



Essays - 6


Reflective Essay

 Each instructor develops her or his own assignments. Your instructor and the assignment sheet s/he has provided are the two best sources for guidance as you work toward a final draft. The handouts/tutorials for the types of essays feature general guidelines to help you write solid essays, but should be treated only as supplements to your instructor and the assignment sheet.


Purpose

 To analyze your own writing critically. You want to move beyond personal opinions about the coursework and grades. Explore your strengths and weaknesses, your habits, your progress, your personality, and so forth. Discuss how these factors influence your writing and vice versa.


Topic





 Depends. Either a specific paper you wrote, your performance in the course, or other possibilities; consult the assignment sheet and your instructor for clarification.

Thesis

 As with an Evaluation Essay, your thesis statement is a value judgment concerning yourself. You will assess yourself to determine if how well you have performed.

Criteria

 You will assess yourself according to specific criteria.

-  **Process** – Discuss which stages of the writing process you feel best about and which stages you would like to improve in.
-  **Structure** – Discuss what phases of papers you tend to execute well or poorly. You may feel good about introductions, but uncertain about conclusions.
-  **Voice** – Discuss your experience with writing in an academic voice. Write about sentence variety, vocabulary, and grammar to explain your performance as a scholarly writer.
-  **Grades** – To some extent, the results of your efforts have been evaluated for you and assigned a grade. Consider these, but evaluate yourself on your own terms. A “C” means different things for different people.

Specifics

- 👉 As always, use specific examples to explain your ideas.
- 👉 Describe in detail your experience with specific stages of the writing process. If you say, “It is hard to think of ideas,” go further and talk about how for the Information Essay you spent three hours watching House while having an existential crisis brought about by the fact that House knows so much and you seemed to know so little. Write about your epiphany: “Then I realized that I knew a lot about the show House.”
- 👉 Describe the organization you used for the essays, discussing what influenced your decisions and how wise you thought you were.
- 👉 Quote yourself directly to provide examples of when you achieved a strong academic voice and when you fell short. Identify words you seem to use incorrectly or too much. Analyze your actual sentences from papers to show grammatical issues you dealt with during the semester.

Structure

- 👉 You could arrange your material according to the criteria you use to evaluate your strengths and weaknesses.
- 👉 You could organize this paper by assignment to offer a narrative of your progress from each essay to the next.