

# ENGLISH 1106: ASSIGNMENT SHEET

## INFORMAL WRITINGS

ENGL 1106: 12671 & 12683  
Pamplin Hall 1010, 8:00-8:50 & 9:05-9:55  
Spring Semester 2010  
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## Informal Writings

### Purpose

- To provide you with opportunities to practice writing from research.
- To develop your thoughts about our class readings.
- To familiarize you with various approaches to disciplinary texts.
- To provide presenters with a springboard for discussion.

### Audience

- Your classmates
- Your teacher

### Format (Unless Otherwise Noted)

- MLA Format
- Typed, 12-point font, Double-spaced
- 300-500 words (You may always write more than 500 words)
- Use the following heading in the upper left-hand corner of your essay:

*Your Name*  
Mr. Gogan  
ENGL 1106  
*Month Day, 2010*

### Descriptions

The idea behind the informal writings (IWs) is that the more practice you get writing, the more you'll improve. In ENGL 1106, our IWs occur towards the beginning of the semester and focus upon the rhetorical analysis of disciplinary texts. These IWs will further serve as springboards for "Article from Your Major" Presentation discussion. Please find specific IW prompts below.

**IW 1:** Write an abstract for each of the day's readings. Refer to our class discussion about writing abstracts from 1/25.

Due: 2/03

**IW 2:** Generate 5-10 strong inquiry questions from each reading. List these questions at the beginning of your IW 3. Then, select one of these questions and explain how you—as a writer, but not necessarily a member of that discipline—would approach answering that question. In other words, create a "writer's plan" that might work to address your question.

Due: 2/05

**IW 3:** Compare and/or contrast any textual or rhetorical aspect of the 2 readings. Your comparison and/or contrast should not address the "content" of the article. Instead, you should look beyond the content and perhaps consider the style, organization, argument, writer(s), or even the design of the articles.

Due: 2/08

**IW 4:** After reading both of the day's pieces, craft a thorough and focused response that answers the following two questions: (1) Which article is more effective? (2) Why?

Due: 2/10

**IW 5:** First, consider ethos to be an interpretation; that is, an interpretation made by a reader about the writer's reputation or credibility. Then, forward an interpretation of each article's writer based upon textual evidence in each piece.

Due: 2/15

**IW 6:** For each article that you read, identify a very specific area where you felt the piece's writer worked with sources effectively. Retype and cite that area in your IW 7. Then, below this excerpt, write a focused and thorough explanation of why this incorporation of a source is effective.

Due: 2/17

**IW 7:** Key words, or specialized terminologies, are significant in any discipline and in any disciplinary text. For each article that you read, list what you consider to be the most important four or five key terms (Note: The article might already provide this list). Next, count how many times these words appear in the text of the article. List your count next to each word. Finally, describe the rhetorical role that the most frequent word plays in the text. In other words, ask yourself: How does the writer deploy this key word in the article?

Due: 2/22

**IW 8:** After reading the day's piece, write a thoughtful reaction/response to the article. In this reaction/response, concentrate on your emotional engagement with the text. In other words, ask yourself: What was I feeling as I read this piece, and why?

Due: 2/24

**IW 9:** After reading the day's piece, review each paragraph asking yourself two questions: (1) What does this paragraph say? (2) What does this paragraph do? Next, divide your IW 10 into 2 columns. In the first column (the left-hand column), you will answer the first question. In effect, you will be writing very brief summaries of each paragraph in the left-hand column. In the second column (the right-hand column), you will answer the second question. In effect, you will be describing each paragraph's rhetorical role in the right-hand column.

Due: 2/26

**IW 10:** As we discussed in class, a discourse community is a group of individuals that share discourse conventions and, potentially, certain values. IW 11 asks you to, first, identify the discourse conventions which appear in each of the day's reading. Second, list these conventions at the top of your IW, treating different readings in different sections. Following each list, suggest how these conventions might reflect the values of the discourse community in which the conventions are employed.

Due: 3/01

**IW 11:** Write a focused and well-crafted description of the rhetorical function of organization in this piece. Pay particular attention to section breaks, section headings, and paragraph length.

Due: 3/03

**IW 12:** Refer to the class discussion from 3/03 and write an annotation for each of the day's articles. Each annotation should blend summary with application.

Due: 3/05

**Grading Criteria**

There will be twelve total IWs, the lowest two grades will be dropped. Each IW is worth one point. Points will be awarded on completeness, focus, thoroughness, and readability. All IWs are due at the beginning of class in hard copy.

*Completeness*

- Was the IW turned in on time?
- Does the IW meet the IW format specifications?

*Focus*

- How well does the IW address its IW prompt?

*Thoroughness*

- How well does the IW exhibit thoughtful engagement with a given text?
- To what degree does the IW seriously consider examples, assertions, or textual features?

*Readability*

- Does the IW contain areas where sentence shape (length, punctuation, wording) or spelling interferes with meaning?