

Description:

Your goal for this essay is to write an analytical, thesis-driven argument that uses the tools described in *They Say, I Say* to enter and successfully engage in academic discourse. This is not a research essay; please limit your use of non-program texts and maximize your close reading of each passage you cite. For this essay, however, we would like you to use multiple texts (which might include films, experiments, graphs, performances, other artworks discussed in lecture) as sources of evidence to support your argument.

As with the previous essay, you may choose to expand upon one of your seminar papers for this longer assignment. But please avoid simply stitching together two seminar papers, or reverting to a simplistic compare/contrast format. What we're looking for is synthesis: applying ideas from one text to another text, or tracing similar themes/methods/forms throughout multiple texts.

Logistics:

Your first, complete version of the essay is due in Writers' Workshop on Wednesday November 2. Please bring copies of the essay for each member of your triad, plus one for yourself.

Your second, revised version of the essay is due to your faculty member's office by 5pm on Friday, November 4. Please include: 1) the version of the essay you wrote for Wednesday (include notes/comments from peer reviewers), 2) your latest revision, 3) an author's note

What is an author's note?

The author's note tells your reader what you have already worked on in the revision process, and what you would like additional help with. You can also use this opportunity to say what it is that you thought was particularly successful about the essay. Most importantly, it should be a substantive account of your thinking and your writing and re-writing process—rather than a superficial description of whether you “liked” the topic or not.

Other specifications:

- Your paper should be roughly 4-6 pages (2500-3000 words) long.
- Your essay must deal directly with at least two of the texts (see above) we have examined together.
- Your essay must use direct textual evidence to support your claims.
- Use parenthetical citations whenever you are directly quoting a text. For examples of what a parenthetical citation looks like, check out Drake's block quotations.
- If you are summarizing another author's idea make sure to reference that author in your sentence, or provide a parenthetical citation.

Characteristics of successful essays

Strength of voice

- Does the paper have a visible argument or thesis?
- Does the writer clearly express their ideas while distinguishing them from existing intellectual conversations?
- Does the writer actively lead the reader through their evidence, providing a sense of direction in the essay?

Organization

- Does each paragraph clearly communicate a separate idea that supports the overall argument?
- Does the order of the paragraphs make sense?
- Does the writer successfully make transitions in between paragraphs?
- Do the introduction and conclusion successfully lead the reader into and out of the argument?

Use of evidence

- Does the essay use sufficient textual evidence to prove its claims?
- Does the writer clearly introduce and interpret textual evidence?
- Does the writer's interpretation of the evidence demonstrate a solid understanding of the text?
- Is all of the evidence introduced relevant to the argument?

Style

- Is the writer's sentence structure clear?
- Does the writer vary their sentence structure successfully?
- Is the writer's vocabulary appropriate to the academic content?