Writing Project 1: Textual Response

*A medium-length, creatively-written response to a reading that explores how a single social issue affects your life.*

Assignment Description

Each of us has a rich, interesting and complicated life filled with thousands of experiences and stories worth telling. Some are seemingly small and insignificant while others seem to change the very course of our lives. But one thing is true: these experiences and stories didn’t occur in a vacuum. They happen along sides serious social issues in our families, local communities and on the national stage. For most of us, we don’t have the time to slow down and really look at how social issues influence our lives. For this first paper, we will read essays that touch on various social issues and write a creatively written personal narrative that explores how our lives have been impacted by them.

Finding a Topic

All three papers for this semester will focus on social issues. Your topic for Paper 1 can potentially be used in all three papers, but that is not required. Choose a topic that is complex enough that you potentially can continue thinking and writing about it for several papers.

* **Politics and Cultural Issues:** think about how issues that occur on a national level affect your daily life. *Consider: health care, immigration, bullying, drug use and the economy.*

Project 1 Goals

* Write a medium-length paper that explores a personal experience and a social issue
* Use creative writing techniques, unique author voice and an interesting organizational structure
* Use proper citation techniques to cite one, and only one, outside work (the *Reading Bank* reading) within your essay
* Improve writing process and editing skills
* **Personal Ethics:** look into your own concept of right and wrong and write about ways in which it has developed over time. *Consider: racism, sexual orientation, legal issues, family dynamics and personal relationships.*
* **Education:** think about how education has played a role in your life, for better or for worse. Consider: *your education background, your major, higher ed. funding, the student loan debt bubble and post-graduation job outlook.*
* **Work:** think about the types of jobs you have held over the years, and write about social issues that are uniquely related to working. *Consider: job types, employment issues,* *the job market,* *union issues and discrimination.*
* **Science and Technology:** explore how changes in science and technology have changed, reshaped, or improved your life. *Consider: medical technology and treatment,* *social media, communication technology*, *military drones and alternative energy.*
* **Nature and the Environment:** explore how issues surrounding nature and the environment impact your life. *Consider: recycling, ‘green’ movement, fracking, pollution and alternate transportation.*

Your Assignment Process

**Brainstorm topics:** take some time and think through the previous list of topics. Think about what issues impact your life, what issues are important to you, and what issues spark your interest.

**Find a reading:** go through the *Reading Bank* and find an essay that relates to your topic. Read through the sections, skim the essay summaries, and spot read individual essays.

**Think of Stories:** think of events, experiences, memories or stories from your life that are examples of your topic and that parallel the reading that you chose from the textbook.

**Draw Comparisons:** decide how your story and the essay relate to each other. Do you have parallel views? Do you disagree? Does the essay change or expand your thinking on your topic?

Writing Features

* This paper involves a heavy narrative element. A good portion of your paper should use Narrative (‘I, me my’) language and employ creative writing for effect.
* Your essay should be approximately a 60/40 or 50/50 split between your experiences and the author’s points.
* Your writing should provide the reader enough context that even someone who has not read the essay can understand the scope of the author’s work.
* Any discussion of your reading from the textbook should use proper MLA formatting for in-text citations and the work cited page.
* Your work cited entry for the *Reading Bank* essay must follow the model for an online article in a magazine, an online newspaper article, or another model that fits the source used, which can be found in Ch. 52 – “MLA Style” (4th Edition; Ch. 54 – 5th Edition) in the *Field Guide.*
* Your in-text citations must follow either the model for an author named in a signal phrase or an author named in parentheses, which can be found in Ch. 52 – “MLA Style” (4th Edition; Ch. 54 – 5th Edition) in the *Field Guide.*
* You may use only one outside source for this assignment – the essay you’ve selected.
* Your paper needs to begin with a strong thesis statement about your social issue that you will support with your personal experience.
* Your essay should be organized using the block or point-by-point style of comparing and contrasting, but more creative organization styles are allowed provided they clearly guide your readers through your work.
* Your paper needs to be properly edited. Participate in online peer reviews, utilize Net Tutor, and use self-editing techniques to polish your final draft.

Paper Submission and Grading Requirements

* This paper is worth 20% of your total grade.
* Your essay should be a minimum of 1,000 words not including your heading, title, and work cited page.
* Your draft should be properly formatted per MLA style guidelines (Times New Roman, 12-point font, uniformly double spaced, header, and page numbers) and saved as a DOC or DOCX file.
* You must fully complete the Week 3 discussion board peer review in order for you to receive feedback from your instructor on your WP1 final draft, and you must submit your final draft by the assignment deadline in order to be eligible to revise and resubmit a revised final draft for grading.