

ENG1121: English Composition 2

Unit 2: Inquiry-Based Research

So far, we've read (or will read) as *readers* the following short stories:

- "This Blessed House," by Jhumpa Lahiri
- "The Things They Carried," by Tim O'Brien
- "Miracle," by Oluwabusayo Temitope "Tope" Folarin
- "Everyday Use," by Alice Walker

And we've read (or will read) as *writers and researchers* the following pieces:

- "Navigating Genres," by Kerry Dirk
- "Navigating This Perfect Storm: Teaching Critical Reading in the Face of the Common Core State Standards, Fake News, and Google," by Ellen Carillo

We've discussed which discourse communities the characters belong to; some are part of a discourse community by choice, while others did not entirely choose their community. You've just turned in a study of personal discourse communities. Now, we'll be discussing the different genres of each reading and which audiences are best for each. You'll also be researching the background of any genre you prefer. **The project for Unit 2 has several steps. Please read this document carefully.**

Step 1: Choose Your Genre

Before you solidify the genre you want to explore for this project, do the following exercise:

1. Choose a genre you're interested in, since you'll be spending a lot of time researching and writing about this genre! (Think back to all the genres we've discussed in this class. Which ones catch your eye?)
2. Write for a few minutes about the genre: What do you know? Do some examples come to mind? What has been your personal experience with that genre?
3. After that, write for five minutes about the following: What are you curious about? What do you want to know more about? What did you wish you had more time to learn about? Why did you choose this genre? (Hint: If you can't write about it for the full five minutes, you should probably find another genre!)
4. When the time's up, spend ten minutes researching on the Internet to begin searching for answers.
5. When time's up, spend ten minutes summarizing what you learned.
6. Take five minutes writing new questions that have come up: What do you still want to know?
7. Brainstorm the keywords that you can use in your library search.

You need to decide on a genre by X

Once you've decided on a genre, find **five to ten** samples or examples of your genre. For example, you might choose open letters (letters written to be published, such as MLK's "Letter from a Birmingham Jail"), you would need to find five to ten letters by others. You can think about texts/genres from your academic major, workplace environments, popular culture, everyday life, etc. You can find these examples by using the Internet and the library's databases.

You must find a minimum of five samples by X

Step 2: Research

Once you've solidified the genre and found at least five samples, it's time to gather the evidence (otherwise known as research). Using the library's resources, conduct research about your genre. We will reflect on the following questions:

1. Why or how is this genre important in our society or in our lives?
2. Who are some of the most well-known people to have worked with this genre?
3. What discourse community is usually connected to this genre?

4. What is the history of this genre?
5. Is there a particular audience to whom this genre is typically directed?
6. What are the rules or forms of the genre?
7. Are there any well-known people who have produced in this genre? Why are they significant?
8. How have others responded to the genre OR to some of your example texts? (You can see if anyone has written a book, part of a book/chapter, newspaper/magazine articles, journal articles, etc. about some of your example texts.)

You must find a minimum of five sources by X

**You must include a Works Cited page for our *sources* on the genre
as well as cite the examples themselves.**

Step 3: General Analysis¹

By using your genre examples and the sources please write about the following:

1. What is the main message of these samples/examples?
2. Do they all have the same kind of message?
1. Are there particular constraints that are associated with these examples? (For example, a haiku or sonnet have certain rules in order to be considered a haiku or sonnet.)
3. Who is the audience to whom these examples are directed?
4. Are there any significant differences between these examples and if so, why?
5. Is there a style, form, or format that all of the examples share in common?
6. Is there particular language that is common to all of the examples that you found?

Step 4: Focus

Choose **one** sample text from your various texts and analyze this text by answering these questions:

2. Who is the author or producer of this sample of your genre?
3. What is the message or goal of the text/example?
4. Who is the intended audience?
5. What kinds of constraints are involved? (For example, a haiku or sonnet have certain rules in order to be considered a haiku or sonnet.)
6. How is this text important to you, society, and/or other discourse communities?
7. What terms or concepts are most important in this example text?

**Your Rough Draft for the General and Focused Analysis is due X
Your Second Draft is due X**

Grading Criteria (each is on a scale from 1 to 20; 100 points possible)

Student shared the genre *clearly* and *informatively*

Student shared the *history* of the genre

Student shared *examples* and *analysis* of each example

Student shared unique *insight* into the process itself

Student summed up their *experience* with the project as a whole

¹ Note that though they are separate writing assignments, both are due on the same date!