

English Composition

English Composition

*JEFF MEYERS, CLINTON COMMUNITY
COLLEGE*



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PART I

COURSE INFORMATION DOCUMENTS

I. I. Welcome

Welcome to English 101-1DL, English Composition. My name is Jeff Meyers, and I'll be your instructor this semester as we look at writing essays, including research writing.

If this is your first experience with on-line education, I am sure you will find it an interesting, challenging and rewarding experience. If you have taken on-line courses before, I am glad you decided to participate in this program as well.

I have also taught English 235, Technical Writing, on-line for quite a few years as well as Eng. 101 in a hybrid format, meaning that students came to class four times a year to take in-class essays. We now offer English 101 as a totally online version of English Composition. I am excited about the possibilities and hope you enjoy it as much as I know I will. I understand your feelings if you are nervous or a little confused at this point. But I believe you will become more and more comfortable with the concept the more you work with on-line lessons.

It's important to note that we have lots of technical support staff to help us with any problems we may encounter. You can find help at helpdesk@clintoncc.suny.edu or by calling (518) 562-4161. The key to developing confidence in a WEB environment is to stay with it and to seek help when needed.

You will find syllabus-like information in a number of documents below. I suggest that you read each document in this section in the order they appear and ask any questions you may have along the way by clicking on the "Ask a question" box at the bottom of each document. You may want to print some of the documents if you take comfort from hard copies.

We will not be using a textbook for this course, but I will provide you with online access to several sites that provide solid information on important writing skills and requirements. As I will emphasize throughout the course, revision plays a major role in writing

properly, and having easy access to all of the rules/regulations that guide proper English is vital to your success. Don't be afraid to ask questions, and don't be afraid to respond to any of your classmates' questions.

I have posted complementary information for each chapter in the different modules and have included some questions to help get the discussions rolling. Once we get going, I would like to be a participant in the discussions along with each and every one of you. *We will all get bored very quickly if I end up doing all the talking.*

We will also be looking at several examples of the essays you will be assigned this semester. I think it is very important that you all understand your role as the writer of expository information (make sure you know the meaning of words when you find them). You will be expected to write using specific support, clear organization, unified information and good sentence skills (all of which we will talk about throughout the semester). I would like all of you to be confident in sharing your ideas regularly.

I hope you're getting the idea that your active participation in these discussions will become the heart of this course. After all, we are dealing with student communication. Don't think of this solely as one of those dreaded English courses you may have come to know. It's a tool that I want to help you use in your future work in college and beyond.

Thanks for reading this. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask. But for now, I suggest you read through the rest of the Course Information before moving onto the course modules.

Good luck, and remember that help is always available for you.
— Jeff Meyers

2. 3. Plagiarism Statement

Plagiarism is the act of presenting someone else's words or ideas as your own. It's clear that having someone write a paper for you and turning it in as your own is plagiarism. It also goes without saying that it's wrong to buy a research paper to turn in with your name on it. But there are other less obvious ways to plagiarize, and you need to be aware of them.

Using someone's exact words without using quotation marks and without giving that person credit is plagiarism.

Using someone's words, but changing a few of them by using synonyms without giving the person credit is plagiarism.

Using someone's original idea, even if you don't use the exact words, without giving credit is also plagiarism.

When you turn in a writing assignment, it is assumed that everything in it is your own work and your own ideas, unless you give credit to the originator of the words and ideas. This includes the ideas you post in online class discussions.

Why? Plagiarism is against the law (stealing) and it's also unethical (lying). Recently in the news you might have read about journalists, politicians, and even college presidents who have gone down because they passed off someone else's ideas as their own. Their jobs, reputations, and their ability to find work in their professions are now ruined. In college the penalties are not quite as harsh (failure for the assignment, failure for the course, dismissal from the college), but it's still not worth it.

On a brighter note, you should know that it is completely acceptable to read what other people have said about your essay topic. And it's perfectly acceptable to **use** what other people have said, as long as you **give them credit** for it.

Here are some sources to help you avoid plagiarism by acknowledging and citing your sources correctly:

The Academic Assistance Center at CCC

The Learning Resource Center at CCC
Purdue's Online Writing Lab: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>
The LRC's online library resources: <http://clinton.edu/Academics/Library/INDEX.HTM>
Your instructor!

3. 4. Overview

This course will focus on essay writing, including such issues as development using specific support, coherence (making sure everything supports a thesis) organizational skills and correct grammatical form. It is an overview of the writing process – how you get from an idea to a complete, thorough essay. It will also include a detailed look at researched writing: how to find sources, cite sources and incorporate sources into text.

You will receive instruction and practice in writing a variety of essays, including argument, narrative, process and classification. You will also work on writing in-class, in a time-controlled setting. The ultimate goal for all of you is to do well in the final timed-writing, which is an essay evaluated by the English Department at the end of the semester. You have to do well with this assignment to do well with the course. We will spend a lot of time working on the timed-writing.

As you plan, draft and polish your writings, you will work with me and your classmates to identify the most effective content, style, tone and design for each assignment you are working on. We will constantly analyze your writing from both the writer's and the reader's perspective, and we will emphasize a simplistic approach to writing rather than a complicated style. Modern writing demands that readers understand what you are trying to say without difficulty and without using a lot of time.

You will write eight essays for this class. At least one (the final argumentative paper) will include a research requirement, which we will discuss thoroughly over the next several weeks. Research is an important tool in many venues, both within and outside school. I want you to be able to use research to grow, to learn and to succeed. Although it is required for only one essay, you may learn that it is valuable for many essays.

We will also spend some time on different grammatical issues.

I don't like to focus on a lot of specific grammar rules. I like to concentrate on those that students are having trouble with. But there are some basics in word choice, sentence patterns and paragraph development that I would like to cover and share with you. There will be some "quizzes" on such grammatical issues as complete sentences, comma usage and plural/possessives.

During the next 15 weeks, you will become a strong student writer. It will benefit you in your education and career goals. I really do believe that learning to communicate via the written word will always be important, made even more so with the expanded use of computers and on-line communication. I hope my experience in school and the business/professional world will be a benefit for you. If you have any questions or concerns, never be afraid to ask or bring them up. Let's all enjoy the semester together.

4. 5. Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of the course, students will:

1. use prewriting strategies to choose and narrow a topic, to generate and organize ideas and to plan an essay;
2. draft an essay that expresses a main point and provides detailed development and support for that point;
3. revise writing to achieve coherence, unity and clarity;
4. edit writing to correct mechanical errors;
5. produce finished essays which express a main point, provide detailed development, clearly communicate ideas, and come to an effective closure. The essay will also follow the rules of standard written English;
6. critique their own writing and the writings of others;
7. use research procedures to produce a documented paper using MLA format;
8. write successful essays within the confines of a time limit;
9. exhibit the ability to think critically and analytically and to reason logically in their writing;
10. recognize that composition skills from this course apply to other writing situations and enhance life-long learning.

General Education Objectives

Students will:

- produce coherent texts within common college-level written forms;
- demonstrate the ability to revise and improve such texts;
- research a topic, develop an argument, and organize supporting details.

5. 6. Textbook and Supplemental Reading

We will not be using a textbook for the course but will be using an online grammar handbook for this course. Use the following web site address to access your handbook at any time.

<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/styleguide/>

6. 7. Course Learning Activities

For this course, you will become involved in three types of Learning Activities:

- **Class writing and discussion activities.**

We will spend much time together working on the different kinds of essays required in the class. We will talk about different options writers have for improving work and then put those options to practice with shared writing exercises. We will look at a lot of models to use for improving writing skills.

- **Study exercises.**

I will provide for you a series of practices exercises reviewing some of the readings and discussions. These exercises will emphasize some of the important concepts of essay writing.

- **Written documents.**

The backbone of the course will be a series of eight essays you will be required to write. Five of them will be out-of-class homework assignments on a variety of topics I will give you as we go along. The other three will be *in-class* essays, which will focus on writing a completed essay in a short period of time (remember that we will not actually meet in class to do these essays). The first two will be graded practices for the final timed-writing, which is a very important assignment. You have to do well with the final to do well in the course.

- **Journal writing.**

Just like any other activity, the more you write, the easier it becomes. You can practice writing skills by using a daily journal. A journal will be required for this course. Each module will require a minimum of three journal entries each. You should spend at least 10 to 15 minutes on each entry, and you

should focus on specific support for your ideas.

7. 8. How You Will Be Evaluated

Essay Grading

Each essay will receive a letter grades based on both content and mechanics and format. Papers can be rewritten for improved grades. In other words, if you receive a C on a paper, you can revise it for improvement. If an original essay is not satisfactory, I will ask you to revise it without giving it a grade. I don't think anyone benefits from receiving failing grades. When you hand in revisions, please include the original graded paper. I need to see what kinds of improvements you made. Revisions are due one week after you receive the paper back.

Essays will be handed in on a regular basis throughout the course and must be handed in on the due dates. A letter-grade penalty will be added for each day a paper is late.

Each essay assignment should include at least one rough draft and the final copy. Save your rough draft before doing any revisions on screen. I have to see improvements between the draft and final copy, or I will not accept the paper.

Research

For this course, you will be required to write at least one essay that includes researched information. We will discuss MLA style of researched writing, and you must include correct research style for the paper(s) you choose to use as research. Your research project will include an additional grade for MLA style. The topic you choose for research should be based on interest: you want to learn more about a topic you have an interest in, one that has relevance to your life.

Final Grade

Your final grade will mostly be determined by the written essays. I will take the average of all final drafts, including in-class essays,

and they will represent 60 percent of your final grade. On-line discussion, journal writing and homework activities will also be included in determining your final grade, using the following breakdown:

Essays: 60 percent

Discussion: 20 percent

Journal: 15 percent

Homework: 05 percent

Numerical averages will be translated into letter grades based on the following scale:

A: 93-100

A-: 89-92

B+: 86-88

B: 82-85

B-: 79-81

C+: 76-78

C: 73-75

C-: 69-72

D+: 66-68

D: 63-65

D-: 60-62

F: 0-59

8. 9. My Expectations

I will be expecting very active participation from you. Since I can't see you, I will need tangible proof that you exist and that you are working in a highly motivated way.

One obvious focus of participation will be in the class discussions. This should be taken very seriously. Since each module is scheduled for about two weeks, this is the time period during which the discussion must take place. Try to put some serious thought in what makes documents successful, both from the writer's perspective and yours. I expect you to participate in the course at least three times each week. I will be looking for your work and ideas that often. Together, we can get a lot accomplished over the next 15 weeks.

I hope that a lot of the discussions are generated by you and your classmates. Sure, I'll have some comments and suggestions once in a while, but I value what all you have to say. You all have experience as writers prior to entering this class. Have confidence in your abilities and help each other improve and strengthen your writing skills.

Obviously, this is an English course, so I will be expecting you to follow proper English rules in your writing. I also believe the need for rewriting can't be over-emphasized. I expect you to write drafts, to work with those drafts and to edit final copies. Look for ways to improve your original ideas. Is there a better way to say it? Do you need to say it with so many words, or will a shorter explanation suffice? Rewriting isn't just adding info. It's adding and deleting info to best suit your needs and those of your audience.

Stay on schedule. Once you fall behind in an on-line course, you can't catch up. Information will only be available for a certain amount of time. Essays have to be completed by the due dates, and homework and discussion activities have to be completed on time as well. If you are having any problems, let me know quickly. Together, we can come up with a solution that best meets the needs of this course and your future education.

I'm sure this is going to be a great experience for all of us, and I hope you will appreciate the benefits in using clear, concise written communication.

Academic Honesty Policy

All students are expected to behave with academic honesty. It is not academically honest, for example, to misrepresent another person's work as one's own, to take credit for someone else's words or ideas, to accept help on a test or to obtain advanced information on confidential test materials, or to act in a way that might harm another student's chance for academic success.

When an instructor believes that a student has failed to maintain academic honesty, he or she may give the student an "F," either for the assignment or for the course, depending on the severity of the offense.

A student may appeal a decision on the charge of failing to maintain academic honesty according to the procedure described by the Student Code of Conduct in the college catalog.

9. 10. Course Schedule

Print this document

COURSE CALENDAR AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

Topics/Activities	Start (use exact dates)	End	Assignments Due
In-Class Writing Sample	Aug. 21	Aug. 30	First Day writing sample Eng. 101 Syllabus
Module 1: Getting Started	Aug. 21	Sept. 1	Introduction to grammar resources: Aug. 31 Journal entries: by Sept. 1
Module 2: Writing the Essay	Sept. 2	Sept. 08	Revision practice Sept. 7 Journal entries: by Sept. 09
Module 3: Narrative Writing	Sept. 9	Sept. 22	Narrative essay: Sept. 20 Journal entries: by Sept. 22
Module 4: Process Writing	Sept. 23	Oct. 6	Thesis practice: Sept. 29 Process Essay: Oct. 4 Journal entries by Oct. 6
First-In-class Essay	Oct. 11	Oct. 13	First In-Class Essay
Module 5: Comparison/Contrast	Oct. 11	Oct. 24	Choosing Appropriate Words: Oct. 21 Comparison/Contrast Essay: Oct. 22 Journal entries: by Oct. 26
Module 6: Classification	Oct. 25	Nov. 11	Writing Effective Sentence: Nov. 4 Classification Essay: Nov. 09 Journal Entries by Nov. 11
In-class Essay 2	Nov. 15	Nov. 17	Second In-Class Essay Intro to final timed-writing
Module 7: Argument/Research	Nov. 11	Dec. 7	Logic examples: Nov. 21 Argumentative with Research: Dec. 5 Journal entries by Dec. 7
Module 8: Timed Writing Discussion	Nov. 21	Dec. 2	Timed-writing discussion: by Dec. 2 Argumentative revisions: by Dec. 12
Final In-Class Essay	Dec. 4-6		Final timed-writing

10. 11. Your Next Steps

Please take a moment to write a small bio about yourself in the Know Your Classmates section below.

If you have and feel comfortable about taking an on-line course, proceed to the first module, “Getting Started,” and read the opening “Mini Lesson.”

If I haven’t seen you yet, I look forward to our first in-class gathering. If I have, nice to meet you. Have fun.

II. 12. Where To Go For Help

If you have a technical problem while taking this course, you'll need to decide who to contact.

A problem with your computer (e.g. Dell, HP, Apple)?	Contact technical support for the computer company.
A problem connecting to the internet?	Contact your internet service provider (e.g. Comcast, Primelink).
A problem accessing your course?	
A problem navigating, viewing, or submitting assignments to your course?	Contact ClintonOnlineHelp@clinton.edu anytime or call (518) 562-4281 or (518) 562-4165 between 8:30 am and 4:00 pm. Mon -Fri.
A problem understanding instructions, finding assigned work, seeing your grades, etc.?	Contact me (your professor) within the course by using "Talk with the Professor."

PART II

COMMUNICATING AND SUBMITTING COURSE WORK

12. 1. Course Communication

Checking Course Announcements

It is your responsibility to read the course announcements on a regular basis. This is as simple as logging into the course and checking the Announcements forum at the top of your Moodle course. It's very important that you read these on a regular basis or you might miss something crucial in your course work.

Sending Course Messages

Choose *Course Messages* from the left-hand menu. Click on the *Create Message* button. Choose your recipient from the TO list, and move them by clicking the right-facing arrow. A subject line is required. Compose your message and click *Submit* button

Course messages are private and should be used for confidential communication. For all other course communication use the *Talk with the Professor* forum or other public forum areas of the course.

Checking Course Messages

Course Messages appear on your homepage, or you can click on *Course Messages* on the left-hand menu. Click the *Inbox* to read messages.

Quickmail

Quickmail is another way to communicate. It uses your CCC email to contact others in the course. You can send mail to individuals

or groups within your class. Click on “Compose New Email” and choose the recipients. After writing your message, scroll to the bottom of the form, and click “Send Email.”

13. 2. Participating in a Discussion

Your participation in course discussions will weigh heavily in the grading of your classwork. This class puts a high value on discussion posts and responses as part of the communication within the course. Class discussions happen within the learning modules and pertain to specific assignments within those modules.

When you see the discussion icon, you can participate within assigned Start and End dates.

A discussion thread is the start of a conversation and will sometimes be started by the instructor and sometimes by the student. Each response to the original question is indented once – a response to a response is indented a second time – etc. This system of indents helps us determine which responses go together.

Responding to the main item

To compose your response to a main discussion item you are reading, click on the Reply button at the bottom right. Be sure you're reading the post you want to reply to, so it posts in the right place in the thread.

A good subject title tells the main point of your response. "Response to Discussion 1" is not a very useful title, especially if everyone in your course uses the same subject. Use a subject line that describes your main point. You'll be able to tell where you are in the discussion by reading others' subject lines. If subject lines are all the same, finding specific posts will be difficult.

Submitting your response

When you have completed your response, click *Post to Forum* button at the bottom.

Netiquette

As discussion is of a public nature, please observe proper netiquette — courteous and appropriate forms of communication and interaction over the Internet (in online discussions). This means no personal attacks, obscene language, or intolerant expression. All viewpoints should be respected.

Clear Communication

It's very important to use standard English grammar, spelling and punctuation in your discussion posts. This will make it possible for all of us to understand each other.

14. 3. Assignments and Quizzes

Submitting Written Assignments

There are two ways to submit a written assignment: by typing or pasting your work directly into a textbox or by attaching it.

Open the assignment page and click the *Add Submission* button. Now you can type or paste directly into the textbox that appears. If you wish to add comments to the instructor a comment box is available. Click *Save Changes* button when you are finished. You'll then see two buttons — *Edit Assignment* or *Submit Assignment*. When you click *Submit Assignment*, you'll be asked if you're sure. If so, click *Continue*. You'll then be able to see that your assignment has been submitted.

To attach your assignment, click the document icon, browse your documents for the file, and click *Open*. Give your document a name. Click *Save Changes* button when you are finished. You'll then see two buttons — *Edit Assignment* or *Submit Assignment*. When you click *Submit Assignment*, you'll be asked if you're sure. If so, click *Continue*. You'll then be able to see that your assignment has been submitted.

How to Take a Quiz

1. Navigate to the quiz you want to take and click the title of the quiz.
2. Quiz instructions and time limits appear on the next screen.
3. When you are ready click the *Attempt Quiz Now* button.
4. You'll be asked to confirm that you're ready to begin. Click *Start Attempt*. The quiz will appear on the screen.

5. When you've answered all the questions, Click Next.
6. You'll see whether or not you've answered each question. If so, click *Submit All and Finish*.
7. If you want to return to any question, do so, and then click *Submit All and Finish*.
8. A results/confirmation page appears on the screen upon submission.

15. In-Class Writing Sample

Please take some time (at least 15 to 20 minutes) to answer the following prompt. Try to write in essay form. This assignment will not be graded, but it helps me to get to know people more quickly and to assess the overall writing ability for this class.

If you had an hour's free time to go anywhere in the world, where would you choose to go. In a short essay, describe your favorite location and why you would choose to spend your hour at that location.

16. Know Your Classmates

Since we will not be meeting in class this semester, it is a good idea to get to know your classmates. Take a few seconds and tell us who you are, why you are taking this course on line and what you hope to achieve from the course.

PART III

I. GETTING STARTED

17. 1. What's Due When

Module Overview: An introduction to writing, including a look at the grammar handbook and journal writing. An emphasis on using specific details.

Module Learning Objectives: Students will recognize the importance of specific details; students will learn a basis for using the online handbook; students will begin recording their thoughts on paper through the use of a journal.

Readings: Online handbook review

Assignments: Using your handbook; Opening journal entries.

Due Date: Handbook assignment: Aug. 31; Journal entries: by Sept.

1

Discussions:

Start Date: Aug. 21. End Date: Sept. 1

18. 2. Specific Details

The key to successful writing is providing your readers with images they can visualize. That is why poets learn to use metaphors and similes so effectively: they compare an image the reader does not know to an image the reader is familiar with (as big as a breadbox is a famous simile). You are not writing poetry here, but your essays must have images that your reader will understand.

In conversation, a listener will ask you a question if he or she does not understand something you say. You don't have that privilege when you are communicating via the written word. You are not there to answer your reader's questions, so you have to make sure you answer any questions in the information you provide (be thorough). The best way to do that is by using specific details, images your reader can see.

Take a look at the following two sentences. Which one gives you a clearer, stronger image of what is going on?

- He ordered too much food and paid for it later.
- He ordered two steaks, two baked potatoes, an order of french fries, corn on the cob, Caesar's salad, chicken wings, cheese sticks, apple pie and chocolate cake. Two hours later, he was sick to his stomach and regurgitated the entire meal.

Obviously, you know much more about the second scenario than the first. Sickening as it is, it gives a clear picture (you might use your favorite word for regurgitate to give an even stronger image). In the first sentence, it's not even clear what "paid for it later" means. Sounds to me like it could mean he paid for his bill after eating, though he might not have eaten everything he ordered. Who knows what it means.

Generalizations are vague images. If I said "she is beautiful," everyone hearing that would have a different image of what she

looked like. Beautiful is a vague word, an abstract word that doesn't give the reader a specific image. But if I said "she has gorgeous (whatever color you wish) hair, bright blue (or brown) eyes (and whatever physical images make her beautiful)..." then the listener sees a specific image.

She is happy.

The car is fast.

The man ran.

I am lucky.

Each one of these statements is vague, generalized. Can you think of an image that would be more specific for each? Think in terms of action for verbs (how does one show happiness?) and proper nouns for people, places and things (a Corvette is a much different image than a Metro, for instance).

So I'd like you to think about being specific with your writing. Look at what other writers do, how they use specific images instead of generalizations. Take the time to read as much as you can and to study the way other people write. You can learn a lot just by studying the techniques of others. Practice being specific.

In the discussion below in Module 1, I am going to ask you to read a short selection and then comment on what makes the selection good in terms of specific details- why the imagery makes the writing come alive. I would like each of you to make an initial comment about how the writer uses specifics, and then I would like you to respond to the comments made by your classmates. It should be fun.

19. 3. Using Your Handbook

Although you do not have a textbook for this course, we will be using an online handbook, The Lumen Writing Guide to Writing (<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/styleguide/>). In order for you to use the handbook effectively, you need to know what is in the handbook. There is a written assignment below to help you become acquainted with the handbook. Later in the semester, we will be doing quite a few exercises from this online resource.

Who wants to memorize all the rules and regulations controlling the English language? It's a pretty extensive, complex language with lots of rules and lots of exceptions to the rules. A handbook can help straighten all that out. By using a handbook regularly, you can master some of the writing problems that may have plagued your success with writing for years. And with practice, it can become a simple addition to the writing process.

There are eight chapters. If you look at the table of contents, you will find a list of sub-topics for each chapter, providing you with easy access to necessary information. As you search for information, the resource will also provide you with links to other online sources that can add additional information on the topic you are searching.

Anyway, if that all seems confusing, take a few minutes to look through your handbook. You will find it beneficial as you get into the course and have to use it for homework assignments, for correcting your papers and for helping with the research project.

But for now, try the next activity in the module to familiarize yourself with the handbook.

20. 4. Journal Writing

I would like you to practice your writing on a regular basis by using a journal. If you get into the habit of writing things down, you might realize how important it is to somehow save your ideas, change them from the potential energy in your mind into kinetic energy (words written on a page, words spoken to someone or words memorized until they become part of your knowledge).

Practice also helps improve your skills. How many of you play a sport or a musical instrument? You know, if you are the shortstop for the team, that the more you field grounders, the better you can react to bad hops and make the plays. The greatest rock musicians are great because they became a part of their guitar or whatever instrument they play. They practice day after day after day. It's the same with writing. If you practice that very difficult concept of moving ideas from your mind to a computer screen or sheet of paper on a regular basis, it will become easier.

So for each module, I am going to ask you to write a minimum of three entries in your on-line journal (some of the longer modules will require more entries, averaging three per week). I will be giving you some required topics early, but you can begin to write on any topic you wish in a few weeks. I will not grade these entries on grammar or content, just on the fact that you are putting ideas down, practicing the process of creating. There is no length limit to the entries, but try to write 10 to 15 minutes on each one. Also, I will only accept one entry per day, so you can't write all three in one setting and be done for the module. It's a practice for you, not for me. Use it to your advantage.

You will find the journal entry list for this module in the "Written Assignment" section. If you'd like to begin now, great. I look forward to reading your ideas.

2I. 5. Becoming Familiar with Your Handbook

Following are several writing problems with questions about where to find information in the online grammar handbook. Use your handbook (<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/styleguide/>) to find the solution to the problem that is presented. For instance, if a question asked where would you find information on the difference between “hanged” and hung,” where would you find that in the handbook? Then answer the question. If you can’t seem to find information on the question in your handbook, see if you can search the Internet for a solution. Good luck.

22. 6. Instructions for Assignment

You may want to print this document out.

This document provides instructions on how to create a written assignment in this course. Be sure you have practiced creating a written assignment in the *Tutorial* BEFORE you attempt to submit your first graded assignment.

Composing your assignment

Normally, you should compose your response using your word processor or on paper. This will give you the opportunity to revise, proofread, and spell check. When you have completed your answer, return to the assignment document and click the “Create Assignment” button at the bottom of the page. Follow the instructions for entering text.

Make sure to read the directions for each assignment carefully for details on required length of your assignment, due dates, and any thing else that may be specific to the assignment.

Ways to move your work to the “Written assignment” form

I will be asking you to send your written essays as attachments.

Work on a word processor, save the file as an .rtf file, then “**attach**” the assignment as a file using the fields at the bottom of the Written Assignment page. See the

Tutorial for complete instructions on using file attachments.

Submitting your written assignment

Click the “Submit” button at the bottom of the page to submit your assignment. Before you can submit your assignment, you must select one of the following:

Private save (your professor cannot see your work; use this option if you are not finished; to continue working on your assignment, click the **Edit** button on the document).

Save for professor (submits your work to the professor; only you

and the professor can see your assignment. You will not be able to “Edit” your document).

Save for class (your assignment is public for the entire class to read. DO NOT USE THIS OPTION UNLESS INSTRUCTED BY YOUR PROFESSOR).

Evaluations

The evaluation for your assignment will appear directly under your document. Evaluations are private and can only be read by the student and professor.

23. 7. Journal Entries: Module I

Journal entries, Module I – Due: by Sept. 1 (remember, one per day only)

For your first three journal entries, I would like you to think about the process of writing and why you are in this course. I know these are not the greatest topics, but they will help you to think about writing, things you might simply take for granted or ignore. I want you to think about writing and what it involves. Remember, you will write one entry per day (or every other day, however you feel comfortable). Don't write every entry now. You will have to come back into this assignment area at least three times to complete the task. Remember, there is no length limit, but try to brainstorm for at least five to ten minutes. Good luck

Here are your first three topics:

1. Evaluate your own personal writing skills. What are your strengths, your weaknesses? How often do you write? What kinds of writing do you do? How important is writing to you?
2. Analyze your thoughts on what you feel English Composition is all about. Why are you required to take the course? What do you hope to get out of it? What kinds of things would you like to see covered in composition?
3. Assess the need for journal writing. Do you think it's a good thing or a waste of time? How often have you had to write a journal? Do you write one for your own purposes (diary)? Why do you think English teachers are so adamant about journal writing?

24. 8. Instruction for Discussion

You may want to print this document out.

Your next task will be to participate in an online discussion. This document provides instructions on how to initiate and respond to discussions. You can also return to the Tutorial for a “refresher.”

A “**discussion thread**” is started each time you submit a discussion item. Each response to the original question is indented once – a response to a response is indented a second time – etc. This system of indents helps us determine which responses go together. By using the “collapse” and “expand,” , and “next” or “previous” document menu options in the navigational bar of the course, or by using the “collapse” and “expand” “twisties,” you can follow the give and take of a **threaded discussion** – the web equivalent of a classroom discussion.

Responding to the main item

To compose your response to a main discussion item you are reading, click on the “Respond” link located at the bottom of that page. In the form, title your response in the Subject field and then respond in the boxed area. A good title tells something of the nature of your personal response. “Response to Discussion 1” is not a very useful title, particularly if everyone in your course uses the same one.

Responding to someone else’s response

If you are already reading someone else’s response document, click on the “Respond” link located at the bottom of that page to respond **to that response**. *Make sure that you respond **on the document intended** so that your contribution will line up in the threaded discussion in the right place.*

Submitting your response

When you have completed your response, click the “Submit” button at the bottom of the page.

Correcting your response

If you discover an error in your document after you submit it, a misspelled word or an incomplete thought, you can “Edit” your document. The **Edit** button appears at the top of your document after you submit it the first time. When you have finished your edits, click the submit button at the bottom of the page.

Quality discussion responses

Responses such as: “I agree.”, “Good question” or “Good answer” / Any response that is just an opinion, or is unsubstantiated / any response that is carelessly typed, poorly thought-out, grammatically incorrect or confusing / any response that is disrespectful of another student or any other person, etc., **are not acceptable.** A **high quality response** contains information from the textbook or other valid source, or applies a concept from the text or course in a meaningful way, or facilitates understanding of the course material or topic. Please review information in the Course Information area of the course for guidelines and specific information on how you will be evaluated on your participation in “Course Discussions.”

Netiquette

As discussion is of a public nature, please observe proper “netiquette” – courteous and appropriate forms of communication and interaction over the Internet (in online discussions). This means no personal attacks, obscene language, or intolerant expression. All viewpoints should be respected.

25. 9. Rubric for Grading Discussions

Each discussion post is graded according to the following rubric:

4 Excellent (A) The comment is accurate, original, relevant, teaches us something new and is well written. Four-point comments add substantial teaching presence to the course and stimulate additional thought about the issue under discussion.

3 Above Average (B) The comment lacks at least one of the above criteria but is above average in quality. A three-point comment makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the issue being discussed.

2 Average (C) The comment lacks two or three of the required criteria. Comments which are based upon personal opinion or personal experience often fall within this category.

1 Minimal (D) The comment presents little or no new information. However, one-point comments may provide important social presence and contribute to collegial atmosphere. 0 Unacceptable (F) The comment adds no value to the discussion.

You should enter each discussion on a regular basis (at least three different days per discussion). Students entering a discussion for the first time during the last two or three days of a discussion will not receive points.

26. 10. Discussion Examples

Examples for discussion comments:

The following are examples of comments and their point values for the discussion areas. Please review. It's imperative that you participate in the discussions regularly and productively. These examples are responding to the following prompt: "What are your writing weaknesses?"

Four-point initial response:

"I believe my weaknesses with writing focus mostly on grammatical issues. I do have a strong understanding of development and organization, but grammar has always been my Achilles heel. For instance, I have always had a problem with the use of semi-colons. I am always misusing them, placing them where they shouldn't belong or not using them when they are needed. It has always been frustrating for me."

Three-point initial response:

"Grammar is my main weakness. I do not like to write in general, but trying to remember grammatical rules is always a challenge. Why do we need to know things like how to use semi-colons? I prefer using simple sentences that end in periods, period."

Two-point initial response:

"I have problems with semi-colons. I am not sure how to use them, and I typically try to avoid them when possible, which often gets me in trouble with the English instructors."

One-point initial response:

"I've never been good at putting sentences together. Grammar is my major weakness."

Zero-point initial response:

"Grammar."

Four-point reply to a response:

“I agree. Semi-colons are typically useless. When you find yourself using too many of them, remember the basic rule that a high-school teacher once introduced to me: ‘If the semi-colon became extinct, writing would improve 100 percent.’ I think her comment suggests that we find ways to remove semi-colons and use commas or periods appropriately.”

Three-point reply to a response:

“Try using semi-colons to separate complete thoughts that have some kind of connection. It really does serve the same purpose as a period, though sometimes semi-colons can also be used like commas to separate items in lists. Maybe periods and commas are better.”

Two-point reply to a response:

“I have always wondered about colons myself. Why worry about all the extra kinds of punctuation when periods and commas do just fine?”

One-point reply to a response:

“Keep practicing. The handbook has some good examples of proper use of semi-colons.”

No-point reply to a response:

“I agree with you totally.”

27. 11. Discussion: Mark Twain Excerpt

Discussion 1 Start: Aug. 21. Finish: Sept. 1

Take a look at the following short excerpt, which comes from a short story by Mark Twain:

“When I first begun to understand jay language correctly, there was a little incident happened here. Seven years ago, the last man in this region but me moved away. There stands his house – been empty ever since, a long house with a plank roof – just one big room, and no more, no ceiling – nothing between the rafters and the floor. Well, one Sunday morning I was sitting out here in front of my cabin, with my cat, taking in the sun, and looking at the blue hills, and listening to the leaves rustling so lonely in the trees, and thinking of the home away yonder in the states, that I hadn’t heard from in thirteen years, when a bluejay lit on that house, with an acorn in his mouth and says, ‘Hello, I reckon I’ve struck something here.’ When he spoke, the acorn dropped out of his mouth and rolled down the roof, of course, but he didn’t care; his mind was all on the thing he had struck. It was a knot-hole in the roof. He cocked his head to one side, shut one eye and put the other one to the hole, like a ‘possum looking down a jug; then he glanced up with his bright blue eyes, gave a wink with his wings – which signifies gratification, you understand – and says, ‘It looks like a hole, it’s located like a hole – blamed if I don’t think it IS a hole.”

In this story, called “Baker’s Bluejay Yarn,” the narrator is trying to convince a group of people that this bluejay did actually speak. What information in this short excerpt is strong evidence that maybe Baker is telling the truth? In other words, comment on specific images you find in this story that are convincing? There are plenty

of examples, so each of you can easily find one or two to comment on. Then look at what your classmates have said and add to their ideas. What makes such a far-fetched story believable? For this module, discussion entries will be accepted after the module end date to give everyone an opportunity to get involved in the discussions.

I'd like everyone to submit comments on a regular basis. Don't come in on one day, put in a bunch of responses and then disappear for the rest of the module. Come in daily or every other day and see if you can add to some of the discussion threads. Let's make this fun and worth while.

Click on the New Post link at the top of this page to take part in the discussion.

PART IV

2. WRITING THE ESSAY

28. I. What's Due When

Module Overview: This module will discuss a variety of issues, including the importance of revision and an introduction to researched writing.

Module Learning Objectives: Students will identify basic revision activities;

Students will begin to incorporate research concepts into their writing skills.

Readings: Lecture sections in module

Due Date: Sept. 6

Assignments: Revising “The Story of An Hour;” Journal entries.

Due Date: Revision: Sept. 8

Journal entries: by Sept. 10

Discussions:

Start Date: Sept. 2

End Date: Sept. 10

29. 2. Write for Yourself

One of the most important tools you can use in writing successful is your own experience, and one of the most important steps you can take to be successful is to write for yourself, not for English composition class. Sure, I know that each and every one of you wants to write an essay that is going to impress me (and translate into a good grade). But try to put that aside. First and foremost, **write for yourself**. Pick topics you have an interest in, topics you want to write about. You will enjoy it much more if you have an interest in it. So **write for your own pleasure first**. The rest will follow.

30. 3. Writing and Revising

I am sure you're all familiar with English teachers telling you about the importance of revising papers. I am no different. I believe it is one of the most important steps in the writing process. Ideas sometimes come out of our minds in a very confused, disorderly fashion. We need to take a look at those ideas once they are down on paper (or on the computer screen) to analyze their effectiveness and thoroughness, as well as many other writing issues.

I have been a professional writer, working at a local newspaper, for many years. I have learned that revising is very important. When I have the time to look at the articles I've written, I can find tons of ways to improve the writing. When I don't have time (deadline restraints), I often find errors after the article has been published in the paper. By then, it's too late. I've made the mistake and feel terrible about it.

We are going to talk a lot this semester about revising, about the different kinds of things you need to look for in your rough drafts. Revision doesn't simply mean adding on to a draft because English teachers want more information. Sometimes deleting original ideas can be as useful as adding to them. I want you to look at your drafts and think of many possible directions you could go, not just in looking for spelling and grammatical errors but thinking about being more specific, using stronger words, varying sentence structures, removing redundant or unnecessary information. So much to look for in a rough draft.

So I am requiring that you submit at least one rough draft with your final essay for each out-of-class writing you do. On line, that means you will be sending me two attachments when you submit an assignment: one for the draft (or more, if you've done more drafts) and one final paper. I will be looking for the kinds of things you've done with your rough draft to reach your final copy. I won't accept two copies of the same paper. I need to see revisions. We will spend

a lot of time talking about revision, so I want you to work on it regularly.

I have included lower in this module a practice on revision, using word-processing. Please take a look at it and see how well you can do. Have fun.

3I. 4. Major Writing Errors

You may be familiar with the English teacher who uses more red ink on papers than on a freshly painted barn, pointing out every grammatical error a student may have made. First of all, I don't use red pens. Second, I like to point out grammatical errors, but I don't correct them. I leave that up to you. And as we go through the course, I will point out fewer and fewer errors (meaning you might be making fewer, or I am requiring you to start finding them).

There are, in this complicated language, hundreds and hundreds of potential grammatical errors. Who wants to cover every single one of them??? As we go through the course and I see specific problems arising, I may include some special assignments on grammar, but for the most part, I am going to rely on you to use your handbook, to ask me questions or to get help in the writing lab for grammatical problems you are having.

With that said, I want to list the top seven grammatical errors I have found students making over the years. I call these the "Seven Eggregious Errors in Student Writing." I believe these are the kinds of mistakes that weaken papers tremendously: they either create confusion because the reader doesn't know what you are trying to say, or they weaken validity because the reader is going to question your content if you don't take the time to write correctly. Here they are:

1. Spelling (Sp). You don't have to be a good speller, but you must spell correctly. Spell check helps, but sometimes you might have to refer to another resource (a dictionary) to help you spell.
1. Misuse of words (WW). This can mean you've chosen a word that doesn't mean what you think it means, or you've chosen the wrong word for what you are saying. Believe it or not, there is a big difference between the verbs *hanged* and *hung*. Do you

know what it is?

1. Agreement (Agr). This can be either subject-verb agreement or noun-pronoun agreement. Just like nouns, verbs are singular and plural. They have to match when used together (John run to the store is wrong- John runs to the store is correct). Pronouns take the place of nouns- you have to use singular pronouns for singular nouns and plural pronouns for plural nouns.
1. Verb usage (Vb). I separate this from misuse of words because verbs are so important in writing. They make the writing interesting, exciting and informative. You have to use correct verb tense, and you have to choose active verbs most of the time.
1. Sentence fragments (frag). Sentences need three things: Subject, verb and a complete thought. There are many problems that can cause a sentence to be incomplete. Sometimes reading aloud can help determine if it's a complete thought.
1. Run-on (R-O) sentences and Comma Splices (CS). These are kind of like the opposite of fragments. You can't have more than one main idea in a sentence without some kind of supporting punctuation or language. This is one of the biggest errors I traditionally find.
1. Semi-colon (;). I didn't include commas in this list. Comma misuse is common, but I think misusing a semi-colon has a stronger impact. Semi-colons have a specific purpose. Trying to impress people by using lots of semi-colons tends to weaken and slow down writing tremendously.

This is an introductory list, not a grammar lesson on all these items. If you have any questions about grammatical problems you're

having, let me know. I will try to help you correct them. Use that handbook as well. You can find any of these egregious errors (did anyone look that word up?) easily your handbook. We will work with them somewhat as we go along.

32. 5. Introduction to Research

(You may want to print copies of this and other lessons on research so you can refer to them later)

An important component to this course is researched writing. Although you can use research for just about any essay you write, you will be required to use research for your final out-of-class essay, the Argumentative Essay. The argumentative essay requires you to take a stand on an issue and show why that is the right choice. You use a lot of your own ideas and opinions, but you can strengthen your point by using good research, information borrowed from others.

Research is an important skill, one that you will use regularly in school and possibly well beyond. It does not have to be a scary concept. It should be something you find rewarding and beneficial. It's an opportunity to grow, to learn, to borrow other people's ideas and use them for your own needs. If done correctly, and can be a big aid. If done incorrectly, and can lead to many problems.

We will be going over many aspects of researched writing over the next few weeks. Although the required assignment is not due until near the end of the semester, I'd like you to start working with research and understanding how it works. We will cover a lot of the ideas that may sound a little confusing right now, but I will list for you the requirements for your research project:

- **MLA format-** I will require that you use MLA format for your argumentative paper (and other papers that you may choose to use research in). We will go over a lot of the rules governing MLA, but the handbook will be a valuable source for you.
- **Number of sources-** you will be required to use three borrowed sources. I need to see evidence that you know how

to use research to support your ideas, and a minimum of three sources will help me evaluate how you've done.

- Text source- I'd like you to use one source from the library. The library certainly has changed its format in the past several years. A library source can be the traditional text you find on the shelves, but a lot of books can now also be found in on-line databases. Either way, you can still find a lot of support from librarians, who can point you in either direction. I just want to make sure you understand the difference between databases and Internet web sites. We will talk lots more about this as we go along.
- Periodical- I would like one source to be a periodical (magazine, newspaper, journal). Periodicals provide up-to-date information, which is very important in today's always-changing world. Again, this can be a hard copy or an online article.
- Open source- the third source can be anything, including a personal interview or an on-line source. We will talk more about this, but you must be careful when choosing Internet sources. Some are great. Some are weak. You need to know where the information you are borrowing comes from.
- Works Cited- I will require you to use a Works Cited Page. We will go over this thoroughly, but I need to see proof that you borrowed the info from specific sources. The citations in your text have to match your Works Cited Page.
- Length- there is no specific length requirements for this paper, but it probably will be longer than your average essay. You've got not only your ideas but borrowed sources as well. That's why I want you to pick a topic that you have an interest in. Choose an argument because it's caught your attention, not because it might have lots of information.

Again, we will be going over this concept regularly over the next several weeks. I look at researched writing as a process and will help you examine the several steps involved in that process. I just wanted to introduce the concept so you can begin thinking about it even now.

33. 6. Using the Word Processor for Revision

The following excerpt from Kate Chopin's "The Story of an Hour" has numerous mistakes in it. I would like you to print the excerpt and type it into a Word document using 10-point font and single spacing. Then I would like you to revise the document using the list of corrections given below. Go in the order given. If you go out of order, some of the steps might be somewhat messed up. So there are two parts to this: getting the excerpt onto Word as it is written here and then correcting it using the list at the bottom Good luck. You will have to send your revised version back to me as a Word document.

The Story of an Hour

Kate Chopin

(Para 1)Knowing that Mrs. Mallard was afflicted with a heart trouble, great care was taken to break to her as gently as possible the news of her husband's death.

(Para 2)She did not hear the story as many women have heard the same, with a paralyzed refusal to accept its significance. She wept at once, with sudden, wild abandonment, in her sister's arms. When the storm of grief had spent itself she went away to her room alone. She would have no one follow her.

(Para 3)It was her sister Josephine who told her in broken sentences, veiled hints that revealed in half concealing. Her husband's friend Richards was there, too, near her. It was he who had been in the newspaper office when intelligence of the railroad disaster was received. He had only taken the time to assure himself of its truth by a second telegram, and he had hastened to forestall any less careful, less tender friend in bearing the message.

(Para 4)There stood, facing the open window, a comfortable,

roomy armchair. It had a rip in the arm but otherwise was very attractive. She sank into this, pressed down by a physical exhaustion that haunted her body and seemed to reach her soul.

(Para 5)She could see in the open square before her house the tops of trees that were all acquiver with the new spring life. The delicious breath of rain was in the air. In the street below a pedlar was crying his wares. The notes of a distant song which someone was singing reached her faintly, and countless sparrows were twittering in the eaves.

This story features three distinct points about a woman's reaction to her husband's death: she is immediately stunned by the news; she needs to be alone to deal with her grief; she starts to realize it might not be as bad as it seems.

I like this story very much and can't wait to take English 102 with Jeff Meyers, a super-duper teacher.

Instructions for Editing “The Story of an Hour.”

1. Double space the entire document.
1. Center both the title and the author.
1. Capitalize the title.
1. Italicize the author.
1. Indent each paragraph (remove paragraph number).
1. Reverse the order of the second and third paragraphs.
1. Change the word “refusal” to “inability” in the new third paragraph.
1. Put commas around the phrase “in broken sentences” in the new second paragraph.

1. Add this statement to the new second paragraph following the words “was received.” , with Brentley Mallard’s name leading the list of “killed.”
1. Delete the second sentence from the fourth paragraph.
1. Change “She sank into this” to “Into this she sank.”
1. Place an extra line between the last paragraph of the story and the short explanation.
1. Bullet and list the three features discussed in the final section.
1. In the last sentence, change “super-duper teacher” to “super dupe.”
1. Spell check the paper.
1. Save the paper.
1. Close the paper and then re-open it.
1. Change the font to 12 point.
1. Type your name, course number and date in the lower right-hand corner of the last page.
1. Print a copy of the paper (you can pretend to do this, if you want).

34. 7. Journal Entries: Module 2

Discussion 1 Start: Sept. 2; End: Sept. 9

This discussion exercise is related to this module's journal writing. As I said, memory is one of the most significant tools a writer has. What I would like you to do is think back to your very first memory and describe what you remember about it. When I was about two or three, I got lost. My parents found me sleeping in a field next to my house. I don't remember any of it. All I know is from what my parents told me. So that isn't my first memory. But I do remember one incident while living in this same neighborhood (we moved out when I was four, so I know it had to be before that). I remember my sister and I were playing in our yard when a dog came along and chased us. The clearest image I have is climbing up the slide to get away from him. I don't remember much else, but that seems to be my first ever memory. Take a few minutes to think about what might be your first memory and briefly describe it. Then, as you read your classmates' entries, see if they remind you of other experiences you've had. This might be a fun little practice in using memory and in getting to know each other a bit. Have fun.

35. 8. Instructions for Discussion

You may want to print this document out.

Your next task will be to participate in an online discussion. This document provides instructions on how to initiate and respond to discussions. You can also return to the Tutorial for a “refresher.”

A “**discussion thread**” is started each time you submit a discussion item. Each response to the original question is indented once – a response to a response is indented a second time – etc. This system of indents helps us determine which responses go together. By using the “collapse” and “expand,” , and “next” or “previous” document menu options in the navigational bar of the course, or by using the “collapse” and “expand” “twisties,” you can follow the give and take of a **threaded discussion** – the web equivalent of a classroom discussion.

Responding to the main item

To compose your response to a main discussion item you are reading, click on the “Respond” link located at the bottom of that page. In the form, title your response in the Subject field and then respond in the boxed area. A good title tells something of the nature of your personal response. “Response to Discussion 1” is not a very useful title, particularly if everyone in your course uses the same one.

Responding to someone else’s response

If you are already reading someone else’s response document, click on the “Respond” link located at the bottom of that page to respond **to that response**. *Make sure that you respond **on the document intended** so that your contribution will line up in the threaded discussion in the right place.*

Submitting your response

When you have completed your response, click the “Submit” button at the bottom of the page.

Correcting your response

If you discover an error in your document after you submit it, a misspelled word or an incomplete thought, you can “Edit” your document. The **Edit** button appears at the top of your document after you submit it the first time. When you have finished your edits, click the submit button at the bottom of the page.

Quality discussion responses

Responses such as: “I agree.”, “Good question” or “Good answer” / Any response that is just an opinion, or is unsubstantiated / any response that is carelessly typed, poorly thought-out, grammatically incorrect or confusing / any response that is disrespectful of another student or any other person, etc., **are not acceptable.** A **high quality response** contains information from the textbook or other valid source, or applies a concept from the text or course in a meaningful way, or facilitates understanding of the course material or topic. Please review information in the Course Information area of the course for guidelines and specific information on how you will be evaluated on your participation in “Course Discussions.”

Netiquette

As discussion is of a public nature, please observe proper “netiquette” – courteous and appropriate forms of communication and interaction over the Internet (in online discussions). This means no personal attacks, obscene language, or intolerant expression. All viewpoints should be respected.

36. 9. Discussion: Journal Writing

Discussion 1 Start: Sept. 2; End: Sept. 9

This discussion exercise is related to this module's journal writing. As I said, memory is one of the most significant tools a writer has. What I would like you to do is think back to your very first memory and describe what you remember about it. When I was about two or three, I got lost. My parents found me sleeping in a field next to my house. I don't remember any of it. All I know is from what my parents told me. So that isn't my first memory. But I do remember one incident while living in this same neighborhood (we moved out when I was four, so I know it had to be before that). I remember my sister and I were playing in our yard when a dog came along and chased us. The clearest image I have is climbing up the slide to get away from him. I don't remember much else, but that seems to be my first ever memory. Take a few minutes to think about what might be your first memory and briefly describe it. Then, as you read your classmates' entries, see if they remind you of other experiences you've had. This might be a fun little practice in using memory and in getting to know each other a bit. Have fun.

PART V

3. NARRATIVE WRITING

37. I. What's Due When

Module Overview: A look at narrative writing, including discussions on dialogue, specific details and revision (critical thinking).

Module Learning Objectives: Students will learn the concept of narrative writing and write a narrative based on their own experiences.

Students will begin working with revision by submitting a draft with their final copy.

Students will continue to practice of writing by submitting a series of journal entries.

Assignments: Narrative essay; Journal entries.

Due Date: Sept. 20 (essay); by Sept. 22 (entries);

Discussions: Examining a narrative essay

Start Date: Sept. 9

End Date: Sept. 22

38. 2. Narrative Writing

Narrative writing is unique. Most of the essays you will be writing for this course (and for many other courses you take) will require “expository” writing. That means the essay will “explain” a thesis. You will provide a thesis statement early in the essay, and everything that follows “proves” or supports that thesis. Narrative writing does not follow that basic essay format.

A narrative essay tells a story. It starts at a certain point and finishes when the story is completed (chronological order). Therefore, a thesis statement is not always necessary. It is better, in narrative writing, to get to the story itself and let the reader recognize the thesis through the action of the story. If you’re writing about a funny experience you had at the mall one day, then the reader will recognize that in the action. You don’t have to say in an opening “I had a funny experience at the mall one day.” That will be shown in the events the reader will uncover.

Narrative writing requires a couple of basic things: focus, action, description and dialogue. Let’s take a brief look at each of these ingredients:

- **Focus:** Your narrative should focus on a brief moment in time (an hour, an afternoon, a day). It should not encompass a long period of time. You are writing only a short piece, so you need to keep that piece focused on a short period of time. The more time you try to fit into the essay, the more general your information will become. By focusing on a short period of time, you will have to be more specific in the info you provide.
- **Action:** The narrative is about you and other characters (whether people, pets or personal items), so there has to be some kind of action between you and the other characters. Your verbs should be chosen to express action (not “he was happy” but “he jumped for joy” or “he screamed with

excitement.”

- **Description:** You are the eyes and ears for your reader. You have to give your reader details so show the scene. What is in the background? What kinds of expressions are on your characters' faces? Put your reader into the scene. A common phrase I like to use in explaining narrative writing is “show your reader, don't tell your reader.” Don't tell your reader that the day was dark: show your reader how dark it was.
- **Dialogue:** The best way to provide specific details is through dialogue. We communicate with spoken language all day, every day. Use dialogue to show the emotions of your characters. We can tell so much about a person by the way he/she talks. Use that to your advantage.

As you develop your narrative essay, you have to remember the chronological order (from beginning to end). But you might want to think about how you keep your reader interested. How you make the action of the event interesting and easy to follow. I have a simple formula that might help you think about narrative order. I call it a “cockeyed alphabet approach” (ABDCE):

- **A:** Begin your narrative with action. Start with some exciting statement, something about the beginning of your story: “The phone rang. In the darkness, I reached for it and knocked it off the stand next to my bed.” That opening establishes two things: the event and the setting. And it does it with strong action.
- **B:** Try to include background into your narrative fairly quickly. In the second, third or fourth paragraph, explain what is going on. After this initial phone call from above, I might include a short paragraph on background: “As I hung up, I realized that John needed my help. We've been friends for years, and he has always been there for me when I was in trouble. Now that he was having problems, I knew I had to do something for him.”

This tells the reader, still with action, that this has been a long-time friendship with lots of past experiences.

- D: Development: Get back to the narrative now. Carry the reader through the events from paragraph to paragraph, using all those ingredients mentioned earlier.
- C: The climax is the “thesis” of your narrative. Without stating an obvious thesis, your reader should understand the point of what you are trying to say at this moment of understanding, the climax to the story. “Ah ha,” your reader should say when you express the most important point about this narrative.
- E: Just like exercising, you should not end abruptly with the climax. Cool down with a paragraph or two giving details about what happens because of this incident. Kind of like the cowboy and horse walking off into the sunset in the typical western movie ending.

I have included a sample narrative in the next section. Take a look at it and think about the questions I ask at the bottom. Look at how a narrative can be fairly brief but detailed if it focuses on a short period of time.

39. 3. Using Dialogue

As I said earlier, dialogue is a wonderful tool in narrative writing. It gives your characters a three-dimensional reality. Think about the last time you were very happy, or very angry. Think about the words you chose to express yourself. The words you use represent your personality. People create impressions of you based on what you say. That is very important in narrative writing, where the only thing the reader can judge you on is the choice of words you use. Each character should have a unique way of speaking, a realistic way of speaking.

There are a couple of basic rules I'd like you to think about:

- First, use a new paragraph every time someone speaks. Sometimes paragraphs will be very short, but that is ok. The new paragraph helps the reader recognize that someone new is speaking.
- Don't get too fancy with attributions. *John said, "I am going to the store..."*, is much better than *John exclaimed, "I am going to the store."* You should help the attribution identify who is speaking; it should not be a distraction to what is being said.
- Dialogue has very basic punctuation rules:
 1. Capitalize the first letter in any direct quote, whether at the beginning of the sentence or after an attribution: *"Looks like it is going to rain," John said. John said, "It looks like it is going to rain."*
 1. Don't capitalize the first letter of the second part of a direct quote following an attribution that breaks up a sentence: *"We will work on it," John said, "when we get a chance."*

1. The punctuation (comma, period, etc.) at the end of a direct quote comes before the quotation mark: “No way,” I said. “Are you kidding?”
- Don’t overuse dialogue. Use it to emphasize something. I’m not asking you to write a play. Just use dialogue here and there to highlight the action of the story.

Here is a short sample from a short story by Guy de Maupassant that illustrates dialogue. Look at the way the author uses dialogue to tell the story:

The mayor was waiting for him, seated in an arm-chair. He was the notary of the place, a tall, grave man of pompous speech.

“Maitre Hauchecorne,” said he, “This morning, on the Beuzeville road, you were seen to pick up the pocket-book lost by Maitre Houlbrequé, of Manneville.”

The countryman, speechless, regarded the mayor, frightened already by this suspicion which rested on him he knew not why.

“I, I picked up the pocket-book?”

“Yes, you.”

“I swear I didn’t know nothing about it at all.”

“You were seen.”

“They saw me, me? Who is it who saw me?”

“M. Malandain, the harness-maker.”

Then the old man remembered, understood, and, reddening with anger:

“Ah, he saw me, did he, the rascal? He saw me picking up this string here, M’sieu’ le Maire.”

And, fumbling at the bottom of his pocket, he pulled out of it the little end of string.

For more information on using dialogue, check out your handbook (look in the Index under “dialogue” or “quotation marks.”

40. 4. Sample Narrative Essay

A VERY, VERY BEST FRIEND

“You need to get into Johnson High with me. Trust me June,” my friend Brandon said, determined to persuade me. “You need a fresh start. Plus, you’ll have me! This is what you need. You will do so much better. They treat you like adults there. I will help you.”

I was uneasy about the idea. I was, after all, completely lost in my life. How much lower could I sink before I finally took his advice? Or anyone else’s, for that matter? I twisted and untwisted the phone cord around my index finger nervously. My slippers scuffed the ugly, dusty tile floor.

“Are you sure? How would I even get there every day? I’m not sure... I don’t know how my parents will take it...”

I paused. I didn’t even know what to think anymore. I had no idea where I even stood with my parents. I hadn’t spoken to them in weeks. I hadn’t seen them in almost two months. What were they going to do to me when I finally saw them? I looked around me. The realization of where I was came back to me, as it did, in waves. The alarmingly, canary yellow walls were meant to bring life to this dead place, I’m sure. The heavy, burgundy, cloth chairs clashed with the color of the walls. They were so heavy to avoid them from being able to be thrown. God, where had I fallen... I didn’t belong here, I told myself.

“Trust me,” Brandon’s words interrupted my drifting mind. “It’s what’s best for you. They’ll probably go for it. Try it, and I’ll take you under my wing there. I run the school anyways.” Jonathan chuckled at this. I could imagine the smirk on his smug face, and it made me smile. I missed him.

Brandon was a 5’11” carbon copy of Bender from *The Breakfast Club*, and I told him so often. He has been a good friend of mine since we were 12 years old, when I happened to three-way call him

for a girl friend of mine to see what he honestly thought of her. Ah, nothing like silly, adolescent, puppy love. The plan completely backfired when he expressed his disgust for poor Sarahl. Somehow, though, he and I became very close confidants, and quickly. Insecure, as most girls are when they're young, I had my own defense mechanisms. I would make jokes about myself, things that I knew were considered flaws.

So, when Brandon suggested switching high schools to better my focus, I truly considered it.

"Okay, okay. I will definitely do my best to push for it," I said, a small grin on my face. It felt good that someone cared at that moment. That even one person DID care enough to answer my calls. "I have to go now, though. It's almost lights out, and there are other girls complaining to use the phones."

"Call me and keep me informed on when you get out," he said quietly. "I'll be here." I could still feel his disbelief and worry for me in his tone when he said this. It came and went during our recent conversations.

I gave my last hurried good-bye and hung up the receiver of the phone. I turned around to see the next girl in line to use the phone. She was a petite, suicidal 12 year old dressed in red, plaid pajama pants with a dirty white t-shirt. It was faded, and looked more beige than white. Her hair was brown, and matted in places, from clear neglect, and it hung in her eyes.

"It's your turn" I said, avoiding eye contact. I quickly handed her the phone and briskly headed for my room.

Once in my room, I quickly dove into my bed. I say bed, but it was more of a cot. I hid under my stale, white sheets that distinctly smelled of bleach and hospital. My mind raced a mile a minute. Eventually, I heard the nurse turn off the lights and lock our doors for the night. I was in a hospital, one I wasn't sure of when I would ever leave, and it was hell. How did I find myself in this situation? Life can be too painful at times. There are times where someone is

just not strong enough to face their own reality. I had found myself at that point. I was 16 years old, on the run from home, and had just lost her boyfriend to some monsters who killed him. I had hit rock bottom, and had no hope left in my heart. I felt like I belonged to no one, and had no purpose. In my own heartache, I made a stupid choice that landed me in this mad house. What could I do?

Every day, I called my family and my friends, over and over. I just reached out and reached out, afraid and at my weakest, in hopes of someone reaching back to me. I ached to feel someone cared. No one came to visit, or had even spoken to me. No one answered my calls, or made me feel any less alone. And oh, how I felt alone in the world during that time.

I say no one, but that's not quite accurate. The ONLY one who answered was Brandon. And I felt I clung to his every call and word like he was my savior. "I'll help you... I'll take you under my wing there." His words echoed in my head as I lay in bed. Yes, I am not alone. I can trust him. He will take care of me. And so, his words carried me through my days there, and gave me hope. That someone still believed in me, gave me strength and determination to fix my situations in life.

The day I was finally released from my nut house nightmare, I remember the anticipation to get home to see Brandon. I remember the anxiousness I had to just feel his calming presence again. I remember seeing him at my door, white t-shirt, blue jeans, and an Atlanta Braves cap on backwards. He was leaning against one of the brown pillars in front of my house. His scruffy face smiled at me, and he embraced me. He held me for a long time, like he just knew how much I had been hurting. He sat with me, and there with me, he began helping me plan my next few steps to changing my life. There's a saying that "Even shadows leave you at the darkest moments." But Brandon was no shadow. He was, and is one of my best friends.

Anonymous,

Eng. 101 Student

This is a very nice narrative, about 1,000 words. It is filled with

action, dialogue, descriptions. How much time takes place here? How much time is involved in the action of the story? How does she move from phone to real life? How appropriate is the dialogue? How does she use active verbs to strengthen the essay?

4I. 5. Critical Thinking

(Again, it may be wise to print out copies of these lectures)

One of the things you need to do, to be successful with your writing, is to effectively revise. As you know, I will be expecting a rough draft to accompany your final narrative essay (as well as for the others). When you look at your draft, you have to think objectively, from a different perspective. What would your reader think of what you just said? Would it be clear or confusing? Thorough or incomplete? You have to be hard on yourself when you revise.

Study the following notes that talk about revision and critical thinking. I hope they will help you in working on your rough drafts:

What is revision?

Revision is the process of analyzing original ideas to improve upon those ideas for the readers' benefit.

- It requires you to think about what you have written from an unbiased, original perspective (that's why you should place time between your rough draft and revision). You have to be able to ask questions about the effectiveness of your written words and to make some sometimes difficult decisions to change original info.

Revision guidelines

- Revision is used throughout the writing process, not in a brief editing session when a draft is completed.
- You edit your papers to fix structural problems like spelling, grammar, punctuation, sentence sense and word choice.
- You proofread your paper for errors and typos that may have been missed in other revision steps.

- Revision, however, is used continually to assess your paper from a “global perspective,” what kinds of major changes can you make, either in adding information, deleting information or moving information from one area to another.
- Even the best professional writers spend a great amount of time revising their work. An author may admit to rewriting a work dozens of times yet is still uncomfortable with the final result. Only an upcoming deadline will prevent the writer from continuing the revision process.

42. 6. Narrative Essay

Due Sept. 20

English 101 Narrative Writing

Narrative writing is *storytelling*. Fiction ? novels and short stories ? is a form of narrative writing. It tells a story, usually in chronological order and usually focusing on true events, though fiction is the art of creating. For English 101 class, narrative writing will focus on a true event, something that actually happened in your lifetime.

For your first essay assignment, write a narrative essay about a best friend. The narrative should focus on a moment in time that exemplifies you and this friend being best friends. For instance, if you believe being best friends means being there for each other in a time of need, give an example of that. Show how your friend was there for you, or visa-versa.

First of all, decide what your subject is going to be. Who or what would you consider your best friend. Define friendship. What makes this friend a best friend. Then find a moment in time to use for the narrative. Focus your essay ? you can't write about an entire friendship or even about an entire summer with your best friend. Find a moment in time, a day, an afternoon, an hour, and write about that.

There is no word limit for this essay, but it must be complete. Use details, actions, dialogue to develop the moment. Your audience is not there, but you need to place them there. You need to be their eyes and ears, their senses. A good narrative essay will be developed to a point that your audience feels a part of it. Be specific. DEPTH.

Remember, the essay should be word-processed, double spaced,

and it must include a rough draft. You will be able to revise it, but if there is no rough draft, you will have to revise it. **Remember also to send your draft and your essay as attachments.** I need to be able to look at it in Microsoft Word.

Here is another sample essay on this topic you can take a look at:

Fishing the West Branch

The river churned violently before us, its waters swollen by last night's massive thunderstorm. The rapids were dangerously alive: if either Bart or I slipped into that torrent, we'd be swept downstream without a hope.

There's no way we're going to catch any fish here, I thought to myself. No trout in his right mind would waste the energy to venture out into those horrific currents to strike at a fly, even if it was the most scrumptious looking morsel he'd ever seen.

But Bart was determined, calling this section of the Ausable the "best damned trout stream you'll ever see." So I agreed to give it a shot, despite the bad weather of the last few days.

Over the years, I had learned to trust Bart's judgment. I'd known him since he moved to our town and enrolled in my third grade class at school. He was the quiet kid in the back, the kid everyone stared at for the first hour and then forgot about by the end of the day. But the moment I met him, I knew he was going to be a great friend, and we've been pretty much together ever since.

"How the hell are we going to catch anything here?" I finally asked him, yelling above the roar of the stream.

"Have faith, my boy," he said. "Have faith."

He then told me to follow him along a trail that led upstream. We walked another fifteen minutes, sometimes moving away from the stream and sometimes walking precariously above it on the edge of a cliff. Throughout, all I could hear was the continuous roar of water rushing past us on its way to the river's mouth, and that kept me in a state of fear.

But then we broke into a small clearing where the river

rushed by just a few inches from the top of the bank. The Ausable was maybe 50 feet wide here, and several large rocks spread across it had created pools of less turbulent water downstream.

“Give this spot a shot,” Bart said. “Cast your line upstream from those pools and let it drift downstream. I think you’ll be pleasantly surprised.”

He then started walking further upstream. I asked him where he was going, and he called back saying he had his special spot, too before he disappeared into the woods again.

I took a few minutes to remove my backpack and set my tackle box and creel for storing any fish I might be lucky enough to catch. Then, standing as close to the bank as I dared, I made my first cast, flicking my elbow back and forth until the line was out far enough and I allowed the fly to land atop the surging stream.

The fly moved quickly into one of the pools, and almost immediately, I felt a strike, a powerful from beneath the surface. A second later, a large brookie broke the surface and quickly disappeared, the fly attached firmly.

The battle took only a matter of minutes, but when I scooped the brookie out of the river, I was aghast at its size: easily a five-pounder. Definitely a trophy fish, and on my first attempt. I yelled to Bart but heard nothing from him upstream. The river, I assumed, was just too loud for him to hear me.

I followed the same technique two more times and pulled in this guy’s bigger brother and sister. All three fish were prime specimens, beauties with their bright, colorful markings and their sheer power in battling my efforts.

I wanted to fish more, but I feared taking more than the limit, so I packed up with plans to meet up with Bart upstream. Before I was able to make my way up the trail, however, he reappeared, a huge smile on his face.

“Well?” he asked. “Any luck?”

“Damn, Bart, three monsters. It was great. How’d you know about this place?”

“Angler’s secret,” he said, opening his creel box to show me

the trophy catches he made.

It was a great day, fishing the West Branch with Bart that day. I've been back a couple of times and had some luck as well, but never did I find those trophy catches that Bart had led me to.

It was a special moment, indeed.

Grading summary

Participants	11
Submitted	0
Needs grading	0
Due date	Wednesday, 20 September 2017, 3:25 PM
Time remaining	70 days 20 hours

43. 7. Journal Writing for Module 3

Journal Writing for Module 3- Due by Sept. 22

This will be the last series of required journal topics. After this, I will give you some options, but you will be able to write about any topic for the day you wish. I will also ask you to write six entries for this module.

For the next **six** entries, I'd like you to think about your surroundings. As with narrative writing, it is important to incorporate description into your writing. Quite often, we don't consciously consider our surroundings. We take them for granted. But as a writer, you have to be the eyes and ears of your reader. So you need to be able to describe things around you.

Choose six of the following topics (remember, only one per day) and write a 10-15 minute entry in your journal on your impressions and observations of a setting:

- Inside a church or hospital
- A street corner
- A laundromat
- Derelicts/street people
- Taking the bus or subway
- Irritating commercials
- A place where I like to spend time

- My strongest quality
- Getting older
- Something that helps me when I'm feeling sick or depressed

Grading summary

Participants	11
Submitted	0
Needs grading	0
Due date	Friday, 22 September 2017, 3:25 PM
Time remaining	72 days 20 hours

44. 8. Instructions for Discussions

You may want to print this document out.

Your next task will be to participate in an online discussion. This document provides instructions on how to initiate and respond to discussions. You can also return to the Tutorial for a “refresher.”

A “**discussion thread**” is started each time you submit a discussion item. Each response to the original question is indented once – a response to a response is indented a second time – etc. This system of indents helps us determine which responses go together. By using the “collapse” and “expand,” , and “next” or “previous” document menu options in the navigational bar of the course, or by using the “collapse” and “expand” “twisties,” you can follow the give and take of a **threaded discussion** – the web equivalent of a classroom discussion.

Responding to the main item

To compose your response to a main discussion item you are reading, click on the “Respond” link located at the bottom of that page. In the form, title your response in the Subject field and then respond in the boxed area. A good title tells something of the nature of your personal response. “Response to Discussion 1” is not a very useful title, particularly if everyone in your course uses the same one.

Responding to someone else’s response

If you are already reading someone else’s response document, click on the “Respond” link located at the bottom of that page to respond **to that response**. *Make sure that you respond **on the document intended** so that your contribution will line up in the threaded discussion in the right place.*

Submitting your response

When you have completed your response, click the “Submit” button at the bottom of the page.

Correcting your response

If you discover an error in your document after you submit it, a misspelled word or an incomplete thought, you can “Edit” your document. The **Edit** button appears at the top of your document after you submit it the first time. When you have finished your edits, click the submit button at the bottom of the page.

Quality discussion responses

Responses such as: “I agree.”, “Good question” or “Good answer” / Any response that is just an opinion, or is unsubstantiated / any response that is carelessly typed, poorly thought-out, grammatically incorrect or confusing / any response that is disrespectful of another student or any other person, etc., **are not acceptable.** A **high quality response** contains information from the textbook or other valid source, or applies a concept from the text or course in a meaningful way, or facilitates understanding of the course material or topic. Please review information in the Course Information area of the course for guidelines and specific information on how you will be evaluated on your participation in “Course Discussions.”

Netiquette

As discussion is of a public nature, please observe proper “netiquette” – courteous and appropriate forms of communication and interaction over the Internet (in online discussions). This means no personal attacks, obscene language, or intolerant expression. All viewpoints should be respected.

45. 9. Discussion: Narrative Essays

Discussion: Narrative Essays Start: Sept. 9; End: Sept. 22

Read the following narrative essay about a late paper. The essay has some creativity and is kind of interesting, but it also has some glaring weaknesses and could use some quality revision. For this discussion exercise, I would like you to comment on what you think is good and bad about the essay- it's strengths and weaknesses. Let's say you handed this essay in and received a C on it, but you want at least a B+. What would you do to improve the essay? Try to come up with at least one suggestion each, and then respond to each other's comments with good critical review. Have fun.

The Wasted Afternoon

I had decided to use my free afternoon to write my narrative essay, which was due in two days, but I ended up having so many problems that I now realize the paper is going to be late. I will have to adjust my strategy and find a way to convince my instructor to allow me some extra time to complete the project. Hopefully, he will understand and be compassionate. Anyway, here is what happened:

First, I thought I had come up with the best idea for a narrative: the weekend my family and I went on a hiking trip for the weekend and we were visited by a bear. However, I was only six at the time, so I did not remember much about the weekend. I knew that I had to visit my parents and gather their recollections of the incident. But when I asked them about it, all they said was it was not true: they had never seen a bear in camp. That was just something they told me to keep me in my sleeping bag at night. That idea was shot.

My next thought came to me the next morning when I remembered a funny time I had with my friends spending an afternoon on the lake with one of my friend's boat. It was a special

weekend. We had so many fun times. Still, my memory was a little vague on a few points, so I called my friend and asked him if he could help me recall some of the things we did and said that day. He was very angry with me and told me he didn't want to help me with the essay and said he would sue me if I wrote such an essay. I thought he was being silly and told him so. He hung up on me after calling me a few choice names. That story was up in dust.

Finally, I thought the day my sister and I went fishing together down at the lake would be interesting. I wrote down a lot of notes of what I recalled from that day eight or nine years ago, but again I found it very difficult to give clear details. I remembered how many fish I had caught and how few she had caught, and I focused my story on that. But then I again felt a need to fill in the blanks and called her to ask about her memories of the day. She had a totally different recollection, stating that she was the one who had caught most of the fish and I had caught only one or two. She also said the weather was rotten but I seem to remember it was sunny. We couldn't agree on anything, and I finally told her never mind, I'll write about something else.

So I turned my narrative into my difficulties in finding a topic for a narrative essay. I'll hand it in and see how the teacher grades it. It just seems like I'm missing something, and I don't quite know what that something is.

PART VI

4. PROCESS WRITING

46. I. What's Due When

Writing Process essays; reviewing prewriting strategies; preparing for research.

Module Learning Objectives: Students will understand the concept of process writing and will write a successful process essay; students will recognize the importance of using thesis statements in expository writing; students will practice prewriting techniques to consider in the writing process; students will become familiar with reliable on-line resources for research.

Readings: Research, handbook, pp. 80-95 (Finding sources for research).

Due Dates: Throughout module- and to use as reference for research.

Assignments: Thesis statement practice; Process essay; Module 4 journal entries

Due Dates: Sept. 29 (thesis); Oct. 4 (process); by Oct. 6 (entries)

Discussion: Fun with process

Start Date: Sept. 23

End Date: Oct. 6

47. 2. The Process Essay

Now that you have completed the narrative essay, we are going to move on to “expository” writing. The rest of the essays you write will “explain” a topic. You will provide your reader with a specific thesis and then support that thesis through a series of related paragraphs, all tied together by the topic.

Your first expository essay will be the process essay. In some ways, this essay is similar to the narrative: you are writing about a moment in time, doing something that doesn’t take very long, and you are using chronological order. Your steps, identified in a series of paragraphs in the body of your essay, should be placed in a manner where your reader can begin with the first step and carry through to the last step.

There are two types of process essays: those that explain how to do something (how to tune a guitar; how to build a bird house; how to study for a test) and those that explain how something works (transmitting a fax; describing the growth of a cell; going through the steps of a piece of equipment at work). In the first, you are expecting your reader to complete the task and understand it fully. In the second, you may be providing information to satisfy your reader’s curiosity. In other words, you could describe the process of sending a fax, dialing the number and all the other physical steps; or you could describe how the fax actually transmits information from here to there- the hidden intricacies of the process.

There are also concrete and abstract processes. A concrete process is one that has clearly defined steps and obvious tools and equipment. Things like recipes and car repairs and craft work are concrete processes. Then there are processes that don’t have obvious tools involved: how to get rid of the blues; how to influence someone to like you; how to prepare for that test.

You need to be an expert at the process you choose to write about. Pick something you are interested in- a hobby or a skill you

have, something you might do at work or have done often in school. You have to be able to develop your steps into complete, thorough paragraphs. An expository essay typically has well-developed paragraphs of 8 to 10 sentences each. If you have a series of paragraphs with only two or three sentences each, your reader will wonder why you don't have more to say, will feel the info is incomplete.

I have a few pointers I'd like to share with you about developing process paragraphs. Using one or combining several might help you add depth and support to your writing:

- Be specific- Use exact amounts. Great chefs can approximate; we need to know exactly what to include. If you're writing about how to build a campfire, give specific sizes for the wood you want your reader to gather. Large wood thrown on the fire early will only smother it. Be as specific as you possibly can be.
- Define terms- If you tell your reader to gather kindling for the fire, is your reader going to know what that means? If you have any doubts, explain what the term is. No one needs a definition for a screw driver, and very few would not know what a Phillips screwdriver is (you may just give a brief description: star-tipped). But if you have a complex tool that the reader won't recognize, define it.
- Include reasons- Readers love to take short cuts. You have to be prepared to guide your reader through the steps correctly. So explain to them why they might be doing a step the way you want them to do it. In baking cookies, you may say "preheat the oven." Most people ignore that. If you give a reason why it is important, your reader may be convinced to do as you say.
- Include don'ts- It's not a good idea to check to see if the electricity is out by putting your finger in an empty socket while changing the light bulb. Advise your reader against it.

Sometimes it's easier to say what not to do than what to do.
Warnings are wonderful influences.

- Mention possible pitfalls- Sometimes, things go wrong. Let your reader know before hand that success may sometimes be out of their control. They've got the cake in the oven and a big truck goes by outside. The vibrations cause the cake to fall. Knowing this before hand can at least reduce the heartache if something does go wrong.

As with all expository essays, this paper should have an introduction and a conclusion. The intro should state a thesis and give the reader some kind of background info that will attract his/her interest. The conclusion should suggest benefits to the process or point to related processes the reader may try in the future. Both intro and conclusion should be shorter than body paragraphs. They are more emphatic.

48. 3. Process Introductions and Conclusions

By the time your readers finish your first paragraph, they should know what process you are describing (with a clear thesis statement). But that isn't always strong enough to convince the reader to continue reading. You should add some more information:

- Reassure them of your ability by giving them your credentials. Let them know you know what you are writing about.
- Mention the advantages of knowing this process. Are they going to save money? Is it going to improve their life? Bring their family closer together? Is it fun and rewarding?
- Stir up their curiosity. Ask them questions they will want answered by reading the process. Do you ever wonder how corn flakes are made? Something as simple as that can get someone's interest rolling.
- List materials needed, if necessary. Decide what your reader needs to know early.

A really impressive closing will help your reader continue to think about your process or even try it. There are a few suggestions for a brief but emphatic closing:

- Be specific about the advantages of doing the process (don't repeat your opening, however). Changing your own oil will save you at least, \$35, money you can now use to drive your clean-running car on a date with your sweetheart.

- Mention complementary processes. For instance, if you've just finished a process on how to bake lasagne, mention to them that homemade garlic bread might be the topping to the cake.
- Offer a few words of encouragement, especially if the process is complicated and might be filled with possible pitfalls.

49. 4. Process Essay Sample

Take a look at the following student essay, which describes a process. Note the different tools the writer uses (Specific details; definition of terms; reasons; don'ts; possible pitfalls. It might be a good idea to actually print a copy of the essay and highlight the different process techniques used to develop each paragraph and to identify which pattern of development is used. Do you think you could rewrite this using one of the other two patterns we discussed?

Acine De Pe Pe Fruit Salad

Acine De Pe Pe Fruit Salad, a unique fruit salad sure to get you hooked after the first bite. This recipe has been passed down to me from previous generations in my family. The kids always request that I make this to bring to holiday or family gatherings because they can't get enough of it! Even though this salad does take two days to make, the amount of time spent each day is minimal and worth the time spent preparing it. You will want to start the salad the day before you will be serving it.

The first thing that you will need to do is to go the grocery store to purchase the ingredients that you will need. Since this recipe has to be done in precise steps, if you forget an ingredient you cannot just buy it later and add it in, therefore, be sure to bring your shopping list of all ingredients with you to the grocery store. The list of ingredients you will need is:

- ½ box Acine De Pe Pe

Note: These are small macaroni ball looking pasta – similar consistency to tapioca. You can find the box in aisle with spaghetti and other pasta. I have found that not every store carries the Acine De Pe Pe pasta, so you may have to visit a couple of grocery stores before you find it.

- 20 oz. can of Crushed Pineapple

- 16 oz. can of Mandarin Oranges
- 1 lg. container of Cool Whip
- 16 oz. jar of Maraschino Cherries
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of Sugar
- 2 Eggs
- 4 tsp. of Flour

Once you have all of these ingredients, it is time start to prepare the salad. You will need a 5 quart pasta pan to boil the Acine De Pe Pe noodles in; a medium saucepan to mix ingredients together and boil ingredients to create your sauce mix; a large mixing bowl to mix ingredients together; a wooden spoon to mix ingredients together; a strainer to drain the crushed pineapple and mandarin oranges into your saucepan and also to drain and cool your pasta in once cooked; a can opener to open the cans of crushed pineapple and mandarin oranges; a paring knife to chop the mandarin oranges and maraschino cherries; tin foil or plastic wrap to cover the bowl before putting into the refrigerator to sit overnight; and, a cutting board to chop the mandarin oranges and maraschino cherries on. Once you have gotten all the above out on your countertop, you are ready to prepare the salad.

On the first day of preparation you will start out by filling your 5 quart pasta pan $\frac{1}{2}$ way with hot water, put on the stove and bring to a boil on medium heat. Once the water is boiling, add $\frac{1}{2}$ a box of Acine De Pe Pe macaroni balls and stir. Boil on medium for approximately 11-13 minutes. Remove from stove, drain by pouring into strainer over the sink. Let sit and cool while you are preparing the other steps. These noodles are very tiny, so you may see quite a few fall through the holes in the strainer. To prevent this, I usually put two strainers together, one inside the other.

While your noodles are cooling, use the can opener to open and drain 1 (20 oz.) can of crushed pineapple and 1 (16 oz.) can of mandarin oranges. Drain the juice from both the pineapple and the

mandarin orange cans into the medium size saucepan on the stove. I usually like to use two cans of mandarin oranges as I like extra fruit in my salad, this is a personal preference. You will then add 2 eggs, $\frac{3}{4}$ cups of sugar, and 4 tsp. of flour to the juice in the sauce pan. Stir all the ingredients together with your wooden spoon. Cook on medium heat until it starts to bubble a little bit. Stir every every couple of minutes or so until it starts to thicken. The consistency that you are looking for is not too watery, but not as thick as pudding. Once it gets to this consistency, set aside to cool. It is very important not to add too much flour. At first the mixture seems very watery and seems like it will never thicken up, but it will if you stick to the 4 tsp. of flour. If, for some reason, you find it is not thickening up, you can add one or two extra teaspoons of flour, a little at a time.

While the sauce is cooling, place your cutting board on the counter, place your mandarin oranges on it and cut each slice of orange in half with your paring knife and then pour into your large mixing bowl.

Pour your crushed pineapple into the mixing bowl along with the mandarin oranges and stir together with your wooden spoon. Once your Acine De Pe Pe macaroni noodles are cooled, pour them into the large mixing bowl along with the crushed pineapple and mandarin oranges and mix with your wooden spoon.

Once the sauce is in your medium sized saucepan is cooled, pour over the Acine De Pe Pe macaroni noodles, crushed pineapple and mandarin oranges in your large mixing bowl. Mix together with your wooden spoon. Cover the bowl with either tin foil or plastic wrap and place in your refrigerator overnight. Even though this does not look like a large portion in your bowl right now, the noodles will expand in size overnight in the liquid.

The next morning, take the mixing bowl out of the refrigerator and place on the countertop. Take the Cool Whip and the jar of maraschino cherries out and place on the countertop. Drain the jar

of maraschino cherries and take the stems off of them. You will need your cutting board and paring knife to cut the maraschino cherries each in half. Pour all of the maraschino cherries, except 8 halves into your mixture in the large mixing bowl and stir with your wooden spoon. Stir all of the Cool Whip, except $\frac{1}{2}$ cup, into the mixture in the large mixing bowl. Mix well. You can adjust the amount of Cool Whip accordingly, depending on how sweet you prefer. I use according to the recipe (if not more) as I like it sweet.

You can now transfer your salad in to a fancy bowl that you are going to want to serve it in on your dinner table and flatten out the mixture with your wooden spoon. Clean off your wooden spoon so that you can place the remaining Cool Whip on the top of the salad and smooth out over the whole surface, just enough to coat the top of the salad. You will then add the remaining maraschino cherry halves creatively on top of the cool whip to make it look pretty. I usually place them in a circle with about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in between each of the maraschino cherry halves. Put the salad back in to the refrigerator until you are ready to eat it at your meal.

Congratulations, you have now created a masterpiece sure to please all that sit at your dinner table! There are varying opinions on whether this salad is a dessert or part of a meal, we will let you decide after your first bite!

50. 5. Prewriting

Ever have writers' block? Even the greatest writers have been troubled by the inability to come up with a good idea. Sometimes we need a little prodding to help our creativity. Prewriting is that tool. Prewriting simply means jotting down ideas prior to starting the writing process (actually, it could be considered the first step following the choice of topic).

Our minds are filled with ideas. Who hasn't had at least a million ideas already today (unless you just got up, I guess). But transferring those ideas to paper or computer screen is the difficult part. Using a prewriting concept can help make that transfer much easier. It can get your ideas down without all those other worries of writing (organization, development, sentence skills).

A convenient way to prewrite is the "cluster." Clustering ideas helps us to create information while organizing it at the same time. Unfortunately, ideas often come out of our minds jumbled. The cluster helps us to place those ideas into categories so the next step (organizing) is much easier. To begin, start with a central idea (what is the topic of your paper?). Using a word or phrase, place that idea in the center of a sheet of paper. Then, think of supporting ideas for the central idea, sub-topics. Place those ideas in circles around the central idea. Then, think about specific support for each one of those sub-topics. As you move away from your central idea, you are creating more specific information, information you can use as support in your essay. Each one of those sub-topics could be a paragraph, perhaps, with the supporting info used to develop the paragraph.

Here's a little practice exercise for you. On the center of a sheet of paper, place the word "School." Now, think of four or five sub-topics to that very broad word (teachers, for instance). Then continue to branch out with specific support for your sub-topics (teachers could lead to "Mrs. Jones," which could lead to "strict," "unpopular"

and “demanding,” in reference to Mrs. Jones as a teacher. See how many ideas you can come up with in about 10 minutes. It’s overwhelming what we can get out of our minds with a little prodding.

Consider using a pre-writing technique for your essays, particularly if you are having some difficulty with one. It’s kind of like having your mind do the work for you.

51. 6. The Thesis Statement

Thesis Statements

Your thesis statement is the most important sentence in your essay. Everything else should revolve around your thesis. It should stand out in your opening paragraph and should point the way to everything else you have to say about your topic.

Here are several guidelines for writing a good thesis:

A good thesis states the writer's clearly defined opinion.

· Poor example: *Many Americans have differing perspectives on the proper attire to wear for an interview, and I agree with some of them.* (The writer's opinion is not clear.)

· Good example: *Proper attire for a job interview should be professional, modest and unassuming.* (Clear position on the issue.)

A good thesis asserts one main idea.

· Poor example: *The proposed feral-cat neutering program in our town will not successfully control the population, and there is no proof that feral cats pose a problem to human health anyway.* (Two main ideas.)

· Good example: *The proposed feral-cat neutering program will not successfully control the population.* (The essay will show various problems with the program.)

A good thesis has something worthwhile to say.

· Poor example: *The great Pyrenees is a nice breed of dog.* (Nothing new for the reader to know.)

· Good example: *The great Pyrenees makes a good pet because of its loyalty, affection and bravery.*

A good thesis is limited to fit the assignment.

· Poor example: *Gun ownership should be banned in every state of the union.*

· Good example: *Voters in our county should be allowed to determine what kinds of gun-control laws should be used locally.*

A good thesis is clearly stated in specific terms.

- Poor example: *The isolationist movement is good for our country.*
- Good example: *President Trump's isolationist agenda has several problems that will create major problems between us and other nations.*

Avoiding Common Errors in Thesis Statements

1. Don't make your thesis merely an announcement of your subject matter or a description of your intentions. State an attitude toward the subject.

- Poor: *I am going to discuss bearded dragons as good pets.*
- Good: *Bearded dragons make excellent pets, as long as proper procedures are followed.*

2. Don't clutter your thesis with such expressions as "in my opinion," "I believe" and "In this essay I will argue that..."

3. Don't be unreasonable. Avoid irresponsible charges, name calling and profanity.

- Poor: *Radical religious fanatics across the nation are trying to impose their right-wing views by censoring high school library book.*

- Good: *Only local school board members – not religious leaders or parents – should decide which books high school libraries should order.*

4. Don't merely state a fact. A thesis is an assertion of opinion that leads to discussion.

- Poor: *Child abuse is a terrible problem.*
- Good: *Child-abuse laws in this state are too lenient for repeat offenders.*

5. Don't express your thesis in the form of a question unless the answer is already obvious to the reader.

52. 7.Research: Finding Sources

Although your research assignment is not due for several weeks, it's not too early to start thinking about the process of research. The first step, obviously, is to choose a topic. We will talk later about the argumentative essay (which requires research in this course), but simply put, you will be taking a stand on an issue you have a vested interest in (abortion/gun control/ privacy rights of citizens) and showing an audience why you believe the stand you took is the right one. Finding other sources to support your stand will strengthen your argument.

Where do you go to find sources? Well, the immediate response today is to go to the Internet. As you already know, I'm limiting your use of on-line "web site" type sources. You can use as many as you like, but only one will be accepted as a requirement (meaning you have to have two other types of sources as well).

Web sites are interesting places, but they are not always reliable. For one thing, the source you find on a web site might be someone's opinion but might not have adequate support for that opinion. It's not enough to say John Smith says gun control is a good idea. Who is John Smith and what evidence does he have that it's good? A lot of people use web sites to "promote" their agenda without considering other viewpoints (which is not good argument). If you use a web site, make sure you know who the author is (how valid he/she is as an expert) and how thorough he/she has researched the topic. A lot of web site information has been stolen without adequate attribution. You're guilty of plagiarizing if you don't make sure your source hasn't plagiarized.

The more valid on-line source is the library-centered data base. You can find libraries of information on line these days. It's sometimes hard for an old codger like me to appreciate it all, but

there is a tremendous amount of material you can find from the comfort of your home. It can be confusing, as well, so working with your friendly librarian might be the best option for helping you find information on line. I have included here some common data bases that may prove useful to you.

Of course you still have the library texts themselves (even though the old card catalog system has been replaced by electronic searches). There is nothing wrong with browsing through a library. Give it a try. You'd be surprised how time disappears when you get involved in a trip through the shelves of the library. Some people, also, find it easier to read material on a page than on a computer screen. It does sometimes seem more relaxing to me.

Periodicals are treasures for research. You can also find lots of periodicals published on line, but the Info Track in your library will help you locate articles in good, old-fashioned magazines or journals. Information that is up to day and on target.

Finding On-line sources

This is by no means complete, but here are some good resources for conducting Internet research:

- CCC's Douglas Library (<http://www.clinton.edu/DouglasLibrary/>)
- Internet Public Library (<http://www.ipl.org>)
- Best Info on the Internet (<http://library.sau.edu/bestinfo/Hot/hotindex.htm>)
- Scholarly Internet Resource Collection (<http://library.csus.edu/infomine/>)

53. 8.Fun with Thesis Statements

Fun with Thesis Statements – Due: Sept. 29

Take a look at the following thesis statements. Many are poorly done: they are too vague, too broad or too confusing. A couple are pretty good. Identify the thesis statements you believe are poor and rewrite them to make them better. Identify the good statements by explaining why they are good. Good luck.

54. 9. Written Assignment, Process Essay

Due: Oct. 9

Essay #2- Process

Write a process essay, describing through a series of steps either how something is completed (a recipe, a craft, an activity) or how something works (a machine, an engine, rain).

The process should be a series of steps, in chronological order, in which you advise your audience how to complete the process or how the process works. You will be writing to an audience of novices, amateurs, beginners, so remember to provide details that they will understand.

Each paragraph should be a developed idea, an individual step. Use the following techniques (discussed earlier) to develop your paragraphs:

- Provide specific details (amounts, numbers, colors, types- concrete information).
- Define terms (assess your audience's knowledge and provide information they need to complete the task).
- Include reasons (why should they do it your way?).
- Include don'ts (why shouldn't they do it the easy way?).
- Mention possible pitfalls- things can go wrong.

The process essay needs a clearly defined introduction and a brief conclusion. Your opening should have a thesis statement that lets the reader know exactly what you are writing about, what your process is. Your conclusion should advise your reader to do the process or look for alternative or connecting ideas.

There is no word limit here, but your paper must have depth. The steps must be complete and easy enough for a beginner to

understand. Remember that a rough draft (with obvious revisions) is necessary.

Grading summary

Participants	11
Submitted	0
Needs grading	0
Due date	Monday, 5 April 2010, 3:25 PM
Time remaining	Assignment is due
Late submissions	Only allowed for participants who have been granted an extension

55. 10. Journal Entries for Module 4

Journal entries for Module 4: Due by Oct. 11

This is your first module for open journal entries. You will be required to submit six entries for this module. You can write about anything you like, though I would like you to try and write about different things each time. Don't turn this into a "diary" where you simply rehash the events of the day. If you have a particularly interesting day, then write about it. But vary your topics- write about some current event issues, some concerns you have, some problems with school/work, some dreams/goals. Use this to promote your creative minds.

You can also use entries from the list I provided earlier, if you like. I once had a student who wrote several entries about a grandparent the student had just lost. It became very useful to this student. I will also include a few more topics here if you can't think of any new ideas. Good luck.

Relationships

1. A difficult boss.
1. Someone I miss.
1. An important relationship I have with someone from a younger or older generation.
1. A person I know who has aged gracefully.
1. A person who has had a significant impact on my life.
1. Changes I would like to make in the way my family does things.

1. A group I have belonged to that had a significant effect on me.
1. An opinion I hold that my relatives would disagree with.
1. Different roles I play in my life (student, employee, friend, brother or sister, neighbor, etc.).

Grading summary

Participants	11
Submitted	0
Needs grading	0
Due date	Monday, 5 April 2010, 3:25 PM
Time remaining	Assignment is due
Late submissions	Only allowed for participants who have been granted an extension

56. 11.Instructions for Discussion

You may want to print this document out.

Your next task will be to participate in an online discussion. This document provides instructions on how to initiate and respond to discussions. You can also return to the Tutorial for a “refresher.”

A “**discussion thread**” is started each time you submit a discussion item. Each response to the original question is indented once – a response to a response is indented a second time – etc. This system of indents helps us determine which responses go together. By using the “collapse” and “expand,” , and “next” or “previous” document menu options in the navigational bar of the course, or by using the “collapse” and “expand” “twisties,” you can follow the give and take of a **threaded discussion** – the web equivalent of a classroom discussion.

Responding to the main item

To compose your response to a main discussion item you are reading, click on the “Respond” link located at the bottom of that page. In the form, title your response in the Subject field and then respond in the boxed area. A good title tells something of the nature of your personal response. “Response to Discussion 1” is not a very useful title, particularly if everyone in your course uses the same one.

Responding to someone else’s response

If you are already reading someone else’s response document, click on the “Respond” link located at the bottom of that page to respond **to that response**. *Make sure that you respond **on the document intended** so that your contribution will line up in the threaded discussion in the right place.*

Submitting your response

When you have completed your response, click the “Submit” button at the bottom of the page.

Correcting your response

If you discover an error in your document after you submit it, a misspelled word or an incomplete thought, you can “Edit” your document. The **Edit** button appears at the top of your document after you submit it the first time. When you have finished your edits, click the submit button at the bottom of the page.

Quality discussion responses

Responses such as: “I agree.”, “Good question” or “Good answer” / Any response that is just an opinion, or is unsubstantiated / any response that is carelessly typed, poorly thought-out, grammatically incorrect or confusing / any response that is disrespectful of another student or any other person, etc., **are not acceptable.** A **high quality response** contains information from the textbook or other valid source, or applies a concept from the text or course in a meaningful way, or facilitates understanding of the course material or topic. Please review information in the Course Information area of the course for guidelines and specific information on how you will be evaluated on your participation in “Course Discussions.”

Netiquette

As discussion is of a public nature, please observe proper “netiquette” – courteous and appropriate forms of communication and interaction over the Internet (in online discussions). This means no personal attacks, obscene language, or intolerant expression. All viewpoints should be respected.

57. 12. Discussion: Process Essays

Discussion. Start: Sept. 25; End: Oct. 11

Let's have a little fun with process writing. Many of us take simple instructions for granted. Who needs to explain how to tie a pair of shoes or how to make a good peanut-butter sandwich? But the fact is that directions can be confusing for the inexperienced person. Have you ever tried to teach a youngster how to tie shoes? It can become frustrating.

For this discussion, I'm going to ask each of you to try something at home and then translate it into the discussion area. On a sheet of paper, draw a simple design (a square or a circle or a star or some very basic drawing). Now, write a set of instructions for creating the design you just made. Remember to be specific. Your reader (us) has no idea what the design is- you have to instruct us from scratch.

Once you feel comfortable with the instructions (that they are thorough and easy to follow), list them in this discussion area. The more basic the design, the easier and shorter the instructions should be.

Now, pick one or two (or all of them, if you like) instructions your classmates have submitted and see if you can create the design at home. For your response, tell us what it is you drew. Good luck.

58. Submitting In-Class Essay

#1

Choose one of the following and write a well-developed essay.

Please remember to submit as an attachment.

1. Narrate a situation in which you fortunately or mistakenly followed someone else's judgment rather than your own.
2. Narrate an experience that led you to a new realization about yourself (or about someone else).
3. Think of an established process that could use improvement (grading, registration, income tax, courtship for example). Describe how a better substitute system would work.
4. Describe how to get rid of a bad habit (don't use a thesis you've already written). Be specific with the habit you choose.
5. Make a general statement about the society you live in and provide examples to support it. For example, the society I live in:
is cruel
is contradictory
is humorous
encourages conformity
encourages individuality.

Grading summary

Participants	11
Submitted	0
Needs grading	0
Due date	Friday, 13 October 2017, 11:55 PM
Time remaining	94 days 4 hours

PART VII

5. COMPARE/CONTRAST

59. I. What's Due When

Module Overview: This module looks at the comparison/contrast essay as well as some important points on conducting research and revising.

Module Learning Objectives: To learn how to write a clear comparison/contrast essay and to produce one using the writing process. To distinguish between summaries, paraphrases and direct quotes in borrowing information from sources. To continue with journal writing and revision practices.

Readings:

Due Date: Throughout module

Assignments: Choosing the Appropriate Word; Comparison/Contrast Essay; Journal Entries

Due Date: Oct. 21 (Choosing Words); Oct. 24 (Essay); by Oct. 26 (Journal Entries)

Discussions: Using borrowed information for research

Start Date: Oct. 11

End Date: Oct. 24

60. 2. Compare and Contrast

Your next essay is going to be a comparison/contrast of two connected items. Comparison means looking at similar ideas; contrast looks at differences.

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First of all, you need to think about what you want to compare/contrast (topic). Some popular topics are two best friends; two cars you've owned; two places you've lived; the differences (and similarities) between high school and college; two siblings; two parents; two favorite movies, TV shows or other forms of entertainment. The key to choosing a topic is the two items have to have some kind of connection. You might want to compare/contrast a hawk with an eagle, or a hawk with a pigeon (predator-prey) for instance, but why would you want to look at a hawk and a hummingbird, for instance. Except that they're two birds, there isn't a lot else in common. You might even look at an ostrich and a hummingbird, as the largest and smallest of birds, but a hummingbird and hawk don't have even that kind of connection.

.....

There are three ways you can go about developing a comparison/contrast paper. I'll briefly discuss them, but you need to think about which would be best for the topic you've chosen:

- **Case Pattern** (one side at a time). With this format, you begin the body of your essay with one of the two items you are writing about. You discuss that item thoroughly before moving on to the second item. When you get to the second item, you are finished with the first. You don't need to repeat what you said in the first section of the essay. For example, let's say you're writing an essay on the similarities and differences between the American alligator and the Nile crocodile. You want to look at three aspects of the reptiles: habitat; feeding habits; breeding habits. With the case pattern, you would have

a section solely dedicated to the alligator, perhaps with a paragraph each for habitat, feeding habits and breeding habits. Then you would have a section solely dedicated to the crocodile, again, focusing on those three sections. The key thing to remember here is to consistency. If you have three paragraphs in the alligator section, you should have three paragraphs in the crocodile section.

- **Alternating pattern** (point-by point). With this format, you will be going back and forth between the two items. The similarities and differences are much more obvious, since you are mixing the two items together instead of separating them as you did with the case pattern. For instance, with the alligator/crocodile essay, you would have three sections: one on habitat; one on feeding habits and one on breeding habits. Within the section on habitat, you would look at both the similarities and difference between where alligators and crocodiles live. They both like wet areas, but the alligator is much more inclined to a swampy environment, whereas the crocodile likes a more open area. Again, consistence would be important here. Each section should be about the same length. If you have a lot of information on habitat and feeding habits but only a brief section on breeding, the reader will assume you are not as familiar with that section. If you're not, why include it?
- **Opposing pattern** (similarities vs. differences). With this format, you are emphasizing that two items have a balanced amount of similarities and differences. It only works if there is that balance. If you are writing about your two twin siblings, there are probably many more similarities than differences. You would be writing a lopsided paper. But if you were looking at your two best friends, there might be a fairly even balance: they're your best friends because they probably have a lot in common, but they are two individuals who have been raised

differently and think differently, perhaps. Our friends, the alligator and crocodile would work well, probably, in the opposing pattern. They are very similar in that they are large predator reptiles. But they have vast differences as well, including location and personality traits (crocodiles are much more aggressive and much more dangerous to humans, for instance).

.....
Here are outlines for the three essays just described:

.....
Case Pattern

Introduction (Including thesis statement)

A. Alligators

1. Habitat
2. Feeding habits
3. Breeding habits

B. Crocodiles

1. Habitat
2. Feeding habits
3. Breeding habits

Conclusion

.....
Alternating Pattern

Introduction

A. Habitat

1. Alligators
2. Crocodiles

B. Feeding habits

1. Alligators
2. Crocodiles

C. Breeding habits

1. Alligators
2. Crocodiles

Conclusion

.....
Opposing Patterns

Introduction

A. Similarities

1. Habitat likenesses

2. Feeding likenesses

3. Breeding likeness

B. Differences

1. Habitat differences

2. Feeding differences

3. Breeding differences

Conclusion

.....
Again, pick a topic you feel comfortable with- one you have a good, solid knowledge of and one you will enjoy writing about. Make sure your topic is narrow enough to deal with in an essay of three or so pages. You can't write about the similarities and differences between World War I and World War II, for instance. You need an introduction and conclusion, again, remembering that introductions attract readers and express theses, and conclusions influence readers to continue thinking about your topic.

..

Remember to include a rough draft. Try prewriting if you're having any problems getting started. Talk to your classmates about possible topics if you like.

6I. 3. Compare/Contrast, Sample 1

Take a look at the following comparison/contrast essay: What format does it use? What suggestions do you have for improving it? It's not a great essay: It could use some strong revisions.

.....

Feelings Change

The image of “my hometown” has a special meaning for many people. It's filled with warmth, comfort and support. For most teens, however, their hometown is a place they cannot wait to escape from. It's only when they are adult that they return to place where they grew up and recognize how special it really is. My hometown, Bakersfield, is a perfect example of this phenomenon as younger people are always bored out of their wits, but the grownups seem content as can be.

As teens in Bakersfield, we are not happy with our community because there very few activities available to keep our attention. We have a small general store where we can buy soda and chips and other munchies, a post office and a fire station. Other than that, we have to travel 30 miles to the nearest city where we can go to the mall or movie theater. For most kids in our community who can't drive yet, the city is too far away unless they can get a parent or other adult to drive them. So we spend most of our days searching for something to disrupt the boredom: it's a major cause for our growing dislike of the community.

Also, nothing exciting ever happens in Bakersfield. Each day is like the day before: monotonous. During school days, we wake up, get ready for school, wait for the bus, spend the day at school, come home, do homework, watch TV or play video games and go to bed. Then we do the same thing the next day, and the next, and the next...On weekends we watch TV or play video games, and

sometimes we go over to a friend's house and watch TV or play video games there. There's just nothing in Bakersfield to attract our attention. It's a routine that draws us to the brink of insanity and forces us to dream about the day we will at last be able to leave.

Finally, the environment is not conducive to a teen's happiness. We're in the middle of nowhere, a wasteland void of teenage opportunities. Like I said, the nearest city is 30 miles away, and nothing but woods and farmlands surround us. We don't even have a river or lake nearby to go swimming or fishing. In the fall, some of us like to hunt, but by winter, we're snowed in with nothing at all to do all day long. With a poor environment and no organized teen-oriented activities, we feel the town has left us down: a big reason why we want to leave here is simply to teach the town a lesson for ignoring us.

Adults, on the other hand, don't mind this lifestyle at all. Their days (or nights if they work a late shift) are spent away from home on the job. When they do come home, they like to sit around and watch TV to recover from a hard-day's work. It helps relax them, so they can get a good night's sleep, which is easy to do in the calm and tranquility of the town. They find contentment in daily routines and feel invigorated instead of emotionally drained from the lack of excitement. During the weekends, they can find extra time to catch up on chores around the house or spend a little extra time with the kids, who are probably doing their best to try and avoid the adults.

Adults also appreciate the relative safety our town offers them and their families. There is no crime to speak of, and residents typically keep their doors and windows unlocked because no one will ever break into their homes. It is a safe community to raise their children, and it keeps them at ease not always knowing where the kids might be. Even without a local police station or sheriff's office, they feel comfortable knowing that crime is simply non-existent. They also work together in an informal kind of "neighborhood crime watch" where they look out for their friends' and neighbors' interests when they might be out of town.

Finally, adults enjoy the camaraderie of the community. Families have been living in Bakersfield for generations, and they have known each other for generations. The town is more like an extended family as adults often visit with one another and share special times like Christmas and even birthdays together. Families ever hold regular picnics during the summer months and often travel in groups to the city for shopping and dining excursions. Everyone knows everyone, something that might not be conducive to a teen's happiness but makes adults feel like their hometown is something special.

Kids can't wait to leave Bakersfield. It's their goal throughout their teen years. But as adults, they often come back because it is their home, and they are comfortable here. It's a place they can raise their own children, renewing the generational likes and dislikes of our little town, Bakersfield.

.....

So, obviously this is case pattern. It talks about what the town is like for teens and then what the town is like for adults. Think about how you could revise this as an alternating pattern or an opposing pattern. How you decide on what pattern to choose will depend on several different factors, but take some time to consider the possibilities as you write your rough drafts.

62. 4. Compare/Contrast, Sample 2

This essay uses the Alternating Pattern. How might you rewrite this using the case pattern?

.....
Hamsters and gerbils: not as similar as you may think

Hamsters and gerbils have both been cherished as pets for decades and decades. They are soft, cuddly creatures that provide their owners with hours of entertainment and laughter. They are considered members of the rodent family, but their characteristics put them high above the negative connotations associated with their cousins, rats and mice. Hamsters and gerbils have a lot in common, but they have many differences as well.

Affection the two animals provide is one area where there are many similarities and differences. Both species love attention and appreciate being handled on a regular basis. They will both sit in their owner's hand without trying to escape and seem to enjoy being rubbed behind their ears. My pet hamster, Gabriel, would often watch television with me for hours; he was so content with being held that I would often forget he was there. My gerbil, Igor, was especially fond of having his belly rubbed and would lie on his back anticipating a friendly massage. Hamsters, however, are a bit more aggressive and might nip at an owner's hand if handled for extended periods of time. Gerbils will eventually fall asleep if held for an extended time. I learned not to become upset those few times when Gabriel took an unexpected nibble of my fingertips and would simply return him to his cage when he seemed ready for a break from me. Igor never showed any signs of aggression; I don't think he would even try to hurt a flea.

They also share an ability to learn tricks, though hamsters do appear to be somewhat more intelligent than gerbils. The

hamster can learn to stand on its hind legs on command and can learn to come when called for. I often enjoyed playing hide and seek with Gabriel, enjoying with pleasure his attempts to find the snacks I had placed in hiding spots throughout his habitat. Gerbils have been known to roll over on command and will sometimes come when called for. I never had to reach for Igor when I wanted to take him out of the cage. I would simply whistle, and he would come to me. Hamsters, however, seem to remember simple commands once they are learned and can be trained to obey for their lifetime. Gerbils have to be re-oriented with commands every few weeks and will forget how to do a trick if commands are not repeated regularly. I owned Gabriel for three years, and he never once forgot what my signal was for begging for treats, but in the four years that Igor lived, he would often forget what my whistle meant until I re-taught him the trick.

Finally, hamsters and gerbils will both find ways to escape their cages if given a chance, but hamsters are more likely to return than gerbils. Both species do develop a connection with their “quarters,” whether it’s a basic metal cage, a glass aquarium or a fancy condominium complete with tubing from several different areas. They feel most at ease when they are in the confines of their homes, but if a cage door is left open and unattended, they will make a mad dash for freedom. Both the hamster and the gerbil will immediately search for cover once they realize they are outside of their normal confines, often choosing to hide beneath furniture or behind appliances. However, the hamster often returns to the cage once it becomes hungry while the gerbil usually will learn to fend for itself in the wild, even if the wild is beneath the kitchen floorboards. Gabriel escaped twice from his home, but he returned during the night each time. I simply had to leave his cage door open. Although Igor never escaped or got lost, I was extra careful with him because I knew he would probably not be found if he did leave his home unsupervised.

When choosing whether to purchase a hamster or a gerbil, it is wise to consider how much time you may have for your

new pet. Hamsters need much more attention and supervision, while gerbils will offer their share of affection but will also be just as happy fending for themselves. Giving either species the time and effort each deserves is the best way to ensure your pet lives a long, comfortable life.

63. 5. How to Take Good Notes

How to Take Good Notes While Researching

Be Selective

Even though a source is on your topic, it may not have any new or relevant information:

- Don't write down what you already know.
- Don't write down the same general (background) information more than once.
- Don't write down a story or piece of information that is entertaining but that will be useless to your report.

Take Notes Almost Entirely in Your Own Words

Do not copy whole paragraphs from your sources. You can waste valuable time and energy by laboriously copying material you never even use ? not to mention the wasted time of rereading everything and trying to decide what to use.

Put nearly everything you read into your own words by using *summary* and *paraphrase*. Reserve quotation marks (direct quotes) for memorable statements of opinion. Reflect on what you read, and then put it into your own words so that it makes sense to you. As you do so, you will be taking the first step toward refining your own ideas and eventually writing your paper.

Use Direct Quotation

Direct quotations are not just something spoken by another person; they are also any words written by another person. Be absolutely vigilant in putting quotation marks around every word that you take from your sources, even if it's only one or two words or half a sentence. If the writer quotes someone else, be sure to note who is being quoted and the source of the quotation.

Get Your Facts Straight

Any statistics and facts must be recorded accurately. Take special care to copy all numbers, names, and other facts correctly, and then check them against the original one more time. Be sure to also record your source of information.

Keep Each Note Brief but Understandable

When you can, write in phrases or short sentences that you will be able to skim quickly. Be sure that each note will make sense to you when you read it later out of the context of the whole article or essay.

Keep an Accurate Record of Documentation

In your final paper, you will need to tell exactly where you found your information; so, as you take notes, write down author, title and other bibliographical information for every source. Beside each note, record the exact page number on which you found the information. If the note covers material that runs more than one page, indicate for yourself where the page changes. This habit will ensure that your documentation is fully accurate.

64. 6. Paraphrase/Summarize

You will be using three different kinds of borrowed information: direct quotes, paraphrases and summarizing information. Let's take a brief look at each:

- Direct quotes: Use the actual words of sources infrequently; save them for the best stated phrases from your source. If your source says something eloquently, use his/her words. If the words make you laugh or cry, they might be useful for the reader of your paper to see. If you're citing an extremely controversial statement, it might be better to keep it in the original author's words to reduce any appearances of extreme bias on your part. Try to keep direct quotes short; if you use a quote that is more than three lines long, you have to use a different format to block the information.
- Paraphrase: Use this technique more often than direct quotes. Restate the original idea of the borrowed author, but do not change his or her meaning. I always suggest that when you are taking notes from a source, paraphrase in your notes, don't copy and paste from the source. Then, when you start to write your essay, you will probably double paraphrase those notes, moving further away from the author's original words. A major form of plagiarism is when you inadvertently use the words from a source without putting quotes around those words, even if you cite the source.
- Whereas paraphrase typically looks at a specific point in your source (a sentence, for instance), the summary identifies a longer section of the work (a paragraph or even a chapter). You want to use summary to condense a lot of information into a short statement. Again, you are putting info into your own words, but you are giving an overview of the section rather than a rewrite of a specific idea. Summary is useful in using brevity in the information you borrow, since most of your

argumentative essay should be your own personal ideas.

For more information on using borrowed sources, refer to the following website:

<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/englishcomp1v2xmaster/chapter/quoting-paraphrasing-and-avoiding-plagiarism/>

65. 7. Commonly Confused Words

Words. They are wonderful tools of expression. They are what make us who we are. They can make us happy, sad, nervous, fearful, excited and proud. A pat on the back is a nice thing, but a few strong words of encouragement go a very long way in making someone feel more comfortable facing a difficult task. But they can also be very confusing if misused. Think about it, about how many words there are and how many words have similar meanings.

.....

I want to take a few minutes to talk about a few word-choice issues that are important to me. I will also assign some material from the handbook for you to look at as well as a practice assignment on choosing words correctly.

.....

Here are some keys to think about when revising your essays for better word choice:

- Use active verbs. Verbs are perhaps the most important words in any sentence. They carry the action. They give the reader an image of movement, of things happening. They can also create excitement and interest. “I slugged him” is a lot more emphatic than “I hit him,” for instance. Think in terms of verbs working with subjects (nouns or pronouns). What is wrong with this sentence: “Tom was slugged by Joe.”? Who is doing the action? Tom, the poor guy, is just sitting there. Joe is the one who should be carrying the action of the verb: “Joe slugged Tom.” It’s shorter and more emphatic.
- Don’t use verbs that need prepositions: As I said, verbs are very important words. Prepositions are not so important (I once had a teacher require us to not use any prepositions in an

essay- what a difficult assignment that turned out to be, but his point was that we really don't need to use them very often). So avoid verbs that aren't complete without the preposition: "set up" (use "establish"); "come upon" (use "discover"); "take hold of" (use "grab").

- Short is generally better than long: You don't need to impress people with fancy words. You do need to express your ideas clearly. Usually, shorter words can be more easily understood by more people. As long as you avoid repetition and elementary language (See Spot Run), shorter words will be stronger words.
- Most adverbs are unnecessary: Modifiers can be great tools, but they are often over-used. "The radio blared loudly." Did you ever hear it blare softly?" What about "teeth clenched tightly."? Try clenching them loosely. The adverb in these two examples is redundant. If the adverb serves a purpose "played badly," use it. But if it doesn't "moped dejectedly," get rid of it.
- Same with adjectives: "Lacy spiderwebs" sounds colorful, but it is really just taking up space. Envisioning a spiderweb, we automatically see a lacy substance. "Precipitous cliffs (cliff is steep, that's what precipitous means). You might want to say "sarcastic smile," but why "friendly smile?" If you just say smile, the reader will think friendly, unless you tell him/her it's some other kind of smile.
- Avoid qualifiers- "A little," "Sort of," "Rather," are all vague and basically worthless. Don't say "I wasn't too happy because the hotel looked pretty expensive."
- When using nouns, be as specific as possible. A red car is a lot different than an apple red Corvette, for instance.
- Don't use compound nouns when possible. Modern technology

has created this feeling that compound nouns “money problem areas” are more important than single nouns: I am “broke.” As with verbs, nouns can be more emphatic if they are simple, basic, easily understood.

- Make sure you know the meaning of the word you are using. It’s fine to use a thesaurus to look for options for words, especially to create variety and avoid repetition. But don’t just pull fancy words out of the thesaurus. Look them up in the dictionary, if you don’t know their meanings.
- Familiarize yourself with similar sounding words (their, there and they’re, for instance). There are many of them. You can find a list of commonly confused words at this site:

<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/styleforstudents/>

.....

I’ve included a brief section in the Written Assignment area for practice in word choice. But think about it regularly. It’s what makes the difference between good and bad writing.

66. 8. Plagiarism

Don't Steal Other People's Ideas

Plagiarism means you have presented other people's facts, ideas or words as if they were your own, – whether you did so deliberately, carelessly or unconsciously.

To avoid plagiarism in your writing, you must:

- Give credit to all sources of information.
- Credit material whether the wording was copied (and thus must be surrounded by quotation marks) or put in your own words (paraphrase).

GUIDELINES FOR AVOIDING PLAGIARISM

· Do not use a source's words without placing quotation marks around those words. Although standard terminology in a field does not get quotation marks (digital thermometer, for example), you still must document the sources.

· Do not use someone else's idea, date or statistic without telling specifically where you found it.

· Do not hand in a paper that you have written for another course without your teacher's consent. Some teachers consider this to be another form of plagiarism. Of course, do not submit someone else's paper or one downloaded from the Internet.

THE RISKS

you are taking a risk If you hand in a paper that contains someone else's word or ideas without giving credit to that person. If a teacher can prove that you have plagiarized, you might fail paper or the entire course or you might be permanently expelled from the college or university. These punishments have been upheld in court.

It is easy for a teacher to spot plagiarism in a student paper. Even in a large class where the teacher may not know each student's style, the teacher will recognize the style of professional sources in a field and may even be extremely familiar with the sources you have used.

Visit the following sites for additional information on plagiarism:

- <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/styleguide/chapter/defining-plagiarism/>
- <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/styleguide/chapter/avoiding-plagiarism/>

67. 9. Choosing the Appropriate Word

Choosing the Appropriate Word – Due: Oct. 21

Choose the appropriate word in the following sentences. Refer to your online source for commonly confused words (as mentioned in the previous lecture).

68. 10. Writing the Comparison/Contrast Essay

Writing the Comparison/Contrast Essay; Due Oct. 22

Comparison/Contrast

For writing assignment 4, you are going to pick two items and make a comparison/contrast between them. Comparison means you are looking at similarities, and contrast requires you to look at differences.

Pick two items that have some kind of connection: two friends, two siblings, two courses you've taken, two teachers, two similar products (the Big Mac and the Big King burgers), two favorite movies or songs or books you've seen, heard or read. Then look at how those two items are similar, different and/or both.

You can use several methods to develop this kind of essay:

- q Case pattern (one side at a time)

- q Alternating pattern (point-by-point)

- q Opposing pattern (specifying similarities/differences)

The case pattern separates the two items you are looking at. Half of your paper

will deal with one item (Coke) and the second half will deal with the other item (Pepsi). You need to organize your paper so similarities and differences are clearly identified.

The alternating pattern means you pick sub topics and arrange your paper according to those. You may have these three topics on Coke and Pepsi: taste, popularity and cost. You would have one section in your paper on taste and look at both products. Then you would do the same with popularity and cost. Organization requires you to always use the same order of information in each sub-topic: Coke first, Pepsi second.

The third, opposing, is the most difficult. You have to have some

kind of balance between similarities and differences. Usually there is not a balance. But give it a try, if you think you'd like to separate the items this way.

You can use a research component for this essay, though research will be required for the final essay, the Argumentative. If you choose to borrow information from a source, remember to use MLA format. For instance, if you're comparing your two twin siblings, perhaps you can find research on the psychology of being twins.

Remember your format for submitting papers, and always have at least one rough draft to submit with the final. Have fun.

Grading summary

Participants	11
Submitted	0
Needs grading	0
Due date	Tuesday, 24 October 2017, 11:55 PM
Time remaining	105 days 4 hours

69. II. Journal Entries for Module 5

Journal entries- due by Oct. 26

Again, your minimum of **six** entries for this module can be open-topics you've already discussed or from lists I provided, or topics of interest to you. I've included a few more suggestions for you here:

Problems and Challenges

1. Taking exams
1. Something that irritates me or wastes my time
1. Something I fear
1. Being broke
1. A time when I felt like an outsider
1. Something I was discouraged from doing
1. The worst job I have ever had
1. A time I encountered prejudice
1. A dilemma in my life that I have never completely resolved
1. An important goal and my plans for achieving it

Grading summary

Participants	11
Submitted	0
Needs grading	0
Due date	Thursday, 26 October 2017, 11:55 PM
Time remaining	107 days 4 hours

70. 12. Instructions for Discussion

You may want to print this document out.

Your next task will be to participate in an online discussion. This document provides instructions on how to initiate and respond to discussions. You can also return to the Tutorial for a “refresher.”

A “**discussion thread**” is started each time you submit a discussion item. Each response to the original question is indented once – a response to a response is indented a second time – etc. This system of indents helps us determine which responses go together. By using the “collapse” and “expand,” , and “next” or “previous” document menu options in the navigational bar of the course, or by using the “collapse” and “expand” “twisties,” you can follow the give and take of a **threaded discussion** – the web equivalent of a classroom discussion.

Responding to the main item

To compose your response to a main discussion item you are reading, click on the “Respond” link located at the bottom of that page. In the form, title your response in the Subject field and then respond in the boxed area. A good title tells something of the nature of your personal response. “Response to Discussion 1” is not a very useful title, particularly if everyone in your course uses the same one.

Responding to someone else’s response

If you are already reading someone else’s response document, click on the “Respond” link located at the bottom of that page to respond **to that response**. *Make sure that you respond **on the document intended** so that your contribution will line up in the threaded discussion in the right place.*

Submitting your response

When you have completed your response, click the “Submit” button at the bottom of the page.

Correcting your response

If you discover an error in your document after you submit it, a misspelled word or an incomplete thought, you can “Edit” your document. The **Edit** button appears at the top of your document after you submit it the first time. When you have finished your edits, click the submit button at the bottom of the page.

Quality discussion responses

Responses such as: “I agree.”, “Good question” or “Good answer” / Any response that is just an opinion, or is unsubstantiated / any response that is carelessly typed, poorly thought-out, grammatically incorrect or confusing / any response that is disrespectful of another student or any other person, etc., **are not acceptable.** A **high quality response** contains information from the textbook or other valid source, or applies a concept from the text or course in a meaningful way, or facilitates understanding of the course material or topic. Please review information in the Course Information area of the course for guidelines and specific information on how you will be evaluated on your participation in “Course Discussions.”

Netiquette

As discussion is of a public nature, please observe proper “netiquette” – courteous and appropriate forms of communication and interaction over the Internet (in online discussions). This means no personal attacks, obscene language, or intolerant expression. All viewpoints should be respected.

71. 13. Direct Quote/ Paraphrase Discussion

Start: Oct. 11; End: Oct. 26

Search for a source that you might use in a research project you are working on. When you locate the source, identify one statement from the source that would work well as a direct quote and then find another statement that you can turn into a paraphrase. Be sure to include both the original statement and your paraphrase. Then, help your class mates out by analyzing their direct quotes and paraphrases.

PART VIII

6. CLASSIFICATION

72. 1. What's Due When

This module looks at the classification essays while continuing our discussion on researched writing..

Module Learning Objectives: To learn how to write a clear classification essay and to produce one using the writing process. To work with parenthetical citations and connect them to the Works Cited page. To continue with journal writing and revision practices.

Readings: *Online information on how to use parenthetical citations and Works Cited.*

Assignments: Writing Good Sentences; Classification essay; Journal entries.

Due Date: Nov. 4 (Sentences); Nov. 09 (Essay); by Nov. 11 (Entries).

Discussions: Discussing research sources

Start Date: Oct. 25

End Date: Nov. 11

73. 2. Writing the Classification Essay

Your next essay assignment is the classification. In this essay, you will categorize information into groups. For instance, you could categorize different types of television programs (comedies, dramas, reality shows), types of popular autos (sports cars, compact cars, station wagons) or any topic you could break down into groups.

Remember how in the comparison/contrast essay you looked at the similarities between two items: Coca Cola vs. Pepsi, let's say. You then developed that essay by looking at basic concepts: color, taste, cost, for instance. In classification you will have one major topic (Soda pop) and will break that topic into three or four categories: colas, fruit sodas, sparkling sodas.

It is important to have some kind of connection between the categories- they have to have a relationship. Here are some important points to consider when choosing a topic and its categories:

- Pick a topic that is workable. Don't try to classify all the types of music, for instance. There are dozens, really. Narrow your topic down- types of modern popular music, or types of classical music. You can write an essay about types of students at Clinton Community College, but in reality there are many, many different types. What you might want to say is "the most common types of students" and then focus on three or four categories (a good number).
- Make sure your categories are balanced. If your talking about types of students and you categorize them into three categories: shy students, outgoing students and rich students, what kind of problem have you created? A rich student might

be shy or he/she might be outgoing. Two categories deal with personality, the third with financial status. They all have to have a connection- all personality or all financial status.

- Categories should be generalizations- support should be specific. Popular music categories: country; alternative; the Rolling Stones. The first two are general categories in which you can find many examples. The third is a specific that doesn't really have examples. The Rolling Stones are one example of classic rock, let's say.
- Try not to classify a topic with two categories. That can lead to a comparison/contrast essay. Sure, there are some that work: two main types of trees in the Adirondack forest: deciduous and coniferous. But for the most part, look for ways to break into at least three categories (but no more than four): leafy trees, needle trees, shrubby trees, perhaps.
- Have a solid introduction that establishes classification (and may include the categories) and a brief conclusion that expresses what the reader should think about now that he/she recognizes these groups.

In the comparison/contrast essay, you wrote about the similarities and difference between lake trout and Atlantic landlocked salmon, let's say. You could write a related classification essay by putting Lake Champlain fish into types: predator fish, prey fish, scavengers (based on food consumption), or sports fish, pan fish, nuisance fish (based on angler preferences). Trout and salmon, then would be good examples for the predator or the sports fish categories, as would bass, pike and walleyes. Yellow perch, rock bass, sun fish might all be fit into the prey category while suckers and bullhead would be considered scavengers.

Pick a topic you're comfortable with, something you have an interest and background in. If you can't come up with examples for

each category, then you probably haven't created good categories. Turn to the Assignment area for instructions on what I am looking for with the classification. I have also provided you with some examples below.

74. 3. Classification Sample 1

Types of Studying Students

It was about 1 a.m. when I returned home from work and prepared to do some final-minute studying for tomorrow's math exam. When I opened the door to the dorm, I discovered, that all of my roommates were also involved in preparations for their upcoming tests. As I watched my friends over the next hour, I discovered three distinct types of studying students: the obnoxious study student, the pretend study student and the depressed study student.

I found the obnoxious student sitting at the dining room table as I walked toward the kitchen for a late-night snack. He was screaming for help from no one in particular until he happened to spot me.

"Hello, Gary, ol' bud," he said with an over-exaggerated smile, as he grabbed my arm and pulled me closer to him.

Obnoxious study students are the type who live to be the center of attention. They will hem and haw over every concept in their study notes and yell like banshees to get some recognition, even if the recognition is negative. This particular student turned my stomach with his forceful efforts, so I freed myself from his grasp and moved on toward a quieter end of the room where I met with the pretend study student.

He was posed with his feet crossed and one arm casually propped against the wall, a textbook held loosely in his left hand. I expected him to fall without the wall for support, and my guess was correct. When his hand left the wall to shake mine, he stumbled over his twisted feet and spilled his beer down his shirt front.

"Excuse me," he slowly mumbled, "I've been studying so hard that I'm loopy now. I've been studying since mid-afternoon, but I am nowhere near finished."

The denying study student will ramble on and on about how much he can cover in one setting drink and how many times he mastered the topic from it. He studies, he says, to have a good time but denies

that too much reading might confuse him I propped this teetering soul back up against the wall and quickly escaped to join a quiet girl sitting in the corner.

“Why are you sitting alone?” I asked. “Are you OK?”

“Oh,” she sniffed, “I’m just wonderful.”

“What’s wrong?” I inquired.

“Oh, it’s my dumb boyfriend,” she moaned, sloshing down the remainder of her warm beer.

I should have thought twice before striking up a conversation with this depressed study student. She put down her notebook and began to tell me all her problems, from age twelve to the present. She was the typical depressed study student, a perfect example of the type who talks for hours on end about nothing but her pitiful self and has no real time for studying. I was stuck playing the Dear Abby role with her for the remainder of the evening.

As a result of this experience, I have come to the conclusion that taking time to study requires a solitary location. Otherwise, you will get caught up in the study habits of those around you, and your own needs for studying material may just go to waste.

As you can see, this essay follows a narrative approach- it has a clear “classification” opening, with a thesis statement included. It also includes an “essay map” that identifies the three categories the writer will discuss. Then it uses all the components of narrative writing you practiced with earlier. You don’t have to use narrative writing for a classification. I just wanted you to see a little different format.

75. 4. Classification Sample 2

A Bug's Life

The importance of the human species on this planet varies from person to person. Some people believe we are here to protect the planet and its inhabitants while others feel all other plants and animals are here solely to benefit human beings. Of the billions of humans who live on Planet Earth, there are three essential categories of attitudes toward life.

The first person, when walking down a sidewalk and spotting a bug on the pavement before him, will alter his steps to make sure he squashes the unsuspecting insect. He has no interest in life other than what kind of impact it has on him. The bug's life is subject to his desire, and he believes the world is better off without such things as nasty, crawly, ugly insects.

My friend, Paul, is a prime example of the "bug squasher." He takes no interest in the wonders of the natural world and only goes into the woods when he hears about a beer party going on behind the cover of the dark forest. I once saw him swerve his car into the other lane in an attempt to hit a squirrel trying to cross the road. When he sees ads on television asking for help for endangered species, he comes up with the comment, "We'd be better off without those nasty apes," or something like that.

The next person sees the bug on the sidewalk and adjusts his steps to avoid hurting the helpless creature. The person sees the need for all kinds of life forms. To him, nature represents the dichotomy of plants and animals all dependent upon one another. Even the tiniest of insects plays a role in the world. Every bug is potential nourishment for some other creature, and every bug will struggle till the bitter end to survive.

I have another friend, Tammy, who is the epitome of the "bug saver." She is involved in several animal-rights organizations and always goes out of her way to protect what she calls "innocent

victims.” She does not believe in hunting at all. In fact, last season, she distributed a petition against allowing people to hunt moose in the northern forest. She is also a vegetarian and says that raising animals such as chickens or cows for human consumption is the cruelest activity humans could be involved in.

Finally, the third person walking down the sidewalk sees the bug but doesn’t alter his steps at all. To him, the bug’s life is a matter of fate. In fact, we are all subject to the will of greater powers, and humans only survive better than other animals because that’s the way it is. He doesn’t worry about whether an animal becomes extinct because he knows he probably would never see it in his lifetime anyway. If he ran over a dog, he would stop to see if the animal needed help and would look for the owner, but he wouldn’t feel overly upset about it.

Most people I know are “bug faters.” They really don’t have any connection with nature at all except passing through it in their vehicles. They’re modern creatures, so caught up in their computers and technologically advanced worlds that they don’t see any problems with the loss of environment, and they don’t feel any need for participating in it. I once asked a friend if he wanted to go so fishing with me, and he said, “No, I wouldn’t want to catch a cold going out in the wet, cold boat.” Three days later, I saw him with some friends water skiing.

Sure, people’s perceptions of life are lots more complicated than that, but when it boils down to what humans think about their planet brethren, they’ll either squash the, save them, or...who cares.

This is a more traditional classification essay- it doesn’t use narrative writing but does use an emphatic order, saving the most common type for the last. It also balances general definitions with specific examples. The writer could have combined the two paragraphs about “bug squashers” into one larger paragraph but decided to use shorter paragraphs. That’s a decision left to a writer.

76. 5. MLA Citation and Works Cited Page

Your researched information requires you to use MLA format. That means using a specific kind of parenthetical citation that includes two things: source and page or section (Smith 89). This will refer to a specific entry in the Works Cited page: Smith, John. When We Were Young and It Mattered. New York: Harcourt, Brace. 1998.

In the sections below, I've given you some examples of parenthetical citations and the Works Cited page. Also, your handbook has plenty of information on the topic. Please refer to your online handbook for several sections on using MLA citation:

<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/styleguide/>

77. 6. Works Cited Format

Formatting details ? *arrangement, punctuation and spacing* ? are an important part of the formal presentation of academic research, so paying attention to these guidelines may affect the grade of your paper.

- Alphabetize the entire list by the last name of the author, editor, artist or speaker. If no author is given, alphabetize using the first major word of the title. Include *A, An, or The*, but do not use them when alphabetizing.

- Do not separate items by type (for example, books and articles), unless asked to do so.

- Do not number the items. Begin each item at the left margin. Continue the first line to the right margin, and then indent the other lines five spaces from the left margin.

- Double space the entire list, and do not add extra spaces between items.

- Skip one space after each period, comma and colon.

- End each entry with a period.

Here are a few basic examples: again, your online reference guide has full details on your Works Cited list.

One Author

List the last name first, followed by a comma, and then list the first name followed by a period.

Jones, Carl. *Long Ago, When we Were Young*. New York: Random, 2017.

Two or Three Authors

Reverse the name of only the first author if there are more than one.

Baxter, Martha B, and Winston F. Yount. *The Evils of Procrastination*. Toronto: Addison, 2009.

Same Author for Two or More Works

List the works alphabetically according to the first word of each

title. Write the author's name for only the first work. Use three hyphens and a period in place of the author's name for the second work. Give all other bibliographical information for each work, even if some of the information is the same.

Warren, Charles. "Keeping Up With the Jones's." *New York Times*. 4 Mar. 2004: A1, A20.

—. "Too Many Obstacles to Face." *New York Times*. 20 Feb. 1996: A11.

78. 7. Parenthetical Citations: Special Cases

Parenthetical Citations

Special Cases

No Author Listed

Give the first important word of the title. Underline, italicize or quote the title as appropriate. Note that it cannot be a word (such as the name of your topic) common to other titles on your Works Cited page; the reader has to be able to recognize your reference. Use several words if necessary.

The number of single-parent households is declining (“Modern Family” A17).

A quotation that your source has quoted

Identify in your sentence who actually said it or wrote it. Then in your citation use the phrase qtd. in.

Scott Merchant has recorded the deep dives of the leatherback turtle, and

Gives it “a tentative 400-foot lead” over the diving record of the sperm

Whale (qtd. in “Whale News” 14).

Mary Stone and Virginia Wilson say low self-esteem makes a woman “terrified of getting too close” (qtd. in Marjorim 259).

A magazine or newspaper article

Give the author if listed; if not, then give a brief form of the title of the article; add the page number. Do not give the title of the magazine or newspaper.

One approach is to analyze the Psalms for the richness of their poetic

Imagery (“Following Biblical Language” 842).

A work that has two or three authors

Give all the last names, joined by *and*.

“A B-type star is an object exhibiting neutral helium lines in its spectrum,

but no ionized helium lines” (Jones and Smith 136).

Synthesized marijuana is used to treat asthma and to control nausea during

Chemotherapy (Carey, Borden, and Miller78).

A work that has four or more authors.

Give the last name of the first author only, plus et al. (“and others”).

A group of environmental scientists argue that “perpetual Third World

Poverty is a luxury that the prosperous can no longer afford”

(Earnhart et al. 104).

Two or more works by the same author.

Give the author’s name, a brief version of the title, and the page number.

Men and women have different purposes while engaging in conversation

(Thompson, *People Don’t Care Anymore* 77).

79. 8. Using Sentences Effectively

A sentence is a basic concept: it includes a subject, a verb and a complete thought. Simple stuff.

A sentence can be very simple: “*John ran.*” Or, it can be very complex: “*John ran to the store when he finished working in the yard because he was thirsty and needed something to drink.*”

The first sentence has a subject, “John,” a verb, “ran,” and is a complete thought: What did John do today? John ran. Sure you might want to add more info to make the thought easier to comprehend, but it’s still a complete thought. “When John ran,” would be considered an incomplete thought because we need more information.

The second sentence has the same verb structure: “John ran,” but it includes a whole lot more– “he finished” is a subject/verb; “he was thirsty and needed” is another. But only “he ran” is the main idea of this sentence. Main ideas are the parts of the sentence that can stand alone. As we already said, “John ran” can be a sentence by itself. But “when he was finished” is an incomplete thought, as is “because he was thirsty.”

Sentences that can stand by themselves are considered “coordinating structures.” That means they are main ideas that do not need more information to be grammatically correct. “I ran to the store, and I bought a six-pack of Pepsi,” has two main ideas. The connecting words (and, but, so, for, or, nor, and yet) connect main ideas in a sentence. You never want to have more than two main ideas in a sentence: “John went to the store, and he bought a six-pack, so he was happy.”

Other parts of the sentence that add additional information but cannot stand by themselves are called “subordinate structures.” This means they would be fragments if left to themselves. “When John

went to the store, he bought some soda.” Now, “he bought some soda” has become the main idea while “When John went to the store” is less important or subordinate. This is a good tool for emphasizing one idea over another in a sentence.

I’d like to break sentences into three categories, loose, periodic and balanced:

- Loose sentences begin with the main idea: “Gary and Susan drove to Portland for their vacation.” *Gary and Susan* is the subject, *drove* is the verb. They are placed at the beginning of the sentence. “Tom waited for the rain to stop before heading out into the woods.” This begins with the subject verb and then adds some additional information. It is important that most of your sentences begin with subject/verb structures. They are the most important part of the sentence and push the reader into the rest of the sentence.
- Periodic sentences begin with less important information and lead up to the main idea (subject/verb). “When Gary and Susan drove to Portland, they decided to stay at Ramada Inn.” Gary and Susan is still a subject in the sentence, but with the word “when” attached, it becomes subordinate. The main idea of the sentence now becomes “they decided...” Periodicity slows reading down. Readers are looking for main ideas, and when they are buried in the middle of the sentence, it is harder to find them. Use periodicity sparingly, one or two times per paragraph at the most.
- Balanced sentences have two main ideas: “Gary wanted to go to Portland, but Susan thought Bangor would be better.” This has two main ideas connected with one of those seven words listed earlier that identify main ideas. You don’t want to have too many balanced sentences, because main ideas will battle one another for superiority in a sentence, and your reader will become confused.

Of course there is a lot more to know about sentences than this. Your grammar book has some detailed information on how to write effective sentences. Check specifically sections 19 and 20 for some more information on what I've just summarized. I also have a practices for you in the Written Assignment area to practice.

80. 9. Writing Effective Sentences

Writing Effective Sentences – Due: Nov. 5

Sometimes the practice of using longer sentence can help strengthen our ability to write short, clear sentences. Try to combine the following sets of shorter sentences into one clear sentence using all the information given. Remember coordination and subordination. Remember to keep them as easy to understand as possible. What do you want to be the most important idea (subject-verb) in each sentence?

8I. 10. Written Assignment: Classification Essay

Written Assignment, Classification Essay – Due: Nov. 10

Classification Essay

For this essay, you will be categorizing related items, placing them into three or four groups with sub-groups representing specific examples.

If you remember, comparison/contrast focused on two specific items (Mr. Smith vs. Ms. Jones, two teachers). Everything in the essay developed an understanding of those two teachers: their habits, their techniques and their personality, for instance. The classification takes a step back and puts the two teachers into groups of many teachers.

For instance, let's say you recognize three distinct types of teachers:

- The lecturer;
- The discussion leader;
- The textbook reader.

Mr. Smith might be a textbook reader. In your comparison essay, you looked at him in great detail as he read from the textbook day after day. Ms. Jones always directs the class in discussion, and you showed that thoroughly in your contrast.

For the classification, you would have a section on lecturers, with a definition of what you mean by lectures and some examples of lecturers; then you would have a section on discussion leaders (and Ms. Jones could be one example); finally, you would have a section on textbook readers (ala Mr. Smith).

Remember, you need some kind of connection between the categories. Do you want to look at teachers based on their teaching methods or based on their subject matter or based on their

appearance, for instance. The fish example looked at types of fish based on their food habits or based on where they lived or based on what anglers were looking for: that would be three separate essays on one topic.

Your categories need examples for support. If you are doing types of players in soccer, you couldn't use goalies as a category. The goalie is the goalie. You could have offensive category, a defensive category and a swing category (both offensive and defensive), I suppose. Then wings and centers could be examples of offensive players, Fullbacks and goalies as the defenders.

Try to use three categories. Two tends to look like comparison/contrast. More than three gets more and more difficult to develop with specific support.

You can use research for this assignment if you like (research is mandatory for the next assignment- the argumentative).

Remember to analyze those rough drafts. I really need to see that you are considering all the ideas we have formulated about critical thinking. Good luck.

Grading summary

Participants	11
Submitted	0
Needs grading	0
Due date	Monday, 5 April 2010, 3:25 PM
Time remaining	Assignment is due
Late submissions	Only allowed for participants who have been granted an extension

82. 11. Journal Entries for Module 6

Journal entries for Module 6; due by Nov. 12

You are required to write a minimum of three entries for this module. Again, you are writing open entries for this module, but I will give a few new ideas for those having trouble with topics:

- Acquiring Experience and Knowledge
 - Learning to drive a car
 - Lessons I have taken
 - An experience that taught me something important
 - Something I've learned to do very well.
 - Information I need to gather in order to make a wise choice about something I wish to buy or do
 - An experience I have had that others could learn from.
 - A teacher, coach or boss who motivated me to learn.
 - An accomplishment or award I worked hard to achieve.
-

Grading summary

Participants	11
Submitted	0
Needs grading	0
Due date	Monday, 5 April 2010, 3:25 PM
Time remaining	Assignment is due
Late submissions	Only allowed for participants who have been granted an extension

83. 12. Instructions for Discussion

You may want to print this document out.

Your next task will be to participate in an online discussion. This document provides instructions on how to initiate and respond to discussions. You can also return to the Tutorial for a “refresher.”

A “**discussion thread**” is started each time you submit a discussion item. Each response to the original question is indented once – a response to a response is indented a second time – etc. This system of indents helps us determine which responses go together. By using the “collapse” and “expand,” , and “next” or “previous” document menu options in the navigational bar of the course, or by using the “collapse” and “expand” “twisties,” you can follow the give and take of a **threaded discussion** – the web equivalent of a classroom discussion.

Responding to the main item

To compose your response to a main discussion item you are reading, click on the “Respond” link located at the bottom of that page. In the form, title your response in the Subject field and then respond in the boxed area. A good title tells something of the nature of your personal response. “Response to Discussion 1” is not a very useful title, particularly if everyone in your course uses the same one.

Responding to someone else’s response

If you are already reading someone else’s response document, click on the “Respond” link located at the bottom of that page to respond **to that response**. *Make sure that you respond **on the document intended** so that your contribution will line up in the threaded discussion in the right place.*

Submitting your response

When you have completed your response, click the “Submit” button at the bottom of the page.

Correcting your response

If you discover an error in your document after you submit it, a misspelled word or an incomplete thought, you can “Edit” your document. The **Edit** button appears at the top of your document after you submit it the first time. When you have finished your edits, click the submit button at the bottom of the page.

Quality discussion responses

Responses such as: “I agree,” “Good question” or “Good answer” / Any response that is just an opinion, or is unsubstantiated / any response that is carelessly typed, poorly thought-out, grammatically incorrect or confusing / any response that is disrespectful of another student or any other person, etc., **are not acceptable.** A **high quality response** contains information from the textbook or other valid source, or applies a concept from the text or course in a meaningful way, or facilitates understanding of the course material or topic. Please review information in the Course Information area of the course for guidelines and specific information on how you will be evaluated on your participation in “Course Discussions.”

Netiquette

As discussion is of a public nature, please observe proper “netiquette” – courteous and appropriate forms of communication and interaction over the Internet (in online discussions). This means no personal attacks, obscene language, or intolerant expression. All viewpoints should be respected.

84. 13. Argumentative Discussion

Argumentative Discussion. Start: Oct. 30; End: Nov. 12

Hopefully by now you have decided on an argument that is of interest to you, one that you will be able to do some research on. If not, then now is the time to start. For this discussion, I would like each of you to share information about one of the sources that you have found for your research (meaning, you have to go out and find one now, if you haven't already).

First of all, tell us what your argument is: what is the focus, and what side of the argument are you choosing? For instance, if you're writing about gun control, are you for or against gun control? Next, tell us about one source you have found about this topic. What is the name of the source, the author, what kind of source (magazine, text, Internet) and how you found it. Then give a brief description of what information might be useful in the source for your paper.

For responses, share your ideas about your classmates' sources. Do you think they sound valid for the topic described? Do you know of any other possible sources your classmate might look up? Did you have similar problems locating sources? Let's start a lively discussion on how useful researched material can be in expanding our knowledge. Good luck.

85. Submitting In-Class Essay

#2

Choose one of the following topics and write a well-developed essay. Remember to keep organization and coherence in mind, as well.

1. Students preparing to enter college have some major choices to make. One of those is the kind of college they will be attending: a two-year community college or a four-year university.

What advantages do you see in attending a two-year school such as Clinton Community College?

2. All students are expected to behave with academic honesty. In other words, they're not expected to cheat on homework, tests or other assignments. And yet, of course, some students do cheat.

What do you feel should be the penalty for such an offense?

Explain

3. People in many parts of the world would be very grateful for the right to vote for their government leaders. In this country, though, only about half of those who can vote actually do, even in a presidential election.

Why do so many Americans not vote?

4. A recent editorial in the Plattsburgh Press-Republican expressed concern that local residents are dumping garbage in public places, spoiling the beauty along highways, hiking trails and beaches in order to avoid paying landfill charges.

What remedies can you suggest for correcting the problem of irresponsible and illegal dumping in this beautiful area?

5. Being a college student isn't always easy, and, in fact,

sometimes it's a real challenge. However, being a college student also has its rewards.

Based on your experience, what would you say are the best aspects of being a student?

Grading summary

Participants	11
Submitted	0
Needs grading	0
Due date	Friday, 17 November 2017, 11:55 PM
Time remaining	129 days 5 hours

PART IX

7. ARGUMENT/RESEARCH

86. 1. What's Due When

Module Overview: A thorough look at argumentative writing, tying it into the research project. A brief discussion on paragraphing and on logical fallacies in argument.

Module Learning Objectives: To learn how to write a successful argument with researched support and to write that essay effectively. To use paragraphs in a manner that supports audience understanding. To use logic in argument.

Readings: Argumentative Writing from online handbook:

<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/englishcomp1v2xmaster/>

Due Date: Nov. 16

Assignments: Identifying logical fallacies; Argumentative Essay with Research; Final journal entries.

Due Date: Nov. 21 (Fallacies); Dec. 5 (Essay); by Dec. 7 (Journal Entries).

Discussions: Political discourse.

Start Date: Nov. 11

End Date: Dec. 7

87. 2. Argumentative Writing

As we have discussed already, argument requires discussion of two (or more) opposing ideas. It doesn't mean bashing your opponent because he/she has differing views. A successful argument leads somewhere: there is compromise, agreement, resolution. Today, too often, argument leads no where. Both sides are stagnant and nothing is accomplished. Can you think of any cases where common arguments seem to be going no where?

I like to think that argument can be designed to convince an audience that your side of the issue is the best side. Then, with popular opinion behind you, your argument can gain strength and perhaps convince your opponent to at least consider some kind of compromise (moving toward resolution). Therefore, I like to use traditional argumentative format, an organization technique that has been used for thousands of years (though not so much, anymore, it seems, with the weaknesses in today's modern argument). I will outline the traditional format below. I suggest you use it in whole or in part to help ensure that you are open-minded yet assertive in your convictions that your side of the argument is the right side.

Introduction

- *Exordium*: This is the section of your introduction that first grabs your readers' attention. Think about speeches. How do they often begin? The speaker will often use some kind of joke to attract the listeners before moving into the topic of the speech. Although this doesn't work well for serious argument (I wouldn't start an essay on the moral issues of euthanasia with a joke), there are many things you can do in the opening to attract the attention of your reader. Some kind of intriguing story related to the topic (a summary of a specific case on euthanasia), or some personal background showing that you have a vested interest in the topic: you care. This should not be

a long section, perhaps one paragraph giving the reader a glimpse into the humanity of the topic and the writer.

- **Exposition:** You are the expert on this topic (you've done the research and experienced the situation). But your reader may not have a strong background. You need to take a moment (or paragraph) to define important issues- give background on what the topic is and why it's important for the reader. Inform the reader with a brief statement of backgrounds. Again, this should not be overly long- a paragraph, again, will suffice.
- **Thesis:** A lot of times, separating a thesis from the rest of the opening can emphasize what direction the paper is going in. Whatever the case, you need to identify early what side of the argument you are on: *Euthanasia is a process that goes against the moral fibers of society and should not be allowed in a civilized world* (your reader clearly identifies with what you are writing about. Make it clear- you support a specific side. If your thesis is "wishy-washy" then your argument will be as well.
- **Plan of Proof:** You've just given an extended introduction (remember, most of your other intros have been one short paragraph). It might be a good idea to have a "transitional" paragraph, leading your reader into the text of your paper. To do this, you could use a plan of proof- how you plan to go about proving what you say is valid. It's kind of an extended essay map, looking at how the essay is organized. It helps the reader decide (hopefully) that something worthwhile will be included in this essay.

Body

- **Confirmation:** This is the bulk of your essay. The reasons why you feel you have a strong argument. You need to have about

three valid reasons for supporting your argument. Each of those reasons should be a separate paragraph in which you explain why you feel your side is right. For the euthanasia issue, one reason might be a religious connection: as humans, we answer to a higher being. Another might be scientific: where there's life there's hope, kinda thing. And a third might be legal: it's against the law. So each of those reasons would be a separate paragraph, with your thoughts and commentary, borrowed info from professional sources and data supporting what you say.

- **Refutation:** There is nothing stronger for weakening an opponent's argument than showing the weaknesses. Look at what your opponent is saying about the argument. What are his/her confirming points? Find weaknesses in logic, truth or validity in those statements and point them out in your essay. Show why you feel the opponent is wrong. Again, don't just make flat statements. Develop it into a paragraph or two proving that your opponent is wrong in his/her viewpoints. Don't argue against your opponent- argue against his/her viewpoint. It's not illegal in this country to disagree. But maybe it's not a good disagreement.
- **Concession:** Because your opponent is human and has probably considered his/her argument very thoroughly, chances are you cannot refute everything he/she says. One of the opponent's views on euthanasia is that patients often suffer during extended phases of terminal illness. It's pretty hard to refute that. If you try, you are giving your opponent strength. So concede. *"Yes, patients do suffer, as my opponent points out. But killing them is not the answer. We need stronger ways to control pain."* This will show that you are open-minded, that you have considered both sides of the argument, that you haven't just brushed your opponent's viewpoints aside. This is a strong tool in attracting the undecided reader. Be careful

though: if your concession is too strong, perhaps you are on the wrong side of the argument.

Conclusion

- **Recapitulation:** Perhaps you've noticed that this essay is probably going to be somewhat longer than the others. You may also remember that I've always tried to avoid using summary in short essays. A conclusion is much stronger, usually. Here, however, you may want to spend some time reviewing the strong points of your argument. If you've spent the past few paragraphs refuting your opponent's points or conceding one or two, then you need to return for a moment and remind your reader of the strong points for your argument in a brief summary.
- **Peroration:** Finally as for your reader's support. Chances are, your opponent will not be convinced that easily. But all those folks "on the fence" are dying to make the right choice. Ask them to help you by making the right choice and choosing your side. Writing to their legislators is a big concluding statement. Asking for votes, if in an election, is obvious. Asking for financial support is a biggie. But here, probably just asking your reader to consider your ideas and make the right choice will be sufficient.

You don't have to use this format verbatim. But please think about being open-minded, considering both sides of the argument, and being assertive in choosing your side. Remember how valuable additional support is in using research. Turn to the Instructions section of this module for information on the argumentative assignment. You can find additional information on argument at: <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/englishcomp1v2xmaster/>

88. 3. Using Logic in Argument

Logic can be a complicated concept, but the bottom line is simple: statements in your argument need to be valid and they need to make sense. Logical fallacies – or errors in reasoning – can weaken an argument and strengthen your opponent’s argument against you. Sometimes they can be hard to find, but with a little thought put into revising your paper, you can identify possible logical fallacies.

Although we could spend a semester discussing logic and logical fallacies, I’ve listed a few below and will also give you a practice in this module’s multi-part exercise.

- **Hasty generalizations:** Basing an argument on insufficient or unsupported evidence. Let’s say you go to McDonald’s on Cornelia Street, and they serve you cold french fries. If you start telling everyone McDonald’s serves cold french fries, you’ve used a hasty generalization. People often do that when telling others about products or services they received. If you go to a thousand McDonald’s and all of them served cold french fries (ugh), then you’d have something to argue about.
- ***Non sequitur* (it doesn’t follow):** Stating a conclusion that is not necessarily a logical result of the facts. If you see in the catalog of courses for the upcoming semester that Mel Gibson is teaching a course in acting, you might automatically think that would be a great course to take because of the teacher. Just because Gibson is an actor does not necessarily mean he will be a good teacher. Great baseball players don’t always make good coaches. You need proof of Mel’s teaching ability before you can say he’s a good teacher.
- ***Begging the question:*** Presenting as truth what is supposed to

be proven by the argument. Stating that your argument for a ban on violent video games is needed because video games cause violence is begging the question. It's not a proven fact until you show sufficient evidence to support that. Often, your facts need to be proven in argument.

- *Ad hominem (to the man)*: Attacking an opponent's character rather than the opponent's argument. Criticizing a political candidate because he or she is divorced or had a drinking problem in the past is not good logic. What is the candidate's record in serving the people? How is the candidate as a public servant? What is his/her platform? His/her personal life doesn't make for good argument (though we all try: look at President Trump, for example).
- *Distraction*: Drawing the reader's attention away from the issue with unrelated information. You argue that there are too many commercials in today's television programming. You point out that televisions today are crystal clear: the reception is so nice that you almost seem to be seeing things live. That has nothing to do with the argument but brightens the reader's perception of the general topic. It's not good support.
- *False analogy*: Making a general statement based on a weak comparison. Look closely at your use of metaphors (comparisons). Make sure the two items are similar. People should ignore the smoking ban in restaurants and bars because they ignore the ban on using cell phones while driving. Two separate issues that are enforced differently. It weakens an argument.
- *Either/or fallacy*: Trying to convince your reader that there are only two sides to an issue, one right, one wrong. Seldom are arguments this clear. If they were, there would be no argument. The whole issue used recently that people in

America who didn't support the war on Iraq were un-American is a prime example of either/or. Many forgot the issue that Americans have a right to voice their opinion. Logic was thrown out the window, mainly because of emotional impact.

- *False premise*: Making an assumption that is not true. Everyone likes science fiction movies, so everyone should go see "Star Wars." Lots of people, obviously don't like science fiction. A better argument would be to look at how "Star Wars" has qualities that will attract both science fiction fans and people who don't like science fiction.
- *Name calling and genetic fallacy*: Using terminology to invoke an emotional response. I once had a student write about gun control (she opposed it). In her very first paragraph, she used the term "bleeding-heart liberals." Right away, she's strengthened her argument with those who support her but has lost all who oppose her and created a sense of doubt in the main audience, those undecided. Don't call people names. The old argument that Billy is bad because his dad spent time in prison is the prime example of genetic fallacy.
- *Appeal to ignorance*: Arguing that one thing is true because its opposite has not been proven true. The old argument at election time: voting for one candidate because the other candidate has nothing of value. That is such a weak statement of our political system. We need to have reasons for voting for a candidate, not for voting against another candidate.

Again, this is a brief look at a very complex idea. Study logical fallacies (look it up in your search engines). But most importantly, think about what your opponent's reaction is going to be to every statement of fact you make in argument. Don't give your opponent ammunition for his/her argument.

89. 4. Argumentative Essay Sample

Thanksgiving is truly one of those few special times we have to emphasize the importance of family. However, too many people in this hurried day and age are just way too busy to focus on giving extra time to their loved ones. They would much rather focus on their careers and other personal endeavors rather than spending a few traditional moments with the family. If nothing else can help bring the family back together, at least families should have their Thanksgiving family meal at the dinner table.

For one thing, a traditional sit-down meal enhances the significance of the meaning of Thanksgiving. The holiday has its roots embedded in the early years of the nation when settlers and natives were trying to find ways to live among one another peacefully. Sharing the autumn harvest was one way to trade weapons for forks and spoon and to share values and believes that they found to be not that uncommon. Using the traditional Thanksgiving setting today can promote those same kinds of values and believes, even within family members themselves. For my family, we seldom have time devoted to sitting down and sharing daily thoughts, but the Thanksgiving dinner provides that option. It reminds us of when the kids were young and we were always close and dependent upon one another.

According to Sarah Klein, contributor for Health.com website, eating with the family can reduce the stress that often adds burdens to people's lives (Sec 8). I believe this is a really good idea. **In a 2008 research conducted by Brigham Young University, "sitting down to a family meal helped working moms reduce the tension and strain from long hours at the office," (Sec. 8).**

Sitting down to an extended Thanksgiving dinner provides family members with a chance to "Catch up" with everyone's current

activities. Siblings and parents often go days and even weeks without talking with one another. Having everyone face-to-face, especially with the extended layout of the Thanksgiving feast, forces members to talk with one another (otherwise they will suffer from the potential “over-stuffed belly” when eating the tasty fare too quickly). Family members who live away from home will be able to bring their loved ones up to date on issues in a way they just can’t do over the phone or via social media. And even kids who live at home will have a special opportunity to sit face-to-face with a mom and dad or siblings they may not have seen for more than a minute or two in the last month. Oftentimes, family members will use the holiday occasion to announce wedding engagements, job promotions or even the soon-to-arrive new member to the family.

“Eating alone can be alienating,” said Cody Delistraty in an article published online by The Atlantic. “The dinner table can act as a unifier, a place of community. Sharing a meal is an excuse to catch up and talk, one of the few times where people are happy to put aside their work. (Sec. 3)

Perhaps most importantly, the traditional Thanksgiving dinner can help to promote family values that have been acquired over a lifetime. Families with a strong religious background may take this time to say Grace, something they may not have done since last Christmas or even Thanksgiving. Parents and grandparents often use the moment to share with their family words of love and appreciation prior to kicking off the meal. And when chow-down time starts, the meal itself provides a wonderful opportunity for members to practice good manners and etiquette. How else are they going to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to taste the cranberry sauce, green bean casserole, oyster stuffing and other sides that make the meal so special. It also helps to enhance the experience of enjoying the wonderful food when everyone waits to dig in until everyone is served.

According to an article published online by Cornell Cooperative Extension, mealtime is one of the most significant opportunities for children to talk with their parents. The article suggests that

parents turn off the TV and cell phones and to ask children about their daily activities (4).

Oftentimes, families feel a little hesitant to provide a traditional Thanksgiving dinner if loved ones don't share the same viewpoints, such as when someone in the family is a vegetarian. Rather than forfeit the entire concept of Thanksgiving dinner, why not use this situation as a positive. Allow the vegetarian to provide a special dish to replace the turkey and other meat-based foods. Not only will that express how important this is to the family member, it will also allow other family members to "test" the uncommon dishes. If a few more members suddenly decide to try vegetarianism, that would not be a bad thing for our world in general. Most importantly, it will show how true love among family members provides for acceptance of differing views and values.

Health.com also promotes the nutritional value of eating dinners as a family. Children who eat at the table ate more fruits and vegetables and less soda and fried foods. The setting also provides an opportunity for "discussions of nutrition and provision of healthful foods," said Matthew W. Gillman, MD, (Klein, as quoted in Sec. 2).

Other people argue that such an archaic tradition as the Thanksgiving dinner does not promote individuality. I feel the opposite is true: seclusion, if everyone goes off and eats on his and her own time schedule, does nothing to promote individuality. Individuality is best highlighted among large groups of people. If ten people with tattoos get together to share their freedom of bodily expression, then there is little individuality involved in their gathering. But when they share their body artwork with one hundred tattoo-less people, they really do make a strong statement. If the family does not meet at the table for dinner, there is no audience to recognize the individual traits of each family member.

Sure, there are going to be cases when family members cannot attend the traditional Thanksgiving dinner. Some may have to work on that day (with the increase in holiday shopping on the holidays, for instance), and some may not be able to travel back home from

their current location. But we can't let those kinds of setbacks hurt the true meaning of family gatherings. A phone call during the height of the meal to someone who wasn't able to make it may make that loved-one's day just a little more bearable, especially with the promise that everyone will try to get together at the next big holiday to repeat the wonderful time they've had today.

A traditional meal can help to enhance the traditional holiday while offering families a chance to catch up with one another. It also acts as an opportunity for family members to emphasize their own personal values. Eating at the table may make the holiday that much more special. If you've ever experienced a time away from family during important events, then you know how important it is to take advantage of what few family opportunities we have available during these busy times.

Works Cited

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Delistraty, Cody, "The Importance of Eating Together," *The Atlantic*. July 18, 2014. Web.

Klein, Sarah, "8 Reasons to Make Time for Family Dinner." *Health.com*. Health Media Ventures, Inc. 2016. Web.

This is a simple topic- something most anyone has experienced. You don't need to choose a complex or controversial issue to write a solid argumentative essay. Take a stand and support that stand using the basic structure of argument. Please note that added research is boldfaced in the essay- it was added after the argument itself had been written.

90. 5. Argumentative Essay

Sample with Research

Here is another argumentative essay that uses research for support. For your assignment, you will have to include information from other sources.

Bugs Bunny's Glaring Weaknesses

Bugs Bunny has always been a favorite of mine. He is clever, cute and consistently comical. But there is one thing about Bugs that has annoyed me for decades: his negative reference to the medical community. Bugs Bunny should not be allowed to use the phrase, "Ahhhh, what's up Doc?" simply for a comedic response.

For one thing, the medical profession of late has taken a dramatic hit in public relations. While doctors' offices continue to struggle with meeting their financial obligations, the general public continues to misguidedly believe doctors are making more money than they can spend. When Bugs Bunny makes light of this profession, it only strengthens the public's negative viewpoints. It only adds to the ridicule that each doctor has to face every time a patient comes into the examination room. Can you imagine how distressing it would be for a hard-working professional to here "Ahhhh, what's up Doc?" every time he or she greets a new patient?

According to Bob Watson, professor of Unusual Sayings at Blockbuster University, the term "What's up Doc?" can be dangerously undermining. If used improperly, a doctor can begin to suppress inner resentment, which can become an unhealthy behavior, or – even worse – can resort to outward aggression toward the patient, Watson believes (49).

Also, the term itself suggests that doctors lack intelligence. It is obvious that the phrase is meant to identify the sarcastic personality of Bugs Bunny, but it also shows a lack of intelligent

communication. An educated rabbit would be more likely to state the phase in a manner appropriate with the situation: “Is there something wrong, Doctor?” Physicians spend a lot of time, money and effort into extensive educations to prepare them for the grinding career in health care. To suggest that they are illiterate buffoons is a disservice that must be halted.

Gordie Little has done extensive research on the correlation between doctor-patient relations. His efforts have shown that patients do lose their respect and trust when they believe their patients are unintelligent:

The matter of the fact is that doctors take a major beating when patients turn on them because of false understanding. When a patient’s trust is lost, that patient will become antagonist and hesitant to seek care from the physician any longer. (C7)

The misuse of language in medicine is another major problem with this phrase. By calling a physician “Doc,” we are using an inaccurate description, something that needs to be avoided at all costs. What would happen if a doctor misinterpreted a patient’s illness or prescribed the wrong prescription medication? Obviously, that doctor would be sued for malpractice. Using phrases like “What’s up Doc?” only lead to increased malpractice costs, which in turn lead to increased fees for patients. Perhaps some of these physicians should start to turn the tables and deliver some lawsuits to Bugs Bunny himself.

Allister Maclean said it best when he noted that the term “Doc” is as negative in context to a professional health-care provider as racial slurs are when referring to minorities. “I’m not convinced that Bugs Bunny is the right person to suggest that doctors are simply morons who deserve no better than half a title,” (322).

Opponents will argue that Bugs Bunny should be left alone, that he is an intelligent creature is using a clever twist of words to create a political statement. This is a ridiculous perspective. There is no political statement behind the phrase whatsoever. It is simply

a cheap way to get a quick laugh from the audience, who fall under the charm of Bugs Bunny and don't realize they have become a part of this atrocity. We only too often use the argument of "political satire" to justify inexcusable mistakes. Bugs Bunny should have been reprimanded the first time he used the phrase and fired if he continued to use it. It's poor taste, not the clever wording of an intelligent creature.

Others will say that Bugs is expressing freedom of speech. This is true, and I am the first person to accept that freedom of speech is one of our most important rights in this nation. But there is also a sense of decency involved here. I am not allowed by law to yell "Fire" in a movie theater simply because I want to evoke a reaction from the audience. But it is also common sense: I know I should not say it. Bugs should recognize that as well and find another, equally humorous phrase.

The last thing I would want to see happen is Bugs Bunny stepping down and refusing to do any more work. He is, after all, one of the greatest actors of our or any other time. But if Bugs cannot make some ethical adjustments to his act, then maybe it is best for all to remember the good things about Bugs and forget about his poor choice of language.

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91. 6. Paragraphs in Essays

Paragraphing will differ with every type of writing you use. In the expository essay, paragraphs are generally well-developed statements, at least seven sentences long. But they can vary greatly. Remember the basic rule: a paragraph represents an individual idea. But beyond that, you as the writer have a lot to do with what constitutes an individual idea. Try to think in terms of helping your reader understand the info you are providing. In essays, a bunch of short paragraphs can be somewhat distracting for an audience that wants lots of explanation. In other types of writing, short paragraphs are a blessing for people who want to finish reading quickly.

I've always been a supportive of the basic essay format: an introduction; a body; and a conclusion. The introduction and conclusion, I feel, need to be succinct- to the point. So they are generally shorter than other paragraphs. The body, I feel, is more successful with an adequate amount of support. As I've said many times, three paragraphs of support seems to be sufficient. If each paragraph is seven to ten sentences long, then a standard essay would be about 1 1/2 pages long. Of course I don't like counting words, so I obviously am not in support of counting sentences and paragraphs. But make sure each section in your essay (a paragraph is a section) is developed to a point that will help your reader understand and feel satisfied with the information.

The following excerpt is from a novel written by Charles Dickens. It is actually several paragraphs long, but I've written it as one large paragraph. See if you can decide where the paragraphs should be placed, and why.

It touches me nearly now, although I tell it lightly, to recollect how eager I was to leave my happy home; to think how little I suspected what I did leave for ever. I am glad to recollect that when the carrier's cart was at the gate, and my mother stood there kissing me, a grateful

fondness for her and for the old place I had never turned my back upon before, made me cry. I am glad to know that my mother cried, too, and that I felt her heart beat against mine. I am glad to recollect that, when the carrier began to move, my mother ran out at the gate, and called to him to stop, that she might kiss me once more. I am glad to dwell upon the earnestness and love with which she lifted up her face to mine, and did so. As we left her standing in the road, Mr. Murdstone came up to where she was, and seemed to expostulate with her for being so moved. I was looking back round the awning of the cart, and wondered what business it was of his. Peggotty, who was also looking back on the other side, seemed anything but satisfied; as the face he brought back into the cart denoted. I saw looking at Peggoty for some time, in a reverie on this strange case; whether, if she were employed to lose me like the boy in the fairy tale, I should be able to track my way home again by the buttons she would shed.

Of course, this is a narrative sample. We learned way back that narrative essays will usually have shorter paragraphs, but still, there needs to be logic behind where they should be. I will let you know, shortly, where Lewis had his paragraph breaks. See how close you were to what he wanted. Differing doesn't make you wrong though, as long as you have a reason for the break.

92. 7. Research: Tying it All Together

We have been spending the semester looking at all the different rules and regulations regarding researched writing. Now it is time to put all that to use. You need to incorporate research into your argumentative paper. You need to show your reader (me, in this case) that you have found valid evidence from other sources. That means you have to have proper parenthetical citations for borrowed ideas and information (not general knowledge), and you have to have a solid Works Cited page that corresponds with the citations. I will be checking on sources, so make sure they are accurate, that I can find them. If I can't, you haven't done the Works Cited accurately.

93. 8. Review of Research Requirements (from Module 2)

An important component to this course is researched writing. Although you can use research for just about any essay you write, you will be required to use research for your final out-of-class essay, the Argument. The argumentative essay requires you to take a stand on an issue and show why that is the right choice. You use a lot of your own ideas and opinions, but you can strengthen your point by using good research, information borrowed from others.

Research is an important skill, one that you will use regularly in school and possibly well beyond. It does not have to be a scary concept. It should be something you find rewarding and beneficial. It's an opportunity to grow, to learn, to borrow other people's ideas and use them for your own needs. If done correctly, and can be a big aid. If done incorrectly, and can lead to many problems.

We will be going over many aspects of researched writing over the next few weeks. Although the required assignment is not due until near the end of the semester, I'd like you to start working with research and understanding how it works. We will cover a lot of the ideas that may sound a little confusing right now, but I will list for you the requirements for your research project:

- MLA format- I will require that you use MLA format for your argumentative paper (and other papers that you may choose to use research in). We will go over a lot of the rules governing MLA, but the handbook will be a valuable source for you.
- Number of sources- you will be required to use three borrowed sources. I need to see evidence that you know how

to use research to support your ideas, and a minimum of three sources will help me evaluate how you've done.

- Text source- I'd like you to use one source from the library. The library certainly has changed its format in the past several years. A library source can be the traditional text you find on the shelves, but a lot of books can now also be found in on-line databases. Either way, you can still find a lot of support from librarians, who can point you in either direction. I just want to make sure you understand the difference between databases and Internet web sites. We will talk lots more about this as we go along.
- Periodical- I would like one source to be a periodical (magazine, newspaper, journal). Periodicals provide up-to-date information, which is very important in today's always-changing world.
- Open source- the third source can be anything, including a personal interview or an on-line source. We will talk more about this, but you must be careful when choosing Internet sources. Some are great. Some are weak. You need to know where the information you are borrowing comes from.
- Works Cited- I will require you to use a Works Cited Page. We will go over this thoroughly, but I need to see proof that you borrowed the info from specific sources. The citations in your text have to match your Works Cited Page.
- Length- there is no specific length requirements for this paper, but it probably will be longer than your average essay. You've got not only your ideas but borrowed sources as well. That's why I want you to pick a topic that you have an interest in. Choose an argument because it's caught your attention, not because it might have lots of information.

Again, we will be going over this concept regularly over the next several weeks. I look at researched writing as a process and will help you examine the several steps involved in that process. I just wanted to introduce the concept so you can begin thinking about it even now.

94. 9. Using Logic in Argument

Using Logic in Argument – Due: Nov. 21

Read each of the following statements and then explain the logical fallacy in each. Don't just list the logical fallacy; explain why you believe it is the fallacy you've chosen. The answers come from the mini-lecture on logical fallacies.

95. 10. Written Assignment: Argumentative Essay with Research

Due: Dec. 5

Argumentative Writing

Argumentative writing is perhaps one of the most significant forms of essay writing. Most of the final timed writing topics are argumentative: they lend themselves well to stating an opinion and supporting that opinion with valid evidence.

Argument is simple to define: two sides with opposing viewpoints come together to discuss those viewpoints and look for compromise or agreement. It's not battling one another and refusing to listen to the other's feelings, ideas. Argument should be used to move forward, not backwards.

For this assignment, you will pick an argument you have an interest in. Things like abortion, gun control, violence on TV are the obvious ones, but what about issues relevant to you: high costs of text books, parking regulations on campus, the noise ordinance downtown. Pick something you have an interest in and argue that it should/should not be allowed.

That is an important point: arguments generally begin with the premise that something should (should not) exist. Creating a thesis should include that kind of wording (City officials should not have a separate noise ordinance for college students living off campus).

A successful argument will be open-minded. You will consider both sides of the issue and show your reader that you support your side of the argument because of the issues, not because of emotional values. In your paper, look for the strengths of your argument: why do you believe that your side is the right side. Then

look for weaknesses in your opponent's viewpoints (brainstorming both sides of the issue may help) and clearly identify them in your paper. Finally, concession can be a strong ally. If your opponent has a minor point or two that can't be argued against, give your opponent credit. It should not hurt your strengths. If the concession is too strong, maybe you're arguing the wrong side.

Research is a valuable tool for this paper. As stated several times already, research is required for this assignment. I will be looking for additional sources and correct MLA format. Remember the requirements. Ask me if you don't.

Remember, if you want to do a revision on this paper after you've handed it in, you need to get it to me on time. The semester is winding down. Good luck, and pick a topic you can enjoy and appreciate.

Grading summary

Participants	11
Submitted	0
Needs grading	0
Due date	Monday, 5 April 2010, 3:25 PM
Time remaining	Assignment is due
Late submissions	Only allowed for participants who have been granted an extension

96. 11. Final Journal Entries

Final Journal Entries- Due by Dec. 7

I would like you to finish your journal writing with a flourish. You will have three entries due for this module. They are open entries, but I'd like them to be well-developed. Spend a little extra time on each. Think about specific support. Make it exciting for you. Again, if you're having problems with topics, refer to the past topics you may not have written about. Good luck.

Grading summary

Participants	11
Submitted	0
Needs grading	0
Due date	Monday, 5 April 2010, 3:25 PM
Time remaining	Assignment is due
Late submissions	Only allowed for participants who have been granted an extension

97. 12. Instructions for Discussions

You may want to print this document out.

Your next task will be to participate in an online discussion. This document provides instructions on how to initiate and respond to discussions. You can also return to the Tutorial for a “refresher.”

A “**discussion thread**” is started each time you submit a discussion item. Each response to the original question is indented once – a response to a response is indented a second time – etc. This system of indents helps us determine which responses go together. By using the “collapse” and “expand,” , and “next” or “previous” document menu options in the navigational bar of the course, or by using the “collapse” and “expand” “twisties,” you can follow the give and take of a **threaded discussion** – the web equivalent of a classroom discussion.

Responding to the main item

To compose your response to a main discussion item you are reading, click on the “Respond” link located at the bottom of that page. In the form, title your response in the Subject field and then respond in the boxed area. A good title tells something of the nature of your personal response. “Response to Discussion 1” is not a very useful title, particularly if everyone in your course uses the same one.

Responding to someone else’s response

If you are already reading someone else’s response document, click on the “Respond” link located at the bottom of that page to respond **to that response**. *Make sure that you respond **on the document intended** so that your contribution will line up in the threaded discussion in the right place.*

Submitting your response

When you have completed your response, click the “Submit” button at the bottom of the page.

Correcting your response

If you discover an error in your document after you submit it, a misspelled word or an incomplete thought, you can “Edit” your document. The **Edit** button appears at the top of your document after you submit it the first time. When you have finished your edits, click the submit button at the bottom of the page.

Quality discussion responses

Responses such as: “I agree.”, “Good question” or “Good answer” / Any response that is just an opinion, or is unsubstantiated / any response that is carelessly typed, poorly thought-out, grammatically incorrect or confusing / any response that is disrespectful of another student or any other person, etc., **are not acceptable.** A **high quality response** contains information from the textbook or other valid source, or applies a concept from the text or course in a meaningful way, or facilitates understanding of the course material or topic. Please review information in the Course Information area of the course for guidelines and specific information on how you will be evaluated on your participation in “Course Discussions.”

Netiquette

As discussion is of a public nature, please observe proper “netiquette” – courteous and appropriate forms of communication and interaction over the Internet (in online discussions). This means no personal attacks, obscene language, or intolerant expression. All viewpoints should be respected.

98. 13. Timed Writing Discussion

Timed-writing Discussion. Start: Nov. 11; End: Dec. 7

Let's look at a specific argument and talk about how we stand on the issues. Each semester, English 101 students are required to take a final in-class timed writing. This assignment is very important because it can have an impact on a student's overall grade. If a student fails this final timed writing, the student can do no better than a C for the course and may fail the course if the student has not done well on the other in-class essays as well. What do you think about this policy? Is it too stringent, or does it put enough emphasis on the importance of the final timed writing (like a final exam)? Talk about your viewpoints and discuss your classmates' perspectives as well.

PART X

8. REVIEW OF IN-CLASS WRITING

99. 1. What's Due When

Module Overview: A discussion of the importance of the Final Timed Writing. Practice grading essays based on the Grading Rubric.

Module Learning Objectives: Will understand the process of taking the final timed writing. Will know how to use a rubric-oriented grading process.

Discussions: Grading past timed writings.

Start Date: Nov. 21

End Date: Dec. 2

Argumentative revisions due by Dec. 12

100. 2. Final Timed Writing Information

As we have said earlier, the concluding activity for this course is the final timed-writing. Remember, you need to have passed one of the in-class writings to pass the course. You all know by now how you've done on your first two in-class essays, so you know where you stand for this one. Also, if you do not pass this final timed-writing, you can not receive a grade above C for the course. So I want to emphasize, again, the importance of this essay.

This is a departmentally administered timed writing, meaning that everyone taking English 101 will take the final. The final essays will be graded by two other instructors at the college. Using a rubric (which I will explain fully in the next section), they will determine if the paper is passing or falls short of what is expected of college students moving beyond English composition. If they can't agree, a third reader will be used to determine the quality of the paper.

You will have 50 minutes to plan, draft, revise, edit and produce a final copy. You will choose one of five prompts (questions). I have included in this module a sampling of past timed writing prompts. I would suggest you practice with some, boost your confidence that you can tackle this kind of assignment.

Use the tools we've discussed this semester. Make sure you have a clear thesis statement in an opening paragraph. Use a series of paragraphs (three is a good target) to develop your body. Make sure each paragraph has substantial specific evidence to prove what you are saying is valid. Have a strong concluding statement that will make your reader feel satisfied that this paper is thorough, clear and informative.

Following is a check-list of things to do during the exam:

- Read the prompt carefully. What are you being asked to write

about?

- Plan what you will say. Write a thesis statement and then plan the main points you will use to prove and support it. Then add details, examples, and specifics that will help explain each main point.
- Draft the paper. Include an introductory statement, body paragraphs and conclusion. REMEMBER TO PERIODICALLY SAVE YOUR DOCUMENT.
- Edit (proofread) your draft. Check for:
 - accurate word choice/phrasing
 - correct and effective sentence structure
 - correct very usage
 - correct use of pronouns
 - consistent point of view
 - appropriate punctuation
 - appropriate capitalization
 - correct spelling

Evaluators will be examining the following characteristics:

- Unity
 - a clear opening statement of the subject and point of your paper
 - all ideas and facts support that opening point
- Support
 - specific evidence and explanation
 - enough details to be convincing and to develop the thesis
- Coherence
 - organization is logical

- ideas are easy to follow
- transitions are used to connect ideas together
- the paper has a clear beginning, middle and end (intro, body, conclusion)

- Sentence skills

- grammar, spelling, typos, etc.

Move on to the next section for an explanation of the grading rubric.

101. 3. The Grading Rubric and What It Means

The following rubric will be used by graders to determine how successful your paper is. They will not use letter grades but will use numbers (4-1) to grade the essays. A 3-4 paper is passing; a 1-2 paper is failing. Graders judge your paper based on a holistic approach. In other words, a few grammatical errors won't fail the paper if it has good organization and support and coherence. They judge the entire essay.

Essays that receive a 3 or a 4 pass the final in-class essay test.

4 Exceeds An essay that *exceeds* the writing proficiency for English 101 has a clear thesis and fully develops and supports that thesis; is consistently organized, clear and unified; exhibits a mature, individual sense of style and indicates an ability to use vocabulary effectively; consistently indicates an excellent understanding of grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and sentence structure; and addresses the prompt.

3 Meets An essay that *meets* the writing proficiency for English 101 has a thesis and adequately supports that thesis; is generally organized, clear and unified; indicates a college-level command of vocabulary; indicates an understanding of grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and sentence structure; and addresses the prompt.

Essays that receive a 1 or a 2 fail the final in-class essay test.

2 Approaches An essay that *approaches* the writing proficiency for English 101 has one or more of the following weaknesses. It has a thesis but does not adequately develop or support it; is poorly organized, unclear or lacks unity; is awkward or immature,

indicating an inadequate command of vocabulary; has frequent problems with grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and sentence structure; or addresses a related topic, but does not directly address the prompt.

1 Fails An essay that *fails to meet* the writing proficiency for English 101 has one or more of the following weakness. It suggests a central idea but does not clearly or adequately support it; is poorly organized, unclear, and lacks unity; is awkward or immature, indicating a poor command of vocabulary; has significant problems with grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and sentence structure; or does not address the prompt.

102. 4. Examples of Past Timed Writing Prompts

Here are some examples of past timed-writing prompts. Notice how they are organized and written. Topics typically deal with current-event issues or concepts of interest to college students in school and the community. When you see this semester's prompts, take the time to decide which one you feel most confident and comfortable with.

1. In our society, it has always been understood that the parent's job is to teach a child right from wrong. Doing this successfully requires discipline, which in the past has included physical discipline (spanking, for instance) as well as verbal discipline. Today, however, many people believe that physical punishment should be legally and socially unacceptable.

Should parents have the right to discipline their child in a manner they feel suitable, or are some disciplinary measures inappropriate?

2. School extracurricular activities take place outside the traditional classroom setting and range from athletics and student government to clubs and social activities. In both high school and college, students are always encouraged to get involved in extracurricular activities.

What are some of the benefits of involvement in extracurricular activities?

3. Cell phones are a part of American culture. However, since no rules seem to cover the etiquette of using cell phones, some people find their use inappropriate. For example, a recent survey asked people when they felt the use of cell phones was appropriate. Results showed that fifty-three percent thought cell phone use was acceptable in the supermarket while six percent thought it was all right to use cell phones in a movie theater.

If you were put in charge of writing guidelines for using cell phones, what would you include and why?

4. Americans are bombarded by advertising. No matter where we go or what we do, it seems that advertising follows us. It's on TV, over the Internet and in the paper. It's on billboards and the sides of buses and even pasted on walls of empty buildings. Each day we are probably exposed to a thousand ads.

What kind of influence has advertising had on your life? Is it something that promotes you to buy products or turns you away from products?

5. Plagiarism is on the rise in America among high-school and college students as well as scholars and professionals. It seems that stealing someone else's ideas is the "easy way out" for many.

Why is there such an increase in plagiarism, especially among students?

1. Body piercing is a booming but largely unregulated business. Because of the dangers associated with piercing, ranging from life-threatening infections to damage to tooth enamel, some states are considering enacting laws requiring parental permission for anyone under 18 to have piercing done.

Would you agree that such laws would be a good idea, or would you oppose them? Why?

2. Clinton Community College received a visit this semester from the Middle States Accreditation Team, which looked at the strengths and weaknesses of the college community.

What recommendations would you make to most effectively improve CCC? Why would these recommendations be important to the future of the college?

3. Vending machines have become a principal source of extra money for school districts across the nation. However, with obesity and poor eating habits on the rise among the nation's elementary, middle and high-school students, the presence of these machines is being questioned.

What do you think? Should vending machines offering the usual candy, chips and soda be allowed in schools? Why or why not?

4. This year's Academy Award for Best Picture went to *A Beautiful Mind*. However, there was some controversy surrounding the decision based on the fact that the movie did not accurately portray the life of the person it was based on.

Should movies based on actual events or real people be factually accurate, or does Hollywood have the right to “fiddle” with the facts to make the stories more interesting for the audience?

5. With a recent earthquake causing considerable amounts of damage across the North Country, we were again reminded of the potential strength and fury of “Mother Nature.”

Describe a time you were faced with nature's power and explain what you learned from that experience.

1. Stress often seems to be a way of life for students: trying to keep up with homework, studying for midterms, getting started on that research project due in a week. Handling the stress can sometimes be just as important as doing the work.

What are some positive strategies you have for handling the pressures of being a student?

2. Currently under New York State law, a sixteen-year-old licensed driver is not allowed to drive after 9 p.m. unless accompanied by a parent or guardian who has a valid driver's license.

Do you support this law, or do you feel it's out of date and should be repealed, giving all drivers the same privileges? Why?

3. Life is full of opportunities. Some people take advantage of them and some people miss out on them.

Describe an opportunity that you took advantage of in your life or one that you missed out on. How did it affect you? How might it have changed your life?

4. Music has an impact on just about everybody. It has the power to soothe and to remove pain and stress from our lives. It also has the power to remind us of past events, both good and bad.

How does music affect your daily life?

5. Following the materialistic and hectic 1980s and 1990s, there has been a recent trend to simplify our lives. Magazines, writers and

lecturers offer advice for stripping away the extraneous and living better with less.

What suggestions would you offer to someone who would want to simplify his or her life?

103. 5. Instructions for Discussion

You may want to print this document out.

Your next task will be to participate in an online discussion. This document provides instructions on how to initiate and respond to discussions. You can also return to the Tutorial for a “refresher.”

A “**discussion thread**” is started each time you submit a discussion item. Each response to the original question is indented once – a response to a response is indented a second time – etc. This system of indents helps us determine which responses go together. By using the “collapse” and “expand,” , and “next” or “previous” document menu options in the navigational bar of the course, or by using the “collapse” and “expand” “twisties,” you can follow the give and take of a **threaded discussion** – the web equivalent of a classroom discussion.

Responding to the main item

To compose your response to a main discussion item you are reading, click on the “Respond” link located at the bottom of that page. In the form, title your response in the Subject field and then respond in the boxed area. A good title tells something of the nature of your personal response. “Response to Discussion 1” is not a very useful title, particularly if everyone in your course uses the same one.

Responding to someone else’s response

If you are already reading someone else’s response document, click on the “Respond” link located at the bottom of that page to respond **to that response**. *Make sure that you respond **on the document intended** so that your contribution will line up in the threaded discussion in the right place.*

Submitting your response

When you have completed your response, click the “Submit” button at the bottom of the page.

Correcting your response

If you discover an error in your document after you submit it, a misspelled word or an incomplete thought, you can “Edit” your document. The **Edit** button appears at the top of your document after you submit it the first time. When you have finished your edits, click the submit button at the bottom of the page.

Quality discussion responses

Responses such as: “I agree.”, “Good question” or “Good answer” / Any response that is just an opinion, or is unsubstantiated / any response that is carelessly typed, poorly thought-out, grammatically incorrect or confusing / any response that is disrespectful of another student or any other person, etc., **are not acceptable.** A **high quality response** contains information from the textbook or other valid source, or applies a concept from the text or course in a meaningful way, or facilitates understanding of the course material or topic. Please review information in the Course Information area of the course for guidelines and specific information on how you will be evaluated on your participation in “Course Discussions.”

Netiquette

As discussion is of a public nature, please observe proper “netiquette” – courteous and appropriate forms of communication and interaction over the Internet (in online discussions). This means no personal attacks, obscene language, or intolerant expression. All viewpoints should be respected.

104. 6. Timed Writing

Discussion 1

Discussion 1 Start: Nov. 21; End: Dec. 2

Read the following essay and then, using the rubric, grade it between 1 and 4, with four being the highest grade. Then, comment on why you gave it the grade. Read your classmates grades and comment on what they said about the essay.

In the past, young voters have been criticized for their lack of participation in the election process. This presidential primary season, however, they are turning out in record numbers. I think that younger people are more interested in government and I believe this because not only do they want certain things for themselves such as more PELL, but they also are starting their families and things such as health care means a lot to them. Another reason why I think young people are more involved these days is because whether one watched MTV or is just browsing MySpace, the election is all over.

As young people get older they begin thinking about things like college tuition, family, life outside high school and college. With today's economy, tuition is on the rise and it seems as though PELL and other forms of financial aid should be too. Well because this has been one of the focuses of the candidates, it gives the younger voters something that affects them directly to listen to. Also as many young people who don't attend college and go directly into the workforce, the talk of universal health care is appealing to many of the young people of today. I believe that the topics that politicians are addressing these days is a major factor in the increase of participation of young voters.

Another reason why I believe young people are paying more

attention to the campaigns of Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama and John McCain is because it's all over the media that young voters associate themselves with. While watching MTV the other day I saw numerous discussions of this November's election and when I went on to my MySpace account I noticed the same thing. Everywhere young voters turn there is something about the election staring them right in the face, making it a little hard to ignore.

After registering to vote in January of 2007 I never really thought that voting was such a big deal but the more I learn and the more I hear I know that come November I must vote. I believe that this is true not only for me but many of the young voters of the United States.

105. 7. Timed Writing

Discussion 2

Final Timed-Writing Discussion 2- Start: Nov. 21; End: Dec. 2

Here is another essay written for the final timed-writing. Read this one and grade it according to the rubric. Discuss your reasons. Comment on your classmates' observations.

American idol continues to roll on as one of the most popular television shows in years. People follow winners and losers on the show religiously. The talk about town the day after an episode is about who did or who did not make the cut. People around America get so into the show because it is like another drama show. I wouldn't say I am a fan of it but I do watch it from time to time.

American Idol is so popular because it is like another drama show. Americas love to be in people business so here is another chance for them to do so. One of the guys on the show name Simons is really mean to people without talent, the things he says to them makes people that are watching the television show laugh and want to see more or what to hear what he has to say next. Americans get caught in the show to see what happen next. They start to have a favorite singer and want to watch them to see how far they go. Some people in the United States get really upset if the person they pick to move on get knocked out. This is almost like a sport to people. Everyone has a favorite singer and wants to see them advance to the next round which is like the playoffs of sports.

A fan of American Idol I wouldn't call myself. I do watch the show here and there but not to much. From what was talked about in the first paragraph some of those reasons are why I watch the show. I don't really care all that much about the singer but what Simons says on the show is really funny. It isn't right what he says

to them but that is his job but this keeps the viewer wanting to hear more. I feel that this show is more for the ladies than the men because there is a lot of emotion in this show. I've have seen a few of my friends that are young ladies cry over one of there people getting booted off the show. From my point of view people get real close to a singer that they picked. The person wants to keep a close look out on their favorite singer.

American Idol is a good show and continues to roll as a popular television show. This show gets a lot of people attention in the United States. People love to see what happens next, be in other people business and more than most lost the drama of the show. People fighting with one another to get to the next round to caught a dream. This show is one of the top right now but it s a good show for many people. People of all ages can watch the show and you can learn that if you have a dream go out and get it. As being another American I can say I am not really a fan of the show. From here and there I will watch the show but will I wouldn't call myself a fan.

106. Submitting In-Class Essay 3

English 101: Departmentally-Evaluated Timed

Writing

Fall 2015

Choose one topic and write a well-developed essay. Make sure your paper is focused, supported, organized, and edited for correctness.

Put your Student I.D. Number, **not your name**, and your instructor's I.D. number, **not the instructor's name**, on the top of your paper.