

English 1010 Assignment Sequence

Paper #1: Writing a Narrative about a Discourse Community

Purpose

Narratives are a significant way of making sense of the world. According to Andrea Lunsford and her co-authors in the textbook *Everyone's an Author*, "Narrative essays, especially in college, are meaningful ways of making sense of our experiences, of what goes on around us—and of illustrating a point, making an argument, or writing about the lives of others" (197). By reflecting on personal experiences, we can gain insights and communicate them effectively and meaningfully. Narrative writing is a powerful and engaging tool because it employs storytelling techniques that resonate and connect with readers. If we want to explain to someone else what happened, what we did, what we learned, and why it matters, narrative writing is often the best genre to choose. Narratives capture the reader's attention, connect with the reader at an emotional and empathetic level, and encourage both the writer and reader to think critically about experiences in a thoughtful and effective way.

Task

Write a 3-5 page essay detailing your experience as a new participant in a discourse community of your choosing. Linguist John Swales defined discourse communities as "groups that have goals or purposes and use communication to achieve these goals." Discourse communities can encompass a wide range of groups and organizations. Every community shares a way of using language to define themselves, allowing the community to communicate and establish a sense of trust, belonging, and cohesion.

It is important to understand what a discourse community is and how it works. This understanding will help you appreciate the perspective of your college teachers when they teach about their own academic discourse communities. These communities include specific writing expectations, values, and types of knowledge that vary across different fields and disciplines. By understanding these communities, you can become more informed, flexible, and effective as a communicator in these and other new discourse communities.

Examples of discourse communities for this essay could include:

- A knitting group that meets once a week in downtown Provo at Heindselman's Yarn.

- Hobby mechanics who watch the YouTube channel *HOWSTUFFINMYCARWORKS* and comment on videos to share advice and ask questions.
- Participants in women's weightlifting classes at Orangetheory
- Dental hygienists in a dentist's office
- [A subreddit forum on a specific topic](#)[Links to an external site.](#) (e.g., book recommendations for fantasy fiction, Taylor Swift fan forum, computer science careers, watercolor painting, keto diet, bears in captivity, D&D gaming, etc.)
- Membership in a local volleyball/soccer/tennis team OR a past high school team/group
- Participation in Comicon, live action or tabletop role-playing game community
- Learning to play the guitar with a teacher or through an online community
- Volunteering at Utah Pride Center
- Waiting tables at Olive Garden or any other particular restaurant
- Working a retail job (e.g., Wal-Mart, Soel Boutique, or Zumies)

For this narrative, tell your reader in story form how you joined the community, what that experience was like, and what you learned about yourself and the community. Use effective storytelling techniques to narrate your experience:

- One or two specific events or scenes
- Distinct beginning, middle, and end (sometimes told in chronological order)
- Descriptive detail
- Dialogue examples
- Character development
- Suspense and tension
- Point of view
- Emotional appeal

In addition, as you reflect on your involvement within the community by telling your story, weave four or five of the following aspects into your narrative essay that best address the community you've chosen:

- What is its purpose, goals, and context in which the discourse community operates?
- How did you enter this discourse community? What motivated you to join, and what steps did you take to become a member?
- What specific language, terminology, and communication practices do members of the discourse community use?
- What are some of the social and cultural aspects of the discourse community (values, norms, beliefs)?
- How did you participate, contribute, or engage with other members?
- What successes or challenges did you encounter? What would you have done differently, in hindsight?

- How has your participation in the discourse community contributed to a meaningful experience, even if you encountered potential obstacles or failed to join the community fully?
- What is the significance of your experience and the broader impact of the discourse community on your understanding of the subject matter, as well as any implications for your academic, professional, or personal life?

Overall, make your narrative essay truly effective by expressing your personality and individual voice, which is important for your growth as a writer and for developing a unique writing style.

How You Will Be Graded

The *Writing a Narrative about a Community* essay will be graded according to the following criteria:

- Length: 3-5 pages (750-1250 words), double-spaced
- Clarity of the narrative's purpose (an organizing principle, a theme, or a central focus)
- Inclusion of storytelling techniques as mentioned in Chapter 14:
 1.
 1. a clearly identified event [discourse community]
 2. a clearly described setting
 3. vivid, descriptive details
 4. a consistent point of view
 5. a clear point
- Use of creativity and a personal, unique voice to effectively tell a story and offer a sense of its impact
- Careful paragraph organization that creates a cohesive and engaging overall structure, including transitions and topic sentences
- Accuracy in formatting, grammar, spelling, and mechanics

Textbook Help

- Part I: The Need for Rhetoric and Writing
- Chapter 1: Thinking Rhetorically
- Chapter 4: Language, Power, and Rhetoric
- Chapter 5: Understanding College Expectations
- Chapter 14: Writing a Narrative/"Here's What Happened"
- Chapter 15: Writing Analytically, particularly the section "Discourse Analysis"

Paper #2: Writing a Summary, Reviewing a Text

Purpose

An important element of studying language and improving our writing skills involves understanding texts and accurately informing others about what those texts mean. Reading critically and carefully is an essential skill for any strong writer. In addition, accurately summarizing someone else's arguments is equally important for a good writer. Thus, for this essay, you will pick an audience of your choice and you will **summarize** for your audience a text by analyzing and mapping a writer's argument, understanding the specific details in a text, and informing your readers about the text's evidence and arguments. You will also **review** the same text by either recommending or not recommending the text to your readers.

Task

Write a 2-3 page essay in which you summarize and review a text based on a careful reading of the writer's argument. First, make sure you fully understand the writer's argument and all the details of the text. Then, summarize accurately and succinctly the writer's claims. Finally, conclude with your review and a recommendation for your audience. The point of this paper is not to simply agree or disagree with the author but rather to use careful reading strategies to understand what a text is trying to convey. Then, you will evaluate the text for your own audience.

Include these specific steps:

1. Provide relevant information about the text, the author, and the subject.
2. Carefully read and break down a text so you fully understand its points and its structure.
3. Pick a specific audience to whom you wish to address your paper and pay attention to the audience's needs and expectations.
4. Include a main takeaway (thesis) that indicates how your paper is structured and what it is about.
5. Carefully and accurately summarize the writer's main points and how exactly the writer argues and develops these main points. Explain the writer's logic (*logos*) and the sort of evidence, data, stories, or descriptions the writer uses.
6. Effectively integrate quotations, and paraphrase from the text into your own essay.
7. Include a clear review or recommendation of the text, as well as your criteria for the evaluation: do you want your readers to read the text, or do you find it is not worth their time? Why or why not? Support your recommendation with clear examples.
8. Be aware of the ethics of reviewing as you consider the effects of your judgments.
9. Feel free to include in your essay visual elements (color and graphics) to represent the text's argument: mapping the argument, creating a spider graph, an outline, or a visual representation of the text.

Assessment Criteria

- 2-3 pages (double-spaced)
- Inclusion of all relevant information about the text
- Summary reflects a close, accurate, and careful reading of the text
- Use of specific details from the text to support the review/evaluation
- Use of persuasion, creativity, and imaginative elements to directly engage the chosen audience
- Careful paragraph organization creates a cohesive overall structure
- Accuracy in formatting, grammar, spelling, and mechanics

Textbook Help

- Chapter 17, Writing a Review
- Chapter 7, Annotating, Summarizing, Responding
- Chapter 28, Quoting, Paraphrasing, Summarizing
- Chapter 29, Giving Credit, Avoiding Plagiarism

Paper #3: Analyzing a Text

Purpose

The purpose of this assignment is to better understand how various factors affect the ways authors craft their arguments. In this paper, you will analyze the ways in which authors have considered the audience, purpose, stance, context, and medium/design when they constructed an article or essay. Learning to approach a text in this analytical way will help you better understand how complex texts are written and will familiarize you with using those strategies in your own persuasive writing.

Task

Write a 5-6 page analysis essay that discusses a particular text as assigned by your instructor. First, summarize the text's overall content and scope, and then offer a detailed, well-structured analysis of how the author has incorporated the needs of the intended audience, a specific purpose, a particular stance, a larger context, the demands of the genre and of the medium/design.

Follow these specific steps:

1. Provide relevant information about the text, the author, and the subject.
2. Include a main takeaway (thesis) that indicates how your paper is structured and what it is about.
3. Use appropriate "evidence" for your textual analysis, including concrete details from the text and in-text citations.
4. Specifically analyze the text's "rhetorical situation:" genre, audience, purpose, stance, context, and medium/design.
5. Make sure your paper represents a fair and accurate summary of the text.
6. Use exact quotations and accurate paraphrases to support your claims.
7. Describe in detail what the text says and HOW exactly it says it.

How You Will Be Graded

- 5-6 pages (double-spaced)
- Analysis of the arguments presented by the text
- Focus on audience, purpose, stance, context, genre, and medium/design
- Use of specific examples, quotations, and images
- Focused thesis statement supported by evidence
- Careful paragraph organization creates a cohesive overall structure
- Accuracy in formatting, grammar, spelling, and mechanics

Textbook Help

- Chapter 3, Rhetorical Situations
- Chapter 6, Reading Rhetorically

Paper #4: Establishing the Facts

Purpose

In order to help us more fully understand the complexity of any given issue, this essay will focus on “stasis theory,” a concept and practice used by orators in ancient Greece. As Andrea Lunsford and her co-authors explain in our textbook, stasis theory “takes you to the heart of the argument” by systematically identifying the overall facts (or the general state) about any interesting and relevant issues of our day. Stasis theory is a powerful method of inquiry because it generates a series of pertinent questions to gain a deeper sense of an issue’s complexity. This sort of analysis also allows you to understand the impasses in an argument--what’s at stake, where decisions need to be made, and how you can enter the conversation.

Task

Write a 5-7 page essay in which you perform a systematic analysis of an issue. In this way, you will analyze an argument and find a specific point of contention at which you can enter the conversation. Your paper will consist of TWO SECTIONS that are cohesively connected to each other:

1. Interrogate a single article that your instructor picked, performing an analysis of the issue presented in the article. Uncover “the facts” of this issue by presenting how the text addresses the following four questions:

- What specific facts or data are relevant to the issue?
- How can the issue be defined?
- How much does it matter, and why?
- What actions should be taken?

2. From this analysis, identify an impasse--a moment of tension between what the author believes and what you believe. This tension will be an opportunity for you to enter the discussion by making a new claim. On which of the four questions do you disagree with the author? On which point would you want to intervene and offer an alternative view or claim? Locate another credible source, from the textbook or the UVU Library Database, about this point of contention. Then, offer your own position on the issue by making a new claim and supporting it with evidence from the second source or article.

Assume that the audience of your essay is academic--your peers, your professor, and other college-educated readers. Adjust your tone and stance to engage this audience effectively. You should write in an academic style.

How You Will Be Graded

- - 5-7 pages (double-spaced)
 - Analysis of and commentary on an issue according to the directions above
 - Overall point of scope of paper is presented in the introduction (thesis)

- Use of two sections (that are roughly equal in length): (1) “the facts” about first article and (2) your own position supported by credible research
- Second part of paper includes an argument: claims are supported with credible evidence
- Careful paragraph organization creates a cohesive overall structure
- Accuracy in formatting, grammar, spelling, and mechanics

Textbook Help

- Chapter 19: Analyzing and Constructing Arguments
- Chapter 20: Strategies for Supporting an Argument

Reflection Essay

Purpose

At the end of the writing process, it is always beneficial to reflect on your own terms about what you have written and the process that allowed you to complete each task. This semester, you were asked to analyze a number of texts and to write in a variety of genres. You also learned useful rhetorical skills that you can employ in your writing in other classes. This short essay presents an opportunity to recall your triumphs and struggles, your writing process and finished projects, and your overall learning gains in the course.

Task

Write a 2-3 page reflection essay to your instructor to reflect on your experience as an English 1010 student. You may want to consider more carefully and critically why writing matters to you as a university student. In addition, you may want to address your future goals as a writer. How will you continue to hone and practice different writing skills? Follow these specific steps in your reflection letter:

1. As a way of introducing your reflection essay, think about your writing process by completing the following statements with at least two additional explanatory sentences:
 1. “I believe writing is...”
 2. “I believe revising is....”
 3. “I believe that writing courses are...”
2. In the rest of the letter to your instructor, address some of the following questions (you do not need to cover all of them):
 - Review each major assignment in your portfolio. What are the strengths and weaknesses? Which is your strongest piece of writing? Explain why it is the best and how it demonstrates what you have learned in this course. Which assignment is the weakest, and how would you change it if you could?
 - Analyze your writing process. Study your drafts, notes, and discussions on Canvas. Look at peer feedback responses. How did they help you revise? What was most helpful? What was not helpful, and why? Which of your instructor’s comments and suggestions were most helpful?
 - Describe your writing process. What strategies have been most helpful?
 - Reflect on your work as an author. What are you good at? What kind of writing do you like the most, and why? What kinds of writing do you struggle with, and why?
 - Define your goals. What have your writing assignments helped you understand about yourself as a writer? What do you want to work on in the future?

How You Will Be Graded

- 2-3 pages (double-spaced)
- Demonstration that you have thought carefully about your writing and your writing process
- Thorough consideration of writing and revision process, including instructor/peer feedback
- Claims are supported with evidence from personal experience in this class
- Reflection demonstrates your writing ability
- Careful paragraph organization creates a cohesive overall structure
- Accuracy in formatting, grammar, spelling, and mechanics,

Textbook Help

Chapter 10, Reflecting on Your Writing