friends?
4. **Public Life** – How do you empower your people? Can they act for themselves?
5. **Service Life** – Does your organization have vision, purpose, and structure?

Transition words

Addition: furthermore, moreover, too, also, in the second place, again, in addition, even more, next, further, last, lastly, finally, besides, and, or, nor, first, second, secondly, etc.

Time: while, immediately, never, after, later, earlier, always, when, soon, whenever, meanwhile, sometimes, in the meantime, during, afterwards, now, until now, next, following, once, then, at length, simultaneously, so far, this time, subsequently

Place: here, beyond, adjacent to, there, wherever, neighboring, on, nearby, opposite to, above, below

Exemplification or Illustration: to illustrate, as an illustration, to demonstrate, specifically, for example, for instance

Comparison: in the same way, in like manner, by the same token, likewise, similarly, in similar fashion

Contrast: yet, on the contrary, but, and yet, in contrast, however, nevertheless, notwithstanding, though, nonetheless, on the other hand, otherwise, after all, at the same time

Clarification: that is to say, to clarify, in other words, to rephrase it, to explain, to put it another way

Cause: because, on account of, since, for that reason

Effect: therefore, thus, consequently, hence, accordingly, as a result

Purpose: in order that, to that end, to this end, so that, for this purpose

Qualification: almost, perhaps, never, nearly, maybe, always, probably, although, frequently

Intensification: indeed, undoubtedly, definitely, to repeat, yes, no, certainly, by all means, surely, without doubt, of course, in fact

Concession: to be sure, granted, of course, it is true

Summary: to summarize, in short, in brief, in sum, in summary, to sum up

Conclusion: in conclusion, to conclude, finally

Orientation

Turn towards them



You have found the treasure of the ages if you can learn to respect, care for, and understand each other. A professor once told me “They don’t care how much you know, until they know how much you care.” Show you care by orienting your approach to the values and standards of your fellow travelers. Of course, too much change is bad, so focus on the truth rather than on what others simply want to hear. If you capture your group’s hearts, they will be confident of your leadership. In the stories they tell their friends, you will be a mentor, wayfarer, and friend.



Give your best

When you write, you have to meet audience expectations. The teacher demands a level of formality, and your classmates want you to show them who you are, to establish your credibility. Aside from knowing what you’re talking about, you have to be confident. As you try to serve your audience’s needs, your writing will improve because you found out how to explore your true self in a way that will help others.

Work as a team



In the institution of education and in the broader career world, all relationships with others thrive on adaptation and conciliation. Working with others on a closely-knit team brings out your best and helps to change the rest. Striving together as a team enables the lonely writer to become something greater. Through networks and affiliations, it is possible to work towards becoming, as Mahatma Gandhi advised, the change that you desire to see in the world.

Effective Style and Tone

Less Effective	More Effective
In Cosmo Girl, there <i>is</i> an advertisement...	An advertisement <i>appears</i> in Cosmo Girl...
These colors <i>are</i> bright, and normally...	These bright colors normally <i>attract</i> the eye...
Men think that it <i>is</i> a major turn on when...	Men <i>consider</i> big lips a major turn on...
“Dazzling Diamond” <i>is</i> in big text at the top...	“Dazzling Diamond” <i>appears</i> in big text...
This <i>is</i> explaining the most obvious part...	This <i>explains</i> the most obvious part...
One woman’s dress <i>is</i> all diamonds...	One woman’s dress <i>glitters</i> with diamonds...
It <i>is</i> a girl’s dream to grow up...	Girls <i>dream</i> of growing up...
Diamonds <i>are</i> a huge part in society...	Diamonds <i>play</i> a huge part in society...
It <i>is</i> a stereotype these days to be skinny...	These days, stereotypes <i>influence</i> trends...
Some women who <i>are</i> skinny as can be...	Some overly skinny women <i>try</i> harder...
She <i>is</i> placed right up front...	She <i>stands</i> close to the reader...
The woman in the background <i>is</i> wearing...	The woman in the background <i>wears</i> ...
They <i>are</i> symbolizing the perfect image...	They <i>symbolize</i> the perfect image
This ad <i>is</i> advertising a product...	This advertisement <i>promotes</i> a product...
The slogan <i>is</i> in capital letters...	Printed in all capital letters, the slogan <i>attracts</i> ...
Another symbol <i>is</i> the nudity... it symbolizes..	The female nudity in the ad <i>symbolizes</i> ...
Since this <i>is</i> a product for females...	Because only females <i>buy</i> this product...
When a child <i>is</i> first born...	When a child first <i>arrives</i> in this world...
Maybelline <i>is</i> not only getting a jingle stuck...	Maybelline not only <i>gets</i> their jingle stuck...

The “less effective” examples came from a student essay on advertising. Weak verbs include linking verbs, passive verbs, and present progressive. Powerful verbs make great writing.

Grammar/ punctuation

Proofreading Tips:

To proofread better, you must change your perspective by making the work “strange”

- Take a big break between writing and proofreading to “cleanse your palate”
- Read much more slowly than usual, pausing on every comma and period
- Read out loud, slower, running finger along page and even recording it
- When you read out loud, don’t pause unless there is a punctuation mark
- Read your essay backwards, sentence by sentence, to check flow
- Read your essay paragraph by paragraph in chunks
- Read sentences backwards, word by word
- Draw comments, pictures, diagrams on the pages themselves
- Use a piece of paper to cover all of the lines you aren't reading
- Pretend you are your audience by role-playing as an “ideal reader”
- Put each sentence on a new line, to ensure correct sentence boundaries
- Use essay evaluation checklist – “Twelve point grading criteria”
- Check your content, organization, and mechanics
- Find your intro, thesis, body, discussion, conclusion
- Make the font bigger and different style
- Mark the verbs and prepositions to take charge of their phrases
- Set up and use your spelling checker to find grammar and style problems too
- Look for each type of error at a time, commas, then periods, and then others
- If you find an error, use find/replace to check if you did it multiple times
- Keep track of your own issues by organizing corrections from previous work

Optimization

Write towards perfection



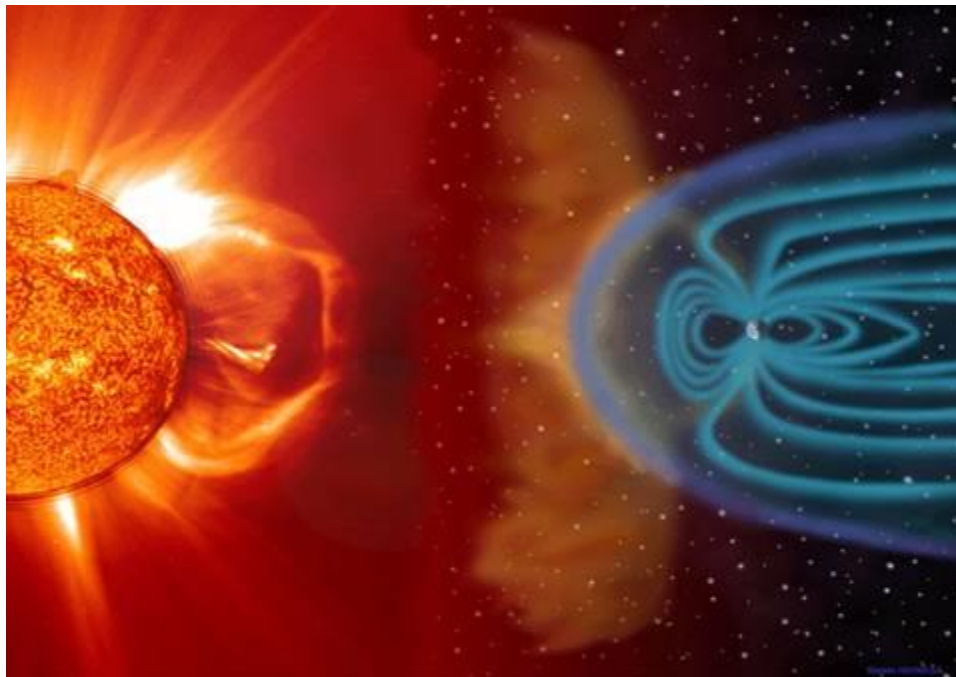
All quests must come to a close, but the end of an adventure is just the beginning of the story of the journey. If you took care to write in your logbook throughout the trip, then you should have plenty of material to make into meaningful stories. The treasure you found will be one of personal awareness. The heroes will be the people who came with you and the friends that you found, and the moral of the story will be one of trials, development, courage, and dedication.



Use good diction

Poorly chosen words can misrepresent a writer, so you should use the words that convey your ideas in a thoughtful and credible manner. Craft the details of your words and sentences so that the words faithfully represent you, and so that people will trust and accept you. The words that you use are just as important as anything else you've done so far. After you've done the work of checking spelling, go the extra mile to make your work into something pleasing and compelling, artful and true.

Beautify your expression



Some aspects of excellent writing can't be taught. It is artistic and compelling for reasons you can't immediately explain, like this picture of the cosmic interaction of solar radiation and the earth's magnetic field. Good writing can be calculated and predicted, measured and practiced, but it should have an elemental quality, flowing like water, warm as sunshine, fresh as a breeze, pliable as the soil, and solid as bedrock. If you have taken the time to find the right words and expressed yourself truly, then you have written something meaningful and worthwhile.

Commas: Use a comma in the following situations:

1. A series of three or more verbs, nouns, adjectives, or even sentences. The rule is one less comma for each item in the series:

I eat, drink, and run.

With three verbs, use two commas (with four verbs, use three commas and so on), and ALWAYS before the conjunction (, and), even between series of sentences:

I ate my sandwich, I drank my pop, and I went home.

2. Between two sentences – with a conjunction (, and) (, or) (, so) (, nor) (, but) (, yet) (, for):

I ate my sandwich, and I went home.

3. After a subordinate (or dependent) clause that begins a sentence: Since, Because, Although, Even though, Unless, After, While, When, Before, etc. plus a mini-sentence:

Because *I fell down*, I broke my nose.

4. After a prepositional phrase (a preposition plus a noun) with five or more words at the beginning of a sentence (up, on, in, before, after, over, below, etc. – prepositions are words that usually indicate the position or condition of a noun):

At night in my home, I sleep.

BUT NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

At home at night, I sleep. No commas with four words or fewer. Sentences beginning with such phrases as (For example) or (Consequently) are exceptions.

Passive Voice: Avoid overuse of passive voice

In passive voice, the subject becomes the object:

The car is driven by me.

The campfire was lit by the hikers.

Put your sentences in **Active Voice**: In active voice, the subject takes action.

I drove the car.

The hikers lit the campfire.

Beginning sentences with This, That, There, and It is OK once in a while, but don't overuse this device.

For example: It is necessary that I go to town.

Instead: I need to go to town.

Subordinate clause – adverb plus verb clause—note the commas:

Since teaching the whole class MLA style, the instructor feels better.

Before going to class, the teacher had a drink of water.

But notice this usage: The teacher had a drink of water *before going to class*. No comma when the clause or phrase comes at the end of the sentence.

Verb phrases: “ing” form of verbs that modify a noun:

Running on empty, Jackson Brown’s car came to a stop.
Puking her guts out, Jane blinked twice and passed out.

Adjective clause: adjective or “-ed” forms of verb:

Angry over the F on her paper, Thelma yelled at the teacher.
 Louise, *annoyed with her boyfriend*, dumped him.

Note: The last four examples would be misplaced modifiers if the phrases were put at the end. Always keep the modifier next to the referent.

Noun phrase: a noun (often accompanied by adjectives and prepositional phrases) modifying another noun.

A firefighter in Chicago, Jasmine often works double shifts.
 Jeremiah, *a car thief from Altamont*, was sent to jail for six years.

Colon/semicolon

(;) = (, and) and is used the same way between two complete sentences that are connected:

Maria loves Juan; she is marrying him in June.

DO NOT use semicolons like commas. A semicolon ends a complete sentence and then adds to or explains what has already been said:

Solana likes fruit: apples, pears, and peaches.

Do not write:

Solana likes fruit such as: apples, pears, and peaches.

Instead:

Solana likes fruit such as apples, pears, and peaches. **NO COLON.**

A colon may also be used to highlight an appositive – an equivalent, even a whole sentence that is repeated for emphasis:

Mark killed the mosquito: he swatted it with his boot.

Conclusion: The Voice within you

Writing in a personal, truthful way is often compared to a journey, as we explore the images within ourselves and recognize the conflict that occurs between our beliefs, intentions, and daily actions. But it's not a question of simply making lemons into lemonade, like "just add sugar." Life gives us crap, and we have to turn it into soil, then plant, grow, harvest, and cook what comes up. It's hard work to separate the lies from half-truths that we tell ourselves as our inner gardener works through what the world dishes out. Writing can be a therapeutic force, unifying these scattered thoughts into a world of expression. It's the story of our life, after all.

Writing about the details of life is crucial to unleashing personal power, but in the right time and place. We may feel uneasy sharing certain private things with others, which is why some words are for personal use only. Journals are usually a safe place to store our private thoughts and decide what topics can be shared during a class. The rule of thumb is that if it still hurts, we plan to share less. Seeing a larger idea or vision can motivate coping or healing, but everyone has their own limits. Although the best lessons come out of drama and tragedy, it's the writer's perspective that reveals them to us. This is also true in life as we find personal meaning.

We can scarcely comprehend the vast territory of the unconscious mind, where every word we've ever heard is stored, and from which *spontaneous infinitely creative speech* emerges as an everyday thing. Think of this! An infinite landscape where voice roams and sees possibilities, making a daily connection to the spoken words of the past and creating new meaning just by talking about it. At this point of communication with others, if we consider that things happen for significant reasons, we can read a personal meaning out of our life's story. Repeated mistakes simply draw more attention to truths that our personal struggles are trying to teach us. Interpreting our life episodes, finding new points of view, and creating fresh meaning are all functions of language, bridging past and future. And voice can be the guide within us.

Appendix # 1: Sample Student Essay

Experience Life and Confront Death

Theme of Mortality in a Country Song

In modern society, many people live apathetic lives without much care or concern for their inevitable demise. There seems to be a commonality among social mindsets that although death is known, it's so far away that worrying about it now would be pointless. In actuality, most people unconsciously believe that they will live forever; that when they go to sleep tonight, they will most assuredly wake tomorrow. Usually this is the case; however, death is a ubiquitous, enigmatic force that could strike anyone at any time. In Tim McGraw's "Live like You Were Dying," Tim recognizes through personal experience to not take life for granted and to live it to the fullest. Listeners of this song are forced to confront the reality that any day could be their last. Through listening to its admittedly catchy lyrics, many listeners are compelled to treat every day like a gift, to "live like you were dying." Through this piece, a bridge between song and reason can be made to better the quality of human life.

One of the focuses of the song is to convey the truth that any day could be your last. Every day people walk to their jobs, homes, friends, etc..., oblivious that any moment could be their last. After listening to the lyrics of "Live like You Were Dying," I could not help but realize that so often I take the precious time that I have been given for granted. I walk seemingly incessant routes day-in and day-out, as routine as can be until one day it will hit me just as it did in Tim's friend's case. Tim begins his moving song by helping the listener to experience that moment when they finally come to grips with the realization that their days are numbered. "He said I was in my early 40's, with a lot of life before me, and a moment came that stopped me on a dime. I spent most of the next days, looking at the x-rays, talking about the options and

talking about sweet time.” Here, Tim’s friend realizes that an unmentioned ailment will claim his life, confronts his death, and what he will do with his remaining time. This becomes a crossroad that all people who come to realize their impending death must face: Will you live life? Or let your disease live life for you? Tim uses this song to chronicle his friend’s journey as he chooses to live his remaining life to its fullest.

Another interesting focus in the song is to demonstrate the benefits of living life to its fullest. Throughout the chorus, his friend comes to experience many of the crazy, dangerous things that many people never would because of fear for life and limb or complacency. “I went sky diving, I went Rocky Mountain climbing, I went 2.7 seconds on a bull named Fu Manchu. And I loved deeper, And I spoke sweeter, And I gave forgiveness I’ve been denying, And he said I hope someday you get the chance, to live like you were dying.” The chorus is a very complex realization of all the things that most people neglect in their life: Adventure, Love, and Forgiveness. Too many times, dreams die, marriages grow cold, and suns set on angry hearts. This chorus attempts to persuade the listener to experience life in all its grandness by convincing the listener of how great it is to take that risk, to feel that compassion, and to realize that life is too short to stay angry with someone. I believe that he, like I, feel that a life spent angry at the world is a wasted life. Too many times, people waste time hating the world rather than accepting it for its flaws and experiencing all it has to offer.

In the next stanza, Tim’s friend continues to share all the great things that made his remaining days into memorable experiences. He said, “I was finally the husband that most the time I wasn’t. And I became a friend a friend would like to have. And all the sudden going fishing wasn’t such an imposition. And I went three times that year I lost my dad. Well I finally read the good book, and I took a good long hard look at what I’d do if I could do it all again.” Through being the man that he never was before, Tim’s friend fulfills the path he felt destined

to walk. He came to grips with his waning spirituality and realizes that suddenly, all the little obligations he avoided were not such impositions. He encourages listeners to realize that even the small things matter in life, like taking that little trip or kissing your loved ones goodnight and that even minute things can enrich your existence. So many times the seemingly trivial matters in life go by the wayside because they do not fit into "The Big Picture." This stanza encourages listeners to break out of their everyday rhythm and take in each experience rather than getting too caught up with all of the hustle and bustle of deadlines and bottom lines.

As the song ends, Tim finally comes to the realization of his own life and eventual death. He poses himself with the same question that so many people refuse to. "Like tomorrow was a gift and you've got eternity to think about what you do with it, what could you do with it, what can I do with it, what would I do with it?" These closing lyrics give absolution and purpose to his friend's story. The true intent of the song was to help people realize that while they may not live forever, they still have time to be everything that they want to be and that each little thing they do should not be taken for granted. Though his friend eventually dies, Tim is left with the lasting impression that his friend's death was not in vain, that he had lived to his fullest, that his life had purpose, that he'd lived life like he was dying.

The final theme that was evident in "Live Like You Were Dying" entailed its ability to connect to its listeners and enrich their lives. I feel this song connected with me on numerous levels. When I was younger, I lost an uncle who was in his mid-thirties. He was a great man and loved his children deeply. Every time I hear this song, it reminds me of the time I got to spend with him and it makes me wonder whether or not he lived his life to its fullest. Did he kiss his children goodnight every night or did he let the pressures of work cloud his focus? Did he forgive people for the little things here and there or did he let the sun go down on an angry heart? Did he get to do all the things he had wanted to do? Sadly, I doubt he ever truly became

what he had wanted to be in his eyes, yet he was everything he could be in ours. After listening to this song, I finally realized that I have been taking so many things for granted and that I wanted to change my life for the better. That even though I know that my life could be long and lasting, I should stop to take in the world from time to time. After long, deep thought, I came to this solution: At the end of life, it is not how I died; it is how I lived that matters.

Tim McGraw's "Live Like You Were Dying" reaches out to people on many levels. It challenges people to break out of their humdrum routine and take in the beauty around them, to show more love to the people they care for, and to take risks for the things that matter most to them. I feel that many listeners, like me, connected to this song through its powerful lyrics and intense topics that many of us fail to realize until it is too late. Through listening to the song, I felt compelled to change myself for the better even down to the smallest thing. I hope that any reader or listener of the song chooses to live life to its fullest, not take anything for granted, and to live like you were dying.

Appendix #2: A Typical Grading Rubric

Teachers and administrators use rubrics to check if students in all English classes are learning a specific set of skills. Look at the audience and subject focuses, which are really important from a reader's point of view. Now notice the absence of any discussion of conviction, expression, or mission, which are all crucial for writers. I think that most teachers understand that these issues are important, but they leave it up to the student to figure it out.

A. Essay demonstrates audience awareness and clear purpose.

Audience and purpose-appropriate tone and style: 1) Excellent, 2) Good, 3) Fair, 4) Poor, 5) None

B. Essay has excellent analysis and critique of subject matter.

Analysis and critique of subject matter: 1) Excellent, 2) Good, 3) Fair, 4) Poor, 5) None

C. Essay has a clear thesis.

Clear and concise thesis: 1) Excellent, 2) Good, 3) Fair, 4) Poor, 5) None

D. Essay supports and develops a topic/thesis.

Essay supports/develops topic/thesis: 1) Effectively, 2) Adequately, 3) Fairly, 4) Poorly, 5) Not at all

E. Essay is clearly organized.

Organization is logical and interesting: 1) Excellent, 2) Good, 3) Fair, 4) Poor, 5) None

F. Essay has a good use of transitions between sentences and paragraphs.

Transitions help ideas in the paper to flow: 1) Effectively, 2) Adequately, 3) Fairly, 4) Poorly, 5) Not at all

G. Essay demonstrates sentence complexity and appropriate word choice.

Sentence complexity and word choice: 1) Excellent, 2) Good, 3) Fair, 4) Poor, 5) None

H. Essay demonstrates a command of grammar and punctuation.

Distracting or confusing errors: 1) Error-free, 2) Minor errors, 3) Major errors, 4) Many errors, 5) Awful

