

ENG 1101  
FIRST YEAR WRITING-OER  
INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES:  
Research Module on Gentrification  
**Preliminary Essay Assignment: Handout 1**

**ASSIGNMENT:**

In class we have discussed, debated, and read various aspects and viewpoints about gentrification in New York City. In this essay, you will consider the effects of gentrification in your own neighborhood. Your essay must have a thesis statement supported by three arguments/sections and must integrate three class resources. Your essay should also incorporate a variety of rhetorical modes. In class we've discussed: description, definition, narration, and presentation and rebuttal of the opposing view.

**THE WRITING TASK**

Write an essay that supports or stands against a **specific change** gentrification has brought to your neighborhood or another specific area of New York City with which you have personal connection. For this essay you must:

1. **Present a thesis statement** that takes a clear stance on a **specific change** of gentrification has brought. This might include the following changes we have discussed in class: better housing possibilities or displacement; school quality; amenities (better variety and quality or higher prices/exclusivity), population shifts). Your introductory paragraph statement should identify your **specific area** in New York City and goes beyond a general statement. Avoid statements such as gentrification is "good" or "bad" or has "caused a lot of problems/difficulties." *Examples of an appropriate thesis statements:*
  - In Williamsburg, Brooklyn, many long-time residents have been displaced due to rising costs of living in the past ten years. I believe this change has taken away the cultural personality of the neighborhood and replaced it with a sterile mix of chain stores that don't offer the same sense of community.
  - In Williamsburg, Brooklyn, gentrification has brought an influx of new businesses and stores that have improved the lives of long-term residents by offering easy access to healthier food choices and health clubs.
2. **Give context:** Describe your connection to this neighborhood. Describe the changes you have seen and how the aspect of change your thesis focuses on fits into the wider context.
3. **Have three arguments/sections that support your thesis statement** and incorporate different types of argumentative strategies. In class we've discussed: description, definition, narration, comparison and contrast, cause and effect, and presentation and rebuttal of the opposing view.
4. **Integrate three sources as identified below,**

**CLASS RESOURCES:**

You must integrate **three resources** into your paper.

1. One of the following three essays: Lance Freeman's essay, "Five Myths about Gentrification" **OR** "The Gentrification of Gotham" published on City Lab **OR** "Comptroller Examines Uneven Economic Growth in Gentrifying Neighborhoods" by Samar Kushid. These texts are all available through links on our class Open Lab site if you have last your copy. *Example of a transitional phrase:*
  - Lance Freeman's article "Five Myths about Gentrification," debunks the "myth" that all gentrifiers are white. My experience supports this. In Bed-Stuy, I have seen many examples of

young people of color returning to purchase brownstones or other buildings with a personal goal of revitalizing the neighborhood they lived in as children.

2. One of the following two videos: Stacey Sutton's *Ted Talk*, "What We Don't Know about Gentrification" **OR** one of Sharon Zukin's three short talks on gentrification on the *Big Think*.  
*Example of transitional phrase:*

- In her *TEDTalk* "What We Don't Know about Gentrification," Stacey Sutton suggests that even long term residents who stay end up feeling isolated because others have left or they are surrounded by businesses that may economically exclude them.
3. One point from our class debate, either as support for your topic or as a counterargument. You must be able to name one person in the class. *Example of transitional phrase:*
    - In our classroom debate about gentrification in English class at City Tech John Smith argued that gentrification has contributed to segregation of economic classes in New York City. While Smith's argument may appear true on the surface, I will counter this claim by stating that . .

### **GENERAL ESSAY STRUCTURE:**

While you will receive a planning sheet to jump off from when composing your ideas, your essay must demonstrate a clear understanding of the classic essay structure:

1. An opening paragraph introducing the topic and your thesis.
2. Three distinct sections, each with a clear, focused point of support for your thesis. Each section *may* include more than one paragraph.
3. A concluding paragraph that thoughtfully draws your already argued thesis and points of support together
4. Clear transitions to show the sequence of your thought and to show when you are transitioning between your ideas and the ideas of the author.

### **LENGTH REQUIREMENT:**

A very well written 2 1/4 page paper may qualify for a C.

A very well written 2 3/4 page paper may qualify for a B.

A very well written 3 1/4 page paper may qualify for an A.

Note: These page counts do not *guarantee* the above grade.



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