

Dear English 103 Class,

Having finished Week 7 and after working with your rough drafts of Essay 1, you all are now in the final stages of revising your draft and are beginning to proofread and edit it. The peer critique activity was designed to focus attention on your essay's structure and development, and you now will want to work on fine-tuning your essay to be the best possible text when you submit it next week.

After reviewing your drafts in class this past week, I have identified some common areas that you all will want to work on and check:

Incorporating outside sources:

Use the "literary present tense." What does that mean? Writers use the literary present tense when we reference outside sources, and we use the present tense as if the work is alive and new each time it is read. We use this tense to make the distinction between the historical past and the fact that our reading of or analysis of a text occurs in the present, in the "now." Consider these two sentences:

- Swift asserts a policy claim that cannibalizing one-year-old babies is the best solution to Ireland's overpopulation problem. (correct verb tense)
- Swift asserted a policy claim that cannibalizing one-year-old babies is the best solution to Ireland's overpopulation problem. (wrong verb tense)

Notice the tense of the verb assert. The first example sentence illustrates the literary present tense (LPT) while the second sentence is incorrectly written in the past tense. Check your essay to be sure you are using LPT when you reference outside sources.

The MLA Documentation System & Using parenthetical notes:

My assumption is that if you successfully completed English 100, then you have mastered various writing concepts that are fundamental and necessary to know for you to be successful in this course. While reading your drafts this week, some of you need to review some of these concepts. In particular, there are four (4) areas that some of you need to review. These four areas include the following:

1. thesis statements
2. topic sentences
3. citations (quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing)
4. parenthetical notes

If you are feeling a little rusty, then follow this link to my English 100 course website and read through these online lecture notes:

- Thesis Statements and Introductory Paragraphs:
<http://www.wiredprof.com/100h/lectures/Thesis-Intros.htm>
- The MLA Documentation System:
<http://www.wiredprof.com/100h/lectures/MLAdocumentation.htm>
- Integrating Citations Within Your Essay:
<http://www.wiredprof.com/100h/lectures/Citations.htm>

Additionally, if you are feeling a little but rusty about general essay structure, see my online lecture notes on these topics as well:

1. The Elements of an Essay:
<http://www.wiredprof.com/100h/lectures/EssayElements.htm>

Essay 1 Wrap Up Notes

The *SF Writer* handbook also can help you out with these concepts, too. All you have to do is look up the above concepts in the index and read further about them.

Thesis Statements for Essay 1:

If you read through my English 100 online lecture on thesis statements, be aware that those are some general guidelines for thesis statements. For Essay 1 in our course, your thesis needs to meet some specific criteria for it to be considered an acceptable thesis. These criteria are based on the objectives of the writing assignment and more explicitly identified below:

1. Your thesis should mention the author or target text.
2. Your thesis must incorporate either the word "analysis" or "analyze," depending on how you structure the grammar of your sentence.
3. Your thesis must incorporate the word "argument" and/or the terms "claim," "support," and "warrant."
4. Your thesis *must* assert a value claim. The best way to test whether your thesis asserts accomplishes this criteria is to ask the following question: "How does the reader benefit from reading this essay?" Or put another way, "Why is reading this essay that analyzes Swift's "A Modest Proposal" worth my audience's time?" If your thesis can't answer either of these questions, then your thesis doesn't assert a value claim.

Your thesis **should not** do either of the following:

5. Your thesis should not say or even hint that you will be interpreting the target essay. If your thesis mentions anything about the subject matter of the target essay, your thesis is off topic.
6. Your thesis should not evaluate the ethics, morals, or philosophical principles discussed in the target essay. If your thesis does, then you are off topic and do not understand the nature of the analysis writing assignment.

These six criteria will help you assess whether you are using the right kind of thesis for this essay or whether you need to revise yours before submitting your paper next week.

Here is a sample thesis:

In order to analyze Swift's essay, "A Modest Proposal," the reader must examine its claim, support, and general assumptions he makes of his audience and their beliefs.

Test the first 4 criteria. Are they all present in the thesis? 2 criteria are missing. Can you identify which 2 are not present? The thesis is deceptively good. While it serve as a adequate thesis, it is not perfect.

Here is a revised, better version of this thesis:

In order to thoroughly appreciate Swift's essay, "A Modest Proposal," the reader must analyze its claim, support, and warrants to understand how these elements of argument function to produce a unified essay.

This thesis meets all of the first 4 criteria.

Topic sentences for Essay 1:

Several of you had difficulty composing appropriate topic sentences to guide each main body paragraph of your essay. Below are sample topic sentences (TS) that will relate to the thesis above and that will focus the main body paragraphs in a potential essay:

MB ¶ 1: In "A Modest Proposal," the type of claim that Swift asserts is classified as a policy claim because he is proposing a solution to Ireland's dire overpopulation problem.

Essay 1 Wrap Up Notes

MB ¶ 2: Swift employs several types of support, and the most abundant kind involve his use of numerical and historical examples.

MB ¶ 3: In addition to these forms of support, the second most common form of support in "A Modest Proposal" is Swift's dependence on emotional appeal.

MB ¶ 4: The last type of evidence Swift uses in his essay is occasional reference to "reliable" authorities.

MB ¶ 5: Although Swift implements several warrants to connect his support to his claim, the most obvious, yet implied, warrant is that he assumes that his audience will agree that breaking the social taboo of cannibalism is acceptable.

Notice that each of these topic sentences incorporates a different element of the structure of a well unified argument. Your essay should look similar to this but be original in its phrasing of the topic sentences.

Turnitin.com as a Useful Documentation Aid:

All of you will need to upload your essay to Turnitin.com by midnight of your essay's due date. But you do not have to wait until the day your paper is due. You can actually use Turnitin.com to check your citations for accurate documentation. How? When you upload your file, an originality report will be generated. Anything you quote from the target essays will be highlighted. There's nothing wrong with that. However, if the highlighted material that shows up is not surrounded by quotation marks and documented with a parenthetical note, then you have plagiarized, and your essay will receive a score of zero (0). I recommend that you upload your paper and check it for accurate documentation. If you have made some mistakes in not documenting your source correctly, you can fix the errors and upload your file again after a 24-hour waiting period. Just be sure to budget your time so that you have a 24-hour window to upload your paper a second or third time if you need to.

Final Reminders:

1. Works Cited page
 - a. If you cite just one (1) source, title this page Work Cited (singular), not Works Cited (plural)
 - b. The title "Crito" is formatted in quotation marks everywhere it appears in your essay. *Everywhere*. Just do not confuse it with Socrates' friend Crito.
 - c. Be sure to format the titles "A Modest Proposal" and "The Declaration of Independence" with quotation marks.

2. MLA Essay Template

You must use the MLA essay template to format your essay. You'll find this on the course website by clicking on the Essay Assignments hyperlink. An incorrectly formatted essay risks losing points for sloppy work. If you do not use this template, you are responsible for making certain that your manuscript follows all of the guidelines for MLA document format. You can read my online lecture notes for my English 100 class here: <http://www.wiredprof.com/100h/lectures/MLAdocFormat.htm>.

Works Cited:**Bibliographic Entry for Essay 1**

Depending on which text you plan to use for your essay, you can simply copy/paste these bibliographic entries into your Works Cited page. Because you will be citing just one source, you must title that page in the singular: Work Cited.

Work Cited

Swift, Jonathan. "A Modest Proposal." *The Structure of Argument*. Eds. Annette T. Rottenberg and Donna Haisty Winchell. 6th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2009. 354-361. Print.

Work Cited

Jefferson, Thomas. "The Declaration of Independence." *The Structure of Argument*. Eds. Annette T. Rottenberg and Donna Haisty Winchell. 6th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2009. 33-35. Print.

Work Cited

Plato. "Crito." Trans. Benjamin Jowett. *The Internet Classics Archive*. Web 21 Feb. 2010
<<http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/crito.html>>.