

Unit 1 Assignments

Part One: Writing your narrative

I. Annotate “Mother Tongue”: due 9/5

We’ve done some annotations in class and here is your chance to practice! When annotating Tan’s text, first identify four details from the text you noticed and are interested in discussing (you may choose to focus on: a specific concrete detail; repetition or patterns in the text; setting; structure and organization or order of details; specific word/s or language). Say how each of the four details you identify makes a difference in or matters to Tan’s text.

Then, in 150-250 words, explain how Tan’s story relates to your own experience with education, and specifically with your experiences learning to read and write. Say what, specifically, about the story *does* relate you. And then say what *doesn’t* relate to you. What would you add to Tan’s story so that it more accurately reflects your own experience?

II. Describe a personal experience: due 9/11

In 250 words, write about one experience you had with reading or writing (in or out of the classroom) that you remember vividly. Describe the details of that moment or event. You don’t have to comment on why this event was important (that will come in the next step); focus here on using as much detail as possible, as well as the thoughts and feelings you had when you were experiencing the event.

III. Write your literacy narrative: due 9/18

Peer Review: due in class 9/16

Now, using the experience you chose to write about in the last step, write your literacy narrative (in 500-750 words). In your literacy narrative, you may choose to say how your personal experience shapes your relationship to reading and writing or impacts how you view school or education. Or you may choose to say how that particular experience reveals something good (or bad!) about the American education system. Be sure to use concrete examples of your personal experience when writing your narrative. Your job here is not to present solutions but rather to show how your experience enables you to understand something specific about reading, writing, or learning.

Part Two: Group Presentation: due 9/23

Group Presentation Prep: in class 9/18 (attendance is essential)

After reading, peer reviewing, and discussing each group member's literacy narrative, your task is to design a presentation about what we can learn based on your collective experiences and thoughts. You may use your group experiences and reflections to make an argument about what is good or bad with the current American education system—and then, what changes would you want to implement; what solutions can you imagine? Or you may want to share what conditions best facilitated and encouraged reading, writing, or learning, based on your group's lived experiences—or what conditions stifled creativity or hindered confidence with learning to read and write.

Your presentation should be 6-8 minutes long. Each member's voice should be heard in the presentation. As class time will be dedicated to preparing for the presentation, your ideas should be rehearsed and your points should be substantiated with details and evidence (how well you are prepared will be part of your grade!).

Grading Criteria:

In all parts of this assignment, you will be graded on: the detail you use to support your claims and statements (the more the better!); the comprehensibility of your ideas (punctuation, grammar, organization—if you choose not to use “academic English,” you should have a clear and articulated reason for that choice); your engagement with your group's ideas; whether you complete the assignments on time.