COLLEGE WRITING

FOR OUR WORKING FAMILIES AND EDUCATION INEQUALITIES CLASS AND BEYOND
WHAT DO YOU THINK?

- NOT an invitation to simply or only bring your own personal associations, reactions, or experiences to the reading of a text.
- Aim is to come up with a fresh observation.
- **Analytical** with **personal examples**.
  - Your writing must show that your associations, reactions, and experiences of a text have been framed in a **critical**, rather than in a only personal, way.
SUMMARIZE, EVALUATE, & ANALYZE

- **Summarize:** The construction of your summary will depend on your agenda.
  - Definitely always do a summary of its themes.
- **Evaluate:** Evaluate the text, don’t just react to it.
  - You should be able to clearly articulate and support your own personal response.
    - What in the text is leading you to respond a certain way?
    - What's *not* in the text that might be contributing to your response?
    - Why is the text making you feel this way?
- **Analyze:** First, consider the parts of your topic. Second, examine how these parts relate to each other or to the whole.
  - What are the components of this work and how do they contribute to the work as a whole?
  - When you analyze, you break the whole into parts so that you might see the whole differently. In the process of analysis, you find things that you might say.
- **Synthesize.**
  - When you analyze, you break down a text into its parts. When you synthesize, you look for *connections* between ideas.
INTRODUCTION

- **Introduction:**
  - 1) should declare your argument,
  - 2) should place your argument within the larger, ongoing conversation about your topic.

- Place your argument into some larger context. Some strategies follow:
  - Announce your topic broadly, then declare your particular take.
  - Provide background material important to your argument.
  - Define key terms, as you intend to make use of them in your argument.
  - Use an anecdote or quotation.
  - Acknowledge your opponents.

- **WRITE IT AFTER YOU WRITE YOUR PAPER**
• Thesis Sentence:
  • Your thesis should also be an arguable point - that is, it should declare something that is interesting and controversial.
  • 1) A good thesis sentence will make a claim:
    • Develop an interesting perspective that you can support and defend.
  • 2) A good thesis sentences will control the entire argument
    • Every paragraph in your paper exists in order to support your thesis.
    • If one of your paragraphs seems irrelevant to your thesis you have two choices: get rid of the paragraph, or rewrite your thesis.
    • You don't have a third option: you can't simply stick the idea in without preparing the reader for it in your thesis.
  • 2) A good thesis will provide a structure for your argument.
    • Signals to the reader what your argument is, but how your argument will be presented.
    • Your thesis sentence should either directly or indirectly suggest the structure of your argument to your reader.
SUPPORTING PARAGRAPHS AND THE OTHER SIDE

• **Supporting Paragraphs:** These paragraphs must each declare a point, usually formed as that paragraph's topic sentence.
  • A topic sentence is like a thesis sentence - except that instead of announcing the argument of the entire paper, it announces the argument of that particular paragraph.
  • The topic sentence appear at or near the beginning of the paragraph and controls the paper's evidence.

• **The Other Side(s):** acknowledge the other side(s) of an argument.
  • Consider what your opponents might say against your argument dismiss or list and rebut them one by one
MAKING YOUR ARGUMENT CLEAR

• **Unity**: state the thesis, with all supporting paragraphs backing up the thesis.

• **Support**: provide at least three separate supporting points for the thesis with specific evidence for each of the supporting points from your readings.

• **Coherence**: Make sure your paper has a clear method of organization with smooth transitions from one idea to the next idea.

• **Sentence structure**: Make sure your sentences are clear and complete.
  - Use adverbs, adjectives, capitals, and periods correctly.
  - Eliminate needless words and don’t use big words unless you know what they mean
  - Check your spelling and vary your sentences
COHERENCE EX.

• Read the following and identify which of the two examples shows coherence:

• A. Domestic violence is known to be a leading cause of homelessness in our country. As a matter of fact, many teenagers learn violence in the home and enter abusive relationships when there is violence in the family.

• B. Domestic violence is known to be a leading cause of homelessness in our country. More women, children, and teenagers are left without a place to stay when threats or actual experience of violence force them to flee their homes, often unable to return.
CONCLUSION

• **Conclusions**: Leave the reader with something to think about.
• **Summary + why what you wrote is important**
CITATIONS

• Cite your sources to avoid being accused of plagiarism
• All information gathered from sources must have an in-text citation, even if you paraphrase it.
COMMON ERRORS

• Book, states that...
• **Example of a quote:** “The janitor’s strike set the tone for the contract negotiations of approximately 300,000 Los Angeles workers who faced expiring union contracts that same year.” (Wong, 21) (Author, Page number)
• Arguments without any support.
• Arguments or examples not directly related to the readings or class.
• Multiple spelling and grammatical errors.
PROOFREADING AND REVISING

- Read your paper out loud. Have another person read it out loud and edit it for you.

- Problems
  - a. Sentence fragment
  - b. Dangling modifier: A word or phrase that modifies a word not clearly stated in the sentence. (A modifier describes, clarifies, or gives more detail about a concept.)
    - Having finished the assignment, the TV was turned on. ➔ Who? What?
  - c. Run-on
  - d. Inconsistent verb tense