

**FIRST DAY HOMEWORK (50 POINTS POSSIBLE)****Day One Forms to Fill Out (40 pts.)**

The following Google Forms are your first assignments for your ENG 1101 course. Start the semester off right and be sure to complete them in a timely manner and following all directions.

Information Sheet (10 pts.): <https://forms.gle/G73GfxM5UnxFJYeD9>

10 Questions (30 pts.): <https://forms.gle/ktb6RfehMEMrHMgLA>

**Accept Google Drive Folder Invite**

Using the email address I collected on the first day of class, I will send you a link to a private Google Drive folder that only you and I can access. This is where you will submit all of your course work. You must accept access to this folder using a Google email address.

**Join Our Class OpenLab Page**

All course assignments and readings will be posted to our class OpenLab page. You must use your City Tech email address to join OpenLab and search for our page. There you will find copies of homework assignments (but not in-class assignments) and links to things we do.

**Read and Take Notes on “Why Good Students Do Bad in College” (10 pts.)**

You will need to read this article before class on Thursday, 8/29, and take notes on it that we will use to discuss in class. You will get credit for the quality of your notes. Be prepared.

## PERSONAL INVENTORY

Let's do a little self-exploration through writing. Who are you? What experience(s) have defined you? What are you good at? What is holding you back? What absorbs your complete attention? What are you interested in? How are you known among your family and friends? What is the horizon of your interests?

Most importantly, knowing that there are no shortcuts in life, how are you going to get to this horizon and beyond?

It is not enough to *\*think\** about these questions. You must answer them, in writing, and do so through rich detail. Doing this not only gives you direction for the work of this course, it also helps you become a more effective writer and communicator.

Why? Because excellent writers know themselves. They are their own first and best audience. They understand their own motivations, needs, desires, insecurities, strengths, weaknesses, *et cetera*. They do not let themselves be intimidated by who they are within themselves or within the world. Instead, they use their knowledge of their self(ves), in all the dimensions the multiple-self encompasses, as they create meaning and share that meaning with the world. It's how they connect to other selves and lead them forward.

If you haven't already, it's time to begin that work.

### Directions

Compose all of your responses into one MS Word document (.doc,.docx,.rtf only), formatted using single-spacing. Upload your assignment to Drive by Tuesday, September 29<sup>th</sup> before you come to class.

The following guidelines will help you produce a successful document:

**PART I.A**—Take some notes for your own reference first. This does not need to be included in the document. It is for your reference in case you are not comfortable jumping in and writing.

Write a list of 10 things on a separate piece of paper for *\*each\** of the following four categories:

1. What fascinates you that you always want to learn more about?
2. What do you want to accomplish in the next five years besides school?
3. What things that you do for your job, your schooling, your hobbies, and/or your professional ambitions that make you feel really good (i.e., give you "flow")?
4. What problem(s) are holding you back in your life currently?

In total, you will have 40 things in your notes across four categories. What you want to be sure of is that your 40 items are not just general words (e.g., love, sports, poetry, music, etc.). These will not help you complete and pass the assignment. You want to come up with complete thoughts. So, rather than writing, “I like guitars,” you would write, “I like to collect custom Japanese electric guitars” or “I want to be a djent guitar god who gets invited to demo the best equipment at NAMM.”

For example, for things that fascinate you, someone else might include:

- a. Browsing community websites like Reddit, Metafilter, or Quora to see how much drama other people have in their lives.
- b. Participating in the culture surrounding collecting and wearing “sneakers,” especially Takashi Murakami’s one-of-a-kind creations.
- c. Designing and soldering circuits to build my own electronic devices.
- d. Hacking Raspberry Pi boxes into custom containers, like old cell-phone cases.
- e. Following the #MeToo movement and cases of sexual harassment in media.
- f. Watching videos of people flying (and sometimes dying) using wingsuits.

**PART I.B**—Choose the five most interesting things from each category and develop a paragraph for each of them (20 paragraphs total). With each interest, be sure that your paragraph-long explanation conveys why it is interesting or relevant to you. A *well-written* five-to-seven sentence of explanation for each (approximately one average paragraph) is sufficient for an honor grade.

For example:

### **My Fascinations (Today, Anyway)**

Browsing community blog websites – I’ve always been a compulsive reader and enjoy learning about things through conversations by knowledgeable people. Reading community question-and-answer sites is one way to explore worlds that I don’t otherwise have access to. Whenever I’m bored, or overwhelmed with work, I check into these sites because I always learn something new. My favorites are Reddit, Metafilter, and Quora. I used to write on these sites, but that takes up a lot of time and so now I mostly just check in and read when I have a few minutes. I particularly like to read about “human relations” kinds of things because it shows me how other people deal with the messy drama in their lives and maybe I’ll learn something about avoiding it in my own.

Studying data visualizations – I’m a very visually-oriented person, but I have to struggle for every single bit of creative skill I’m able to acquire. I don’t learn well by watching videos, or listening. I have to have a visual system to read/study. Data visualizations are an example of how I learn best, and also what I wish I could do better. I really like visualizations that provide some level of meta-analysis of a subject. I can do simple information visualizations, but I lack the technical skills to do more complex ones and, more importantly, I lack the motivation to learn this. Instead, I like looking at and appreciating the hard work of others.

You will be required to think and maybe even look up words and ideas to articulate aspects about you well enough to cover a paragraph. If you don’t manage to complete the paragraph, you can’t earn full credit, so make writing each paragraph well a focus of your efforts.

When you don’t know what to write, ask yourself the journalistic questions: what, where, when, how, and why (you already know “who”). Be sure to give yourself enough text to connect your ideas and an explanation of them to both an internal audience (you) and an external audience (me).

**PART II**—Choose 20 questions from the question bank on the following pages and answer them with a paragraph each. The questions that you choose are entirely up to you, but you should have at least five (or more) sentences for each response (see my examples above). Be sure to include a subject heading that lets your reader (i.e., me) know what you are writing about.

**PART III**—Create a finished document using standard margins, font choice, and organization as you understand them from your previous writing experiences. Except, this time make the document **single-spaced** and **well-organized**—much like this assignment sheet is doing. I will add a sample template for a simple reporting style to OpenLab for your reference. You can use it if you wish, but it will need to be adapted.

### Grading

The Personal Inventory is worth 100 points and is graded on your ability to use the directions to generate an appropriate volume of well-organized content and that this content is suitable to use as the basis for developing a personal narrative. **Your grade *will not* be determined by how correctly your writing approximates Standard Business English, so write freely, but with care.**

You must thoughtfully complete the entire assignment for full credit. Credit cannot be awarded for work not completed and loaded to your Drive folder in the proper format. Incomplete work (i.e., missing sections, lack of full paragraphs, unformatted, wrong file type) will be given partial or no credit. Also, if I see you are counting sentences and doing the minimum amount of work necessary for what you think will be an A, I will joyfully give you a C and encourage you to do better next time.

Your peers in previous semesters and years rose to the occasion and crushed this exercise. I expect that you will do the same.

**Personal Inventory Questions to Choose from To Answer (Choose 20)**

1. What hobby would you get into if you had as much money or time as you wanted?
2. What is your super power?
3. What job or activity would you be terrible at?
4. What habit do other people have that annoys you the most?
5. What skill would you love to master if you could?
6. What would be an once-in-a-lifetime adventure for you?
7. What is the last adventure you went on? Who joined you?
8. What song have you completely memorized? What does it mean to you?
9. If you could live in a movie or game, which one would you choose and why?
10. When friends come to you for help, what kind of problems do they bring to you?
11. What do you want to know more about? How do you think it fits into your life?
12. Who has impressed you with their accomplishments? What have they accomplished and why?
13. What luxury in your life can't you live without? Why? What does it provide you?
14. What are you interested in that your friends don't know about?
15. Among your friends and family, what are you famous for? How did this fame come about?
16. How different was your life one year ago? What has changed? Why did it change?
17. What is special about the place you grew up? Be specific.
18. What is the most impressive thing you know how to do? Explain.
19. What are you most insecure about in your life? How has this insecurity contributed to shaping you?
20. What is something that you are really good at, but embarrassed that you are really good at it? What has caused you to be embarrassed about this?
21. What dumb accomplishment are you most proud of? Why?
22. What is something that you keep messing up regardless of how many times, or how hard, you try?
23. How do you get in the way of your own success? Do you think this is a permanent condition?
24. What do you have doubts about? Where did those doubts originate?
25. If, as the metaphor goes, life is a game, what are some of your rules?

26. What habits, behaviors, values, and/or attitudes would your friends say are “so you”?
27. What gets you worked up? Why does it get you worked up?
28. What do you consider a good life? Where do these ideas about what is “good” come from?
29. What have been some of the turning points in your life?
30. What are three interesting facts about you that most people don’t know?
31. What is the hardest lesson you have learned in your life so far?
32. What do people that know you think is weird about you?
33. What is the best thing that you got from your parents? What is it about this that you value?
34. What is the smell of your childhood?
35. What are your favorite smells? What memories do they trigger?
36. What do you like the feel of when you touch it? How would you describe touching it?
37. What lifestyle change have you considered making for a while? What is preventing you from making it?
38. What would be your spirit animal? Describe what connection you have to this animal and why?
39. What are you really, really good at but hate to do?

## WRITING A BASIC ANALYSIS (50 POINTS POSSIBLE)

An analysis is, in essence, a study of the structure of something through its elements. A basic analysis of a text is a focused look at one or more of the elements of the text (e.g., the content, argumentation, rhetoric, mechanics, or style) that follows general critical principles rather than discipline-specific methods. A good basic analysis uses the examination of these features to develop a main idea from your own thinking that addresses a problem, issue, or concern (i.e., a gap) that is relevant to the audience of the analysis.

To write an effective basic analysis, you must both read and understand the nuances of a text, take generative notes, and then cohesively reorganize your notes around either a known gap (e.g., one given to you), or around an emergent gap (e.g. one you discover). You do this by synthesizing the connections and interrelationships of your ideas around a conclusion.

### DIRECTIONS

Your assignment is to write a 500- to 600-word basic analysis as a response to [Consider the Lobster](#), by [David Foster Wallace](#). You will do so without making use of any discipline-specific techniques to literary analysis. Instead, you will use general principles of critical thinking. Below are the things that you must be willing to do.

#### A. Taking Notes

Like the summary, as you prepare to write a basic analysis, you must read the text, and take notes. If you are inexperienced in writing basic analyses, I recommend that you write directly on the text itself in the form of annotations and then transfer them to a working document. This will involve the following:

- You must be willing to read and understand what you read by writing your way through this understanding.
- You must be willing to commit time and focus to read closely and track what you have read through your annotations and notes.
- As you read critically and take notes, you must be willing to stop, reflect on what you have read, ask yourself questions about it, and add notes to your existing notes as part of that process (recursivity).

#### B. Composing Ideas

Once you have completed your close reading of the text to be analyzed, take your annotations and transcribe them into a document. While doing so, you must be willing to consider what ideas are most important to you, and which other ideas are related to that idea (and “speak to it”). As part of this process, you have to find the main idea, or argument, or narrative/story **of your own piece** that is speaking to you. To do this, you must:

- Have enough notes that you can then produce ideas in sentences to create chains of argumentation (i.e., related paragraphs) to introduce, support, and then conclude a main idea that you develop.
- Be able to articulate an opinion on the subject you are writing on (an informed opinion), but also try to apply that opinion towards more abstract, or general, ideas.
- Recognize and question your own relationship with the text to situate yourself within it.

### **C. Finding the Gap**

Once you have an adequate base of notes from which to work, you are prepared to draft your analysis.

- Your analysis should be focused on what is missing (in your own opinion) that can be filled in through analysis. This is something that will bridge the “gap” between your own interest and understanding, the text, and the audience. For example, thinking about what people’s relationship with is to the animal proteins they consume, and society’s relationship to its meat supply more generally.
- As part of your analysis, you may summarize, evaluate, connect, and/or extend ideas from the source text with your own.
- As part of your analysis, you may reorganize the text around conflicting or conflicted viewpoints, contradictions, theses, factual information, or any other content found within the text itself.
- Your own analysis should have an introduction (written last), body, and (brief) conclusion.

### **EVALUATION**

This assignment is worth 50 points (~5% of your final grade). You will be graded on your ability to demonstrate an effective analysis. While you do not need to show each step in the composing process, you may do so to bolster your credibility. Use the basic MLA format of your summary. Show evidence of revision and editing. The deliverables for this project are:

1. The edited 500- to 600-word summary (uploaded to Drive).

Keep in mind the following requirements;

- Your summary must be in MLA format, and in .doc, .docx, or .rtf file formats. For this assignment I will not accept Google Docs, printed summaries, or .pdf documents.
- You can find an example of MLA format on the Purdue OWL by searching for “[MLA Sample Essay](#).”
- Your analysis should be revised and copy-edited before you hand it in.
- This assignment is due on Thursday, September 26<sup>th</sup>.



## WRITING AN EFFECTIVE SUMMARY (50 POINTS POSSIBLE)

A summary is an organized reconstruction of the essential claims, evidence, and analysis of a text. A good summary provides both the essential ideas and overall argument of a text as well as a sense of what the summary writer believes to be important based on the organization that information. To write an effective summary, you must both read and understand the nuances of a text, then cohesively reorganize it around what you consider to be the most important ideas to share with an audience and what connects those ideas.

### DIRECTIONS

#### A. Taking Notes

As you prepare to write a summary, you must read the text, and take notes. If you are inexperienced in writing formal summaries, I recommend that you write directly on the text itself in the form of annotations. Your annotations should accomplish three things:

1. Provide you with a visual map of where the key ideas and arguments of a text are located for your reference (e.g., the underline function).
2. Provide a basic, functional analysis of the key ideas of the text by organizing them using basic schema (i.e., lists, diagrams, flowchart, etc.) to facilitate your own ability to synthesize knowledge from them.
3. Provide your response to these ideas in your own words. The degree to which you are able to “talk back” to a text in the form of an educated opinion is indicative of your ability to use the ideas from the text constructively, either in the form of a summary or another type of analysis.

#### B. Composing Ideas

Once you have completed your close reading of the text to be summarized, take your annotations and transcribe them into a document. As you do so, keep three things in mind:

- First, your notes do not need to be a word-for-word transcription of your annotations. You can expand some of your more fruitful notes or ideas, and completely disregard others.
- Second, you may include critical direct quotes (e.g., a definition of a key term) in your notes, but you should not use it in your summary unless they are truly critical. For example, a key technical term with precise language that is interrogated as the argument of the text you are summarizing. Otherwise, no quotes.
- Third, you can add to your notes as you read through them, but most importantly, begin to structure your ideas into the order that you want to address them in a summary. Be sure that while you do so, you identify and write out what the key argument of the text is (in your own words). Organize your notes into the points you wish to address. If your summary was particularly complex, you would print your notes, and reannotate them, but you do not need to do that here. You also don't need to use all of your notes if you have many. Choose the best ones.

#### C. Drafting the Summary

Once you have an adequate base of notes from which to work, you are prepared to draft your summary. For this assignment, your summary should be two paragraphs long and have a distinct strategy for each paragraph and how the two paragraphs fit together. For example, you might want your first paragraph to focus on articulating what “critical thinking” is in the context of college-level writing. Then your second paragraph could demonstrate what that might look like in practice in Gita DasBender's classes.

## **EVALUATION**

This assignment is worth 50 points (~5% of your final grade). You will be graded on your ability to demonstrate effective process in composing a summary by showing the work you have done at each step below, and then producing a cohesive summary that is formatted in MLA format and shows evidence of editing. The deliverables for this project are:

1. Your annotations of the article itself (bring in the paper article with your name on it for me to evaluate).
2. Your composed page notes (print and attach to article).
3. The edited two-paragraph summary (uploaded to Drive in doc format).

Keep in mind the following requirements;

- Your summary must be in MLA format, and in .doc, .docx, or .rtf file formats. For this assignment I will not accept Google Docs, printed summaries, or .pdf documents.
- You can find an example of MLA format on the Purdue OWL by searching for "[MLA Sample Essay](#)."
- Your summary should be revised and copy-edited before you hand it in. Your notes do not need to be.
- This assignment is due on Tuesday, September 17<sup>th</sup>.

"It is with a kind of fear that I begin to write the history of my life."

--First sentence from The Story of My Life by Helen Keller

## STORY OF MYSELF

For the Story of Myself, you will write a 1,500- to 2,000-word essay on, well, YOU. The basis for this essay will be an informal analysis that you conduct based on the content you generated for Project I. In Project I, you considered many dimensions of yourself and how you relate to your own imagination, aspirations, and the world. Using the techniques of note-taking and informal analysis we have covered (or will) in other assignments, find what is important to represent about you, why and how it is important, and compose an essay on that main idea.

You will consider yourself as the motivated and embodied subject of the world that you are, as well as the experiences that have led you to this point. As you conduct your analysis of yourself, consider avoiding a simple restatement of what you have already discovered in Project I. Instead, take the most important insights from Project I and see how they fit together into a narrative that is unmistakably you. This narrative does not need to be the best thing you have ever written, or capture the ineffable complexity that is your life, or even be that interesting. Think of it as merely a beginning—a first attempt at capturing something important about who you are right now, in this moment of your life, while keeping in mind the person you wish to become.

### Directions

Approach this essay in a similar way to your informal analysis of the upcoming assignment, *Consider the Lobster*, but in this case the source text is your own writing about yourself. Use or adapt the same analytical process and rhetorical techniques to generate and develop ideas, refine those ideas as you build structure into them, devise what the main idea of your essay will be, and then re-structure what you have around that idea into something essay-shaped.

### Recommendations

- 1) Think of this essay as the continuation of a multi-step process. The first step was to generate lots of notes and content. Next, you must decide what you really want to write about. You can do this by re-reading what you have written for Project I, and annotating it. Look for ideas that you connect to, think you have more to say about, or that you believe you can link together around some coherent theme, or anything else that speaks directly to you as being worth pulling forward.
- 2) Eliminate content from Project I that you feel confident you will not use. You will still have access to it if you are wrong, but if you are not using it, you don't need it taking up mental space.
- 3) Continue to annotate your ideas. Remember the process of close reading, responding, reflecting, and expanding. Annotate your annotations. The goal here is to get a critical mass of ideas flowing about your topic (i.e., about \*you\*) that writing your essay becomes as much a process of what not to include as struggling to get enough.
- 4) Once you have a critical mass of ideas, take your notes and annotations and create a rough outline of what you plan to include in your essay. This is an informal outline of what the main idea will be, and what ideas will feed into and develop that main idea.
- 5) Begin drafting your essay in a non-linear fashion. Do not start at the beginning. Do not write the introduction. Start with what you know the best, or want to write about the most. Work outwards from there by attaching more to that core and re-writing, or reorganizing, what you have. In essence, you are building the essay from the inside out.

### Grading

This essay is due on Tuesday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> at 11:59 p.m. The essay is worth a total of 100 points. To receive credit for the essay, you must upload a completed .doc, .docx, or .rtf file into our shared Drive folder. I've provided a rubric below, but generally speaking, an "A" text is one that has been thoughtfully written and reworked based on substantial invention and drafting to articulate a significant statement about the writer's life. The "C" text is one in which all directions have been followed...i.e. it's about you, a completed draft is made and submitted.

Please use the manuscript template uploaded to our Course Document Repository.

<b>Content Development (40 points)</b>	
The information you choose to include holds an appropriate level of complexity and interest for a college-educated audience.	
Details illuminate the subject, and expanding on key points.	
<b>Argumentation (40 points)</b>	
Ideas demonstrate clear hierarchical logic presented in a discernable narrative flow.	
Overall argumentation develops a main idea accurately and consistently.	
<b>Style (20 points)</b>	
Design and formatting features of the manuscript are accurate.	
Essay is in a separate, correctly named .doc, .docx, or .rtf in your Drive folder.	

## WRITING A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS (50 POINTS POSSIBLE)

A comparative analysis is more than a “compare and contrast” exercise. An effective comparative analysis develops a comparison between two or more things using a common frame of reference, sometimes referred to as an “umbrella” term or concept. This frame of reference is derived from independent analyses of the things to be compared. Your umbrella lays the grounds of comparison for the analysis, what terms are relevant, what the organizational scheme is, and how they are linked together through a main idea (or thesis).

An effective comparative analysis does not simply list what is similar or different among the things being compared. It is organized around a main idea in the umbrella that is argued by the writer, who uses ideas generated out of an analysis of the things being compared to support the main idea.

For example:

In a comparative analysis of dogs and cats, one does not simply compare (or contrast) dogs from cats. The basis of comparison must be within an umbrella, such as behavioral characteristics of both species, feral population social hierarchies, or perhaps even polydactylism. This frame of reference gives you specific areas of comparison to develop, and each analysis would produce different insights, comparisons, and contrasts, from the other. Further, if say, ferrets were added as a third comparative “thing,” the terms of analysis would adapt yet again.

## DIRECTIONS

Read the short essay, “How to Write a Comparative Analysis” from Harvard University’s College Writing Center.

<https://writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu/pages/how-write-comparative-analysis>

Use the guidelines from this essay to write a comparative analysis from the eight articles (see list below) on writing that you have read and annotated for this assignment (see document repository for the articles).

Your assignment is to write a 500- to 1000-word comparative analysis between a selection of these texts. You will do so by establishing **your own clear frame of reference** and then **developing an argument** around a main idea that falls within the frame. Your frame of reference should be centered on what you personally found relevant from these pieces, and have synthesized about that in your notes. I encourage you to think broadly first, then deeply through this process.

Once you have written your comparative analysis, write a separate one- to two-paragraph reflection (titled Comparative Analysis Reflection) where you indicate what you were trying to accomplish with this piece (à la Giles). This should go in your Drive folder as a separate document.

**EVALUATION**

This assignment is worth 75 points (~7.5% of your final grade). You will be graded on your ability to demonstrate the process of building an effective analysis by developing notes through annotation, produce a coherent written argument of your own design, and reflecting productively on this process. Use the basic MLA format for your analysis. Show evidence of revision and editing.

The deliverables for this project are:

1. The edited 500- to 1000-word comparative (uploaded to Drive) – 40 pts.
2. Your collated, organized notes with proper parenthetical citations (uploaded to Drive). – 25 pts.
3. The reflective statement (also uploaded to Drive). – 10 pts.

Keep in mind the following requirements;

- **USE EFFECTIVE DOCUMENT TITLES. DO NOT USE YOUR NAME.**
- Your analysis must be in MLA format, and in .doc, .docx, or .rtf file formats. For this assignment I will not accept Google Docs, printed summaries, or .pdf documents.
- You can find an example of MLA format on the Purdue OWL by searching for “MLA Sample Essay.”
- Your analysis should be revised and copy-edited before you hand it in.
- This assignment has the following due dates:
  - Annotations due on Thursday, October 10<sup>th</sup>.
  - Collated notes due on Tuesday, October 29<sup>th</sup>.
  - Comparative analysis due on Thursday, October 31<sup>st</sup>.

**SOURCE MATERIALS**

[Why Good Students Do Bad in College](#) (ThinkWell)

[Critical Thinking in College Writing](#) (DasBender)

[Reflective Writing and the Revision Process](#) (Giles)

[Finding Your Way In](#) (Lessner and Craig)

[Taking Flight: Connecting Inner and Outer Realities during Invention](#) (Antlitz)

[Storytelling, Narration, and The Who I Am Story](#) (Ramsdell)

[So You've Got a Writing Assignment. Now What?](#) (Hinton)

[The Sixth Paragraph: A Re-vision of the Essay](#) (Lynch)

## PROJECT PROPOSAL (50 POINTS POSSIBLE)

Your first major step in your ENG 1101 essay is writing a very basic proposal that captures your initial thinking and ideas about your proposed subject. This is the document that you use to attempt to persuade me why your proposed subject is good for an essay project and how you will approach it. What will persuade me is not only the quality of your idea, and how you are thinking about it, but also how well I think it will work in meeting the objectives of the course.

Here are the things I will be considering when I respond:

- Are you able to narrow down a big, vague understanding of your subject to something narrow enough (but not too narrow) to write about? In other words, can you think critically about it?
- Are you organizing your thinking about this subject effectively already? In other words, are you able to engage the process of doing the intellectual work for your subject in a productive way?
- Are you willing and able to *slump* an analysis and synthesis (e.g., split and lump) of different ideas about your subject to develop a narrowly-focused main idea and then expand explore that through your essay?
- Do you have the experience and expertise (i.e., ethos) necessary to address your subject in a credible manner?

Ultimately, the subject you choose to work on is going to be up to you. In the end, I almost never fundamentally reject an idea. But, unless you are able to present an essay with a narrowly-focused idea that you have explored deeply through its various contingencies, possible meanings, and perspectives, then you will not have completed the intellectual work of the course. The more of the above questions you can resolve, and resolve well, the stronger your subject will be.

## DIRECTIONS

You must quickly complete this initial project proposal. The proposal will be organized as a basic technical document paying attention to formatting and design choices. You must address the following areas:

**Project Title**—Provide a working, descriptive title for your project that helps me understand what you are trying to do with your essay.

**Subject Overview (1+ page)**—Write a general, but organized, description of your subject as you currently understand it. What are the core aspects of the subject you think are important? What kinds of research do you think will be relevant for you to explore? Why do you think this subject matters to the people you think will care about it?

**Your Stake(s)**—What is your expertise regarding the subject? What is your interest in it? Be specific. You are pitching your qualifications to write on this subject \*and\* your ability to produce the project that I specified.

**Project Goals**—What do you hope to get out of exploring this subject? What do you hope to learn by doing the project?

When your proposal is written, organize it one of three ways:

- 1) Adapting the design of this document as a guide (I'm leaving a .docx version in Course Documents for You to boilerplate).
- 2) Use the basic report template in Course documents for you.
- 3) Design something yourself (the preferred, but not necessary, option).

### Remember

Neither this initial proposal, nor your project are going to be perfect. They might not even be good. In fact, you are going to fail at one (or many) aspects of this work. The path to becoming an experienced writer of ideas and conveying your vision is fraught with doubt, indecisiveness, and feelings of inadequacy.

**Producing a proposal document under these conditions *\*is\** success.** It is a success that you will be able to replicate again, and it will eventually lead to other successes.

So, while you will fail, what you will fail the most at is meeting your own expectations for the kind of success you are working towards. Think of it this way—if you wait until you already have the skills, the time, and the right idea to move forward, you will be waiting forever. Now is your time.

### Proposal Due Date

Assignment Due Dates		
Assignment	The Project Proposal	11/12/19 (Tues)

### Grading

This assignment should be between one-and-a-half and two pages, single-spaced, in a 10 or 12 pt. sans serif font with subject headers and good use of white space. This proposal is worth 50 points based on its completeness, articulation of the questions in the areas assigned and clean design presentation.



"Stubborn and ardent clinging to one's opinion is the best proof of stupidity."  
--Michel de Montaigne



## THE *ESSAI*

The word "essay" comes from the French verb, **essayer**, meaning "to try." In 1580, Michel Montaigne, the French Renaissance philosopher, statesman, father of modern skepticism, and popularizer of "the essay," published his still read volume *Essais*. This book of, well, essays, are deeply introspective, analytical examinations of the topics that the ever-curious Lord Montaigne found fascinating during his life.

Believe it or not, in Michel de Montaigne's time, the idea of publically writing about trivial, sometimes even personal, matters unrelated to theology, statecraft, or other doctrinal issues and imperatives was seen as tacky. Even worse is if one inserts their own subjective identity into their writings and appear as themselves rather than maintaining a high style of objective analysis. Lord Montaigne did both, a lot, and thus wasn't highly regarded as an author during this time, only as a rich nobleman deeply involved in regional affairs of state and the people whom he governed.

Nevertheless, the impact of Montaigne's *Essais* on modern Western thought cannot be overstated. His work was a primary influence in Francis Bacon's *Essays*, which was the first widely recognized collections of secular humanistic writing of the Renaissance and led directly to his later works, which formed the basis for modern scientific reasoning. Montaigne's works formed a basis for close examination of socio-cultural and developmental phenomena in psychology, child-raising, and learning that still have merit today.

### Directions

In the classical tradition of Lord Montaigne, you are going to make an *essai* (i.e., an essay, a try). Your *essai* will include topical research that informs your thinking, the various strands of which will be carefully integrated through critical thinking and analysis into a cohesive textual narrative.

Think of it this way. For a previous assignment you wrote an informal analysis of *Consider the Lobster*. For the *essai*, you are writing your own version of *Consider the Lobster*. Your *essai* does not need to be as complex, or as verbose, as David Foster Wallace. Your own work can be as spare and personal as Gloria Anzaldúas, *Borderlands*, but it must be entirely yours and informed by both your own observation and analysis as well as outside sources of information.

### Expectations

- You will write a 2000- to 3000-word text in 12 pt. font, with double-spacing throughout and 1 in. margins.
- The text will be in MLA format (which is good for essays of this nature). You can find an example of MLA format on the Purdue OWL by searching for "MLA Sample Essay."
- Your *essai* will deliver an insightful analysis of a topic negotiated between you and me. As part of this analysis, you will include outside sources as necessary, but with no less than 10 additional sources of information.
- Your draft must be uploaded to your Google Drive folder by 11:59 p.m. on Thursday, December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

**Evaluation**

The *essai* is worth 200 points, or approximately 20% of your final course grade. What you hand in on Thursday, December 12<sup>th</sup> is a draft of your *essai*. On the following Tuesday, you will receive a provisional grade on your draft as well as guidance for revision and a final due date. If you revise, your *essai* will be re-evaluated. If you do not, or your revision is not substantive, your provisional grade will be recorded.

<b>Content and Structure (50%)</b>	<b>Grade Earned</b>
	Additional Comments:
All key elements of the <i>essai</i> assignment are covered in a substantive way. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essay develops a main idea.</li> <li>• Essay is structured logically with a beginning and end.</li> <li>• Essay delivers a coherent and insightful analysis of main idea.</li> </ul>	
The content of the essay is comprehensive, accurate, and persuasive. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information and details provided are relevant, well-developed, and compelling.</li> <li>• Source materials are relevant and credible.</li> <li>• Audience concerns are anticipated and addressed.</li> </ul>	
The paper develops a central idea and is directed toward the appropriate audience. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essay has a recognizable central theme.</li> <li>• Essay develops theme throughout the text.</li> </ul>	
Major points are stated clearly; are supported by specific descriptive details and examples.	
The essay attempts to capture a larger point or understanding about the topic.	
<b>Readability and Style (25%)</b>	<b>Grade Earned</b>
	Additional Comments:
Paragraph transitions are present, logical, and maintain the flow throughout the paper.	
The tone is appropriate to the content and assignment.	
Sentences are complete, clear, and concise.	
Sentences are well constructed, with consistently strong, varied sentences.	
Sentence transitions are present and maintain the flow of thought.	
<b>Mechanics and Formatting (25%)</b>	<b>Grade Earned</b>
	Additional Comments:
The paper is in appropriate format, with 12pt font, 1in margins, and double spaced throughout.	
The paper is laid out with effective use of headings, font styles, and white space.	
Rules of grammar, usage, and punctuation are followed.	
Spelling is correct.	
MLA formatting is used consistently throughout.	

**PROJECT II**

**Introduction to Composition I**

ENG 1101-LC65 (#31982)

Due: 12/12/19 (Thursday)

## ANNOTATED RESEARCH BIBLIOGRAPHY

As you continue to develop the subject you will write about for your essay, you must do some research to develop the complexity of your own thinking. By writing down the ideas that come out of the research you do during your source-based research, you will be able to develop good insights that would otherwise be unavailable to you.

For your research bibliography assignment, you are responsible for a brief summary and analysis of **FIVE** credible and relevant sources related to your subject. Remember, do not choose the first five sources you come across; instead, choose the best five you have found.

### Directions

#### **Choosing the best five sources**

What are the criteria for the best five? At this stage in your project, you want to find sources to annotate that do two things:

- (1) Challenge your own thinking about your subject and help you focus your ideas – In other words, the sources you choose should provide you with new perspectives about your topic. Avoid sources that tell you what you already know. You are looking for better ideas than what you already have.
- (2) Credible enough to use in an intellectual context – The sources that you choose should be informally CRAP-tested (<https://bit.ly/2wzwy9m>) for relevance to your project, and their general efficacy as sources that will help you discover and make an argument. Use credible journalistic sources, academic research, white papers, or other expert sources for the annotated bibliography. Avoid non-expert or unverifiable sources (e.g., fake news, online encyclopedias, generic blogs, or farmed content unless these sources (and their failings) are directly relevant to your topic (e.g., you are writing *about* the source itself, not relying on it for expertise).

Your sources do not necessarily need to be academic (e.g., they can be journalistic, web-based, etc.), as long as they speak with well-founded authority on the subject. With each source that you include, you will provide an accurate citation (use <http://www.citationmachine.net>), a robust one paragraph summary of the claims and evidence, and a composed paragraph of critical analysis of how you might use the source or what it contributes to your thinking.

#### **Summarizing your sources**

For each source, you will create about a half-page set of bullet-points (about 6-10) from your source of ideas, claims, arguments, and/or evidence that your source provides. If you use a direct quote from the source, be sure to put it in quotes. If the information is found in a source with page numbers, put the number in parentheses like this (5). From your set of bullet points, I want to be able to discern what you find valuable about the source and what information you feel you can pull from it. Use complete sentences and strive to add your own thinking.

#### **Evaluate your sources**

You have a list of questions below to help you interpret the value of the source towards your project. I recommend that you compose your responses to the questions by thinking about the questions first, and then integrating your “answers” into coherent and cohesive statements that discuss the content and usefulness of the source for your essay. You do not need to answer every question, or every question with equal depth— instead, choose which questions are most important and elaborate on those. You must have one full, well-written paragraph of evaluation for each source. Do not use five random sources. Make sure you choose sources that are relevant to your thinking about your subject (otherwise you will find that you have wasted your time).

***Final write up***

Once you have written five summaries and evaluations of sources, take the most important ideas from each and put them into a 250-500 word synthesis of what you have learned about your subject. Explain what your focus will be for the essay, what information you already have, and where your research needs to take you to complete the project successfully.

**Questions you might address for your write-up**

- How does the information offered in this source enhance or challenge my perception? If it doesn't, it probably doesn't need annotated.
- Does this source bring new questions to mind about my subject? If so, what questions?
- Do I feel this source is right for my essay? Why or why not?
- What might this source contribute to my thinking about my essay?

**Citation format**

Use MLA citation style and [www.citationmachine.net](http://www.citationmachine.net) to create and format your citations. A reader needs to be able to find your source with reasonable effort from the information you provide.

**Evaluation**

This annotated bibliography is worth 100 points. In addition to completeness, it will be graded based on the criteria below.

<b>Content and Development</b>	
<b>Grade Earned:</b>	
	Additional Comments:
<p>All key elements of the annotated bibliography assignment are covered in a substantive way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bibliography synthesizes and connects sources to research topic.</li> <li>• Bibliography covers (5) sources.</li> <li>• Bibliographic entries are complete.</li> <li>• Bibliography was completed on time.</li> </ul>	
<p>The content of the bibliography is appropriately detailed, accurate, and persuasive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information and details provided are relevant and cohesive.</li> <li>• Source materials are analyzed for relevance and credibility.</li> <li>• Presentation of source is written for an academic audience.</li> </ul>	
<p>The bibliographic entries highlight the main idea of the text. Major points of the source are stated clearly and are supported by relevant specific descriptive details and examples when appropriate.</p>	
<p>The bibliography uses the vocabulary and theory of the sources correctly.</p>	
<p>The bibliography synthesis shows evidence of a central idea or research inquiry, its basic structure, and a brief plan for moving forward with additional research on the project.</p>	
<b>Readability and Style</b>	
<b>Grade Earned:</b>	
<p>The tone of the notes and synthesis are appropriate to the content material and assignment.</p>	
<p>Sentences are complete, clear, concise, and in Standard Business English.</p>	
<p>Sentences are well constructed, with consistently strong, varied use of phrasing.</p>	
<p>Sentence transitions are present and maintain the flow of thought.</p>	
<p>Paragraph transitions are present, logical, and maintain the flow throughout the synthesis.</p>	
<b>Mechanics</b>	
<b>Grade Earned:</b>	
<p>The annotations and synthesis are in appropriate format, with 11 or 12 pt. font and 1 in. margins.</p>	
<p>The document is laid out with effective use of headings, font styles, and white space.</p>	
<p>Rules of grammar, usage, and punctuation are followed.</p>	
<p>Spelling is correct.</p>	
<p>Evidence of consistent and appropriate MLA citation for each entry.</p>	
<b>Total: 100%</b>	