English 1102 Sample Assignment 1

Rhetorical Reading Responses*

The purpose of this assignment is to encourage rhetorical reading and writing. Rhetorical reading calls attention to the author’s intentions on readers and focuses on how texts work to change readers’ minds. As you read texts, you’re not just learning about the world; rather, you’re learning what the author claims about the world in the text.

Before writing the response:
1. Do a fast preview of the text for as much information as possible—length, complexity, original publication and date, author, time to read, etc.
2. Slowly and carefully read the essay; take marginal notes so you’ll remember your reactions (or use post-it notes).
3. Make a brief list of does and says statements for each paragraph. Does indicates the paragraph’s function, such as “summarizes opposing views,” while says summarizes content.

The Written Response:
1. Using your memory and notes, write a rhetorical précis in your own words with no words borrowed directly from the text:
   Sentence 1: Name of author, genre, and title of work, date in parentheses; a rhetorically active verb (such as “claims,” “argues,” “asserts,” “defines,” “explores,” or “suggests”); and a “that” clause containing the major assertion or thesis statement in the work in your own words.
   Sentence 2: An explanation of how the author develops and supports the thesis (i.e. evidence), usually in chronological order.
   Sentence 3: A statement of the author’s apparent purpose, followed by an “in order to” phrase.
   Sentence 4: A description of the intended audience and/or the relationship the author establishes with the audience.
2. Write your reaction to the text. Are you confused? Annoyed? Delighted? Tickled? Do you agree?
3. Write about what you agree with in the text or stuff you learned. Include your personal experiences, values, and beliefs that affirm the author’s argument (Elbow’s believing).
4. Write a paragraph about your questions, objections, doubts, or confusion about the author’s argument (Elbow’s doubting game).
5. After re-reading, write a more detailed, analytical response. This section should include a claim supported with textual evidence from the argument. Think of a question that can be answered with a close reading of text and explanation of passages. Reach for a why question here; look at your does statements above. For example, “Why does Tan open with an anecdote about her mother?” Your answer is your claim. Then support your claim with textual evidence. Sometimes I’ll assign the question for you to answer for this number.

Format: Informal. Thought and development count. I must be able to understand your ideas, though. Type your responses; keep them under 2 pages.

Tip: Keep these responses when I return them because you’re building notes that will become the basis of papers. This takes time—academic writing requires you to read, process, and write about source texts—but rest assured, the skills and habits you form will help you in other classes.

Grading: F—off topic, incomplete; D—complete but sketchy; C—good effort but keep digging deeper; B—you’ve made important observations but develop them more fully; A—I learned something new about your thinking about the essay; thoughtful and well developed.

*For this assignment, I am indebted to Ann George; Ramage, Bean, and Johnson, Writing

**English 1102 Sample Assignment 2**

**MLA Convention**

**Name: ____________________________________**

A. Write each of the following correctly for a Works Cited entry. Indicate the page in Bean and Harbrace where the type entry is located.


   _____________________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________
   B:       HH:


   _____________________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________
   B:       HH:


   _____________________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________
   B:       HH:


   _____________________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________
   B:       HH:

B. Correct the following Works Cited entries. Indicate the page in Bean and Harbrace where the type entry is located.


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**English 1102 Sample Assignment 3**

**Rhetorical Analysis Editing**
For each paper, read the paper through looking for each issue. Initial when you’ve corrected/commented on each paper.

Clarity and Readability
1. Read the paper through looking for MLA conventions. Check the following:
   _____ Title page correctness
   _____ Works Cited list correct, in alphabetical order
   _____ Punctuation for quoted material correct (outside parenthesis)
   _____ Author’s last name in parentheses with page number unless introduced in sentence; then just page number

2. Examine the paper for introducing material correctly. Is all borrowed material introduced with a rhetorically effective attributive tag? Comment.

3. Ask the writer what grammar, style, or clarity issues he or she has had in the past. Write them below, look up and write below the page in Harbrace for reference, and read the paper checking for these. Circle and explain any you find.

4. Read the draft once out loud. Circle and comment on confusing passages or errors.

5. Check for spelling errors, especially those spell check will miss (to/two/too, here/hear, affect/effect).

6. Locate other errors or patterns of errors that the writer should correct. Circle them and comment. Write them below (subject-verb agreement, comma usage, etc.).

English 1102 Sample Assignment 4

Rhetorical Analysis Revision

For each paper, complete the following activities. Put your comments in writing somewhere on each paper so that the writer can use them for revision.

Purpose and Topic
• Read the paper through one time without marking anything. Play the believing game and explain everything that works well.

• How well does the paper address the purpose and topic of the assignment?
· Underline the writer’s thesis statement and explain how well it helps you understand the essay’s contribution.

· Underline each of the topic sentences. Read the thesis statement and all the topic sentences. Explain how well the paper’s argument works (it should make sense this way even without the evidence in the body paragraphs.)

Organization
· Re-examine the topic sentences. Explain how the paper is organized and how you know. Suggest places that confuse you.

· Examine the topic sentences and paragraphs for transitional words that cue you to arrangement. For chronological, you’d expect “time” words, like “first,” “next,” “later,” etc. For topical, you’d expect numbers of points, “first,” “second,” “another,” “further.” Explain places you’re confused and suggest places for improvement.

Evidence
· Examine body paragraphs for evidence. How well are do you understand the writer’s claims? Explain places you’d like to see more textual evidence.

· Note the amount of summary, paraphrase, and direct quotation. Comment on its effectiveness.

· Look for attributive tags and introductory material for every borrowed text. Circle these; explain places where they’re missing.

· Comment on the inclusion and explanation of rhetorical terms. Suggest places where you’re confused or need more clarification.

English 1102 Sample Assignment 5

Rhetorical Analysis

Purpose and Topic:
Part of preparing to argue is fully understanding and researching what’s already been written about the issue. We consider what others have written, think about what further ideas need to be written, and then develop these in an argument. Paper one encourages you to do just that. In paper one, you’ll analyze what and how an essay contributes to our understanding of an issue in a
conversation. You may analyze any of the essays we’ve read—Cobb, Wynar, Ringley, Felton, Brin, Lewis, Posner, or Guernsey. While you’re concentrating on one essay in detail, you should refer to the others so we see the distinctive contributions of the one you’re analyzing.

Remember, all the arguments we’ve read make a certain type of claim and help us see certain things about the issue. So in your essay, explain the claim and how it’s made. In other words, play Elbow’s believing game rather than doubting game. You don’t have to agree, of course, with the author’s claims or strategies, but you should be able to fairly and accurately explain what the argument claims, how the author accomplishes this meaning, and what the essay contributes to the ongoing discussion of this topic.

Evidence:

In rhetorical analysis, you’re concentrating on the rhetorical aspects—how the author creates meaning and the “does” statements in your notes. So while you’ll need to summarize each essay with a brief précis, your essay should do more than summarize. Instead, you should point out rhetorical moves and explain how they create meaning and understanding. Include the aspects we’ve learned—types of claims, rhetorical situation and genre, logos (claim, reason, warrant, grounds, backing, qualifier, rebuttal), the writer’s credibility (ethos), and the writer’s appeal to emotions (pathos)—when you discuss the writer’s work. Your argument should demonstrate understanding and savvy application of these concepts. In addition, be sure to use plenty of textual evidence, summarized, paraphrased, and quoted using MLA format, and explain what the textual example means and what it “does” in the argument. Choose this evidence carefully to illustrate your claim about the essay.

Arrangement (Organization):

An effective analysis will include an introduction that provides your background, experiences, qualifications, as well as the topic’s background, overview of essays, and your thesis. Successful body paragraphs will show us with textual examples of why your claim is reasonable and true. Readers usually expect one of the following patterns in analysis:

· a play-by-play (or chronological) pattern follows the structure of the text, presenting commentary as you go. This is practical, but you risk paraphrasing and merely summarizing rather than arguing the rhetorical aspects and supporting your thesis. In addition, it’s often difficult for readers to switch gears repeatedly among the various rhetorical qualities of the text.

· a topical approach is organized by points, reasons, or rhetorical aspects you want to discuss. This approach allows you to make a pointed analysis and helps ensure you’ve digested the material and aren’t just summarizing. It’s structurally more complicated and, subsequently, more difficult.

Make sure you include plenty of transitional cues to the reader regardless of the pattern you choose. An effective conclusion answers “so what,” and in this case, indicates what else needs to be argued about this issue.

Clarity and Readability:

Write with your audience in mind, striving for standard English and effective style. Adhere to MLA format for academic essays. Use simple, straightforward language and explain the text clearly and fully.

Delivery/Evaluation:
You’ll bring two complete typed drafts to class on Tuesday, Feb. 17, for peer review and to submit to me. Bring another draft Th. The final is due Tuesday, Feb. 24, by 1:30 p.m. in my office (470-B, 10 Park Pl.). As an academic paper in the humanities, the paper should be typed neatly following MLA format; include all drafts and peer review sheets with the final.

I’ll evaluate your paper using the guidelines in your syllabus. I’m looking for demonstration that you understand and can apply the concepts in the chapters we’ve read thus far. Use plenty of textual evidence and explanation.

**Tips for the Process:**
You began writing this paper the first day of class when we began discussing this topic. Re-read class notes, the textbook, and the essays. Talk to your classmates about their reaction to the material. Engage in the pre-writing strategies in Bean and Harbrace. See especially Bean’s chapter on “Reading Arguments,” the sections on analyzing the sources of disagreement and articulating your own values. If you don’t understand the rhetorical terms, study the sections in the book that discuss these and/or come see me during office hours. Use your reading responses to develop ideas; draft early and revise often. Visit the Center for Writing early and often. Enjoy!