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Essays for Reading (in addition to textbook): Kwame Anthony Appiah, “Go Ahead, Speak for Yourself” Nausicaa Renner, “How Do You Explain the ‘Obvious?’” Bernie Sanders, “We Must Make Public Colleges and Universities Tuition Free”	Essays for Reading (in addition to textbook): Suzanne Nossel, “The Pro-Free Speech Way to Fight Fake News” Bridget Anderson, “The Politics of Pests: Immigration and the Invasive Other” Isaac Chotiner, “How Anti-Semitism Rises on the Left and Right”

ENG 9 Writing Assignments TIP Sheet

- 1) Argument Essay- use the essays covered in Week One and Week Two. Reference p 32 for ideas for an argument.
- 2) Visual Rhetoric - use the essays covered in Week Five and Week Six. Reference p 147 and p 158, for ideas for an argument.
- 3) Essay 3- Immigration: use the essays covered in Week Six, Week Seven, and perhaps Week Eight. Reference Chapter 23: Immigration: What Is to Be Done? And reference Chapter 23, p 601-2 for ideas for an argument.
- 4) Essay 4- Arguing with Fiction: use essays covered in Week Nine and Week Ten. Reference Chapter Eleven for ideas. Also reference any of the “Topics for Critical Thinking and Writing” on p 397, p 398-9, p 403-4, and/or p 407-8 for ideas on arguing with fiction. Arguing with non-fiction (facts or factual writing) is different than arguing about literary devices, plot, characters, or any of the numerous ways that fiction (including poetry, drama, literature) proves or demonstrates its point.
- 5) Essay 5-Arguing in a Debate or Discourse Community: use essays covered in week Twelve, Week Thirteen, Week Fourteen. Reference any of the “Topics for Critical Thinking and Writing” in Chapters 25, 26, and 27, for ideas on how to argue in a debate and/or discourse community.

English 9 Essay Grading Rubric

A (90- 100%) – An essay grade of A is reserved for papers that exceed the essay requirements to craft and argument that is interesting, original, compelling, and elegant. An essay in this category: addresses the assignment thoughtfully and analytically, setting a challenging task; has a thesis that is clearly-focused, original, and insightful; demonstrates coherent and rhetorically-sophisticated organization and makes effective connections between ideas; cites and analyzes relevant sources and evaluates their validity, effectively integrating them into text when appropriate; provides specific detail and compelling support; demonstrates superior control of grammar, sentence variety, word choice and conventions of standard written English.

B (80-89%) – An essay will receive a grade of B if it somehow moves beyond the basic expectations of the assignment, offering some thoughtful insights and observations that draw from but do not merely parrot our class discussions. An essay in this category: addresses the assignment clearly and analytically, setting a meaningful task; has a thesis that is clearly-focused; demonstrates a clear and coherent organization and makes connections between ideas; cites and analyzes relevant sources, effectively integrating them into text when appropriate; provides effective supporting detail and reasoning; displays consistent control of grammar, sentence variety, word choice, and conventions of standard written English.

C (70 - 79%) – An essay will receive a grade of C if it meets but does not exceed the minimum requirements of the assignment – it will address the prompt; it will be complete, with an introduction, body, and conclusion, organized well enough that the essay is always speaking to the main argument. An essay in this category: addresses the assignment in an adequate and satisfactory manner; has a thesis that governs the essay, but it may be vaguely stated and merely implied throughout the essay; demonstrates adequate organization, though connections between ideas may not be consistent; cites sources, adequately integrating them into text; provides support and examples that may not show a clear connection to the thesis; demonstrates adequate control of grammar, sentence variety, word choice, and conventions of standard written English (there may be errors, but not enough to continually distract the reader from the argument of the essay).

D (60 - 69%) – An essay will receive a grade of D if it fails to meet the minimum requirements of the assignment; it may be missing the required number of sources, a required Works Cited page, a discernable thesis, a clear connection to the assignment prompt and/or an overall plan. An essay in this category: may not address the assignment directly or clearly; may distort or wander from the assignment or set a trivial task; does not have a discernable thesis, nor a controlling idea that governs the content of the essay; displays random or confusing organization; displays a lack of understanding of appropriate texts; fails to cite, integrate, or analyze material from the texts; replaces analysis with narration, summary, or description; fails to provide supporting detail and instead relies on unsupported generalizations; show inadequate control of standard written English, with many errors that distract or impede understanding.

F (0 - 59%) – An essay will receive a grade of F if it does not reflect any of the basic components of composition that we have discussed (and will continue to discuss) throughout the semester. An essay in this category: may fail to address the assignment; lacks a thesis or an understanding of a thesis; lacks organization or displays illogical organization such that the thesis or logic of the paper remains unknowable; fails to use sources or misuses the texts of others; displays an inability to understand texts, analyze sources, or support ideas; shows substantially inadequate control of standard written English, with errors that prevent communication. Essays that are late, not turned in, or do not meet the minimum word count will earn a “0.”

*I often write letter grades only on essays. Here is a key to determine percentage points:

A+ = 98-100 / A = 95 / A- = 92

B+ = 88 / B = 85 / B- = 82

C+ = 78 / C = 75 / C- = 72

D = 65

F = 50-55 or 0

What is a Text?

The word “text” is probably the most fluid term in a rhetorical situation. Usually, the word “text” refers to a written or typed document. In terms of a rhetorical situation, however, “text” means any form of communication that humans create. Whenever humans engage in any act of communication, a text serves as the vehicle for communication. Three basic factors affect the nature of each text: the medium of the text, the tools used to create the text, and the tools used to decipher the text.

Medium of a Text

Texts can appear in any kind of medium, or mechanism for communicating. The plural of medium in this sense is media. Various media affect the ways that authors and audiences communicate. Consider how these different types of media can affect how and what authors communicate to audiences in various rhetorical situations: hand-written, typed, computer-generated, audio, visual, spoken, verbal, non-verbal, graphic, pictorial, tactile, with words, or without words (there are many others, of course). Some varied specific examples of media could include a paper, a speech, a letter, an advertisement, a billboard, a presentation, a poster-board, a cartoon, a movie, a painting, a sculpture, an email, a Twitter tweet, a Facebook post, graffiti, a conversation (face-to-face, on a cell phone, via text messages) . . . this list is nearly endless.

Tools to Make a Text

Every text is made with tools that affect the structure and content of a text. Such tools could be physical tools that range from very basic (such as the larynx, throat, teeth, lips, and tongue necessary for verbal communication) to very complex (such as a laptop computer with graphic-manipulating software). These tools could also be more conceptual tools that range from simple (such as implementing feedback from an instructor) to more complicated (such as implementing different kinds of library and primary research). The tools of communication often determine the kinds of communication that can happen in any given rhetorical situation.

Tools to Decipher a Text

Likewise, audiences have varied tools for reading, viewing, hearing, or otherwise appreciating various texts. These could be actual physical tools that would likewise range from very basic (like the eyes and reading glasses necessary to read) to very complex (like a digital projector and screen to view a PowerPoint presentation). Or they could be conceptual tools that could range from simple (childhood principles learned from parents) to more complicated (a master’s degree in art). The tools that audiences have at their disposal affect the ways that they appreciate different texts.