

SCAFFOLDING OF MY ASSIGNMENTS FOR THREE UNITS OF MY FYW-150 CLASSES

These are the basics of my lectures and handouts for the three separate units of my FYW 150 class.

Unit One: Reflection and Description based on the novel, *The Chosen* by Chaim Potok. Personal narrative and reflection based on one of the novel's themes.

1. What does Literature Have to do With Writing? (Short Video "What is Literature For?"—a Monty Pythonesque 5-minute animation by the School for Life /YouTube) Then students write about and discuss techniques they noticed.
2. Critical Thinking and an Exercise in Observation
3. Some Literary Terms
4. Brief Literary Criticism (Explains movements in 20th-21st century, including what linguistic anthropologists tell us about binary language systems and their influence on our thinking/writing).
5. Writing Reflective Essays With a Purpose
6. Writing Descriptive Essays (Several exercises, including the Sense-Memory Exercise and a small group collaborative exercise I call "The Car Goes Down the Street").
7. Writing Compare/Contrast Essays
8. Themes in The Chosen, a novel by Chaim Potok
9. Writing Personal Narratives on a Theme From The Chosen
10. Prompt for the First Formal Essay (Students will compare/contrast their own experience and a character's with regard to a theme they have chosen from the novel).
11. Structuring This First Formal Essay ("The Essay Robot" Handout: What Goes Where?)
12. Ways to Begin Your Reflective Essay (Examples, followed by their own attempts at writing an introduction)
13. Writing a Strong Thesis Statement
14. Writing a Meaningful Conclusion
15. Quoting From Sources
16. Some Basic MLA Rules
17. Considering the "So What?" Factor

Other areas we cover in this section include Writing Concisely; Creating a Dominant Mood; Awkward Sentences; Common College Writing Problems; Rough Drafting, etc. In this section, students are encouraged to share their work and we talk about what is distinct about each sharer's "voice". Rough drafts are shared with me, but not peer reviewed since reflective writing is often extremely personal and sometimes even painful. Of course, in the next two sections of my class, workshopping and "peer reviewing" are mandatory.

Unit Two: Writing Rhetorical Analysis is a section devoted to analyzing the ethos, pathos, logos and various rhetorical and persuasive strategies of writers/speakers/etc. This section will culminate in a full comparative rhetorical analysis of two essays. (For the formal comparative essay, I use "A Complete Medical Education Includes the Arts and Humanities" by David S. Jones, MD PhD, in The AMA Journal of

Ethics and “That ‘Useless’ Liberal Arts Degree Has Become Tech’s Hottest Ticket” by George Anders in Forbes Magazine). We build on certain skills learned in the previous section, and add in more rhetorical observations.

1. What Is Rhetoric/Joining the Conversation/Knowing Your Audience
2. Some Rhetorical Terms You Need to Know
3. Aristotle’s triangle: Ethos, Pathos, Logos
4. Persuasive Techniques and Strategies
5. An author’s/speaker’s “voice” or style of diction.
6. Exercise: Bring in and present to class a simple object with a message: (graphic T-shirt, cartoon, bumper sticker, funny coffee mug, etc.) Using one or more persuasive strategies, write a brief paragraph attempting to convince others of its value and share with the class.
7. Exercise: Comparing a one-page essay with a cartoon strip (both of which deal with the overemphasis on ridiculous beauty standards for women in our society) and write how each text appeals to ethos/pathos/logos. Identify some strategies used in each.
8. How Dialogue and Pictures Contribute to the Rhetorical Model
9. Performance: Add in Techniques of Visuals, Sound, Movement, Body Language, Tempo and Tone. (We watch two 3-minute performances: Marshall Davis Jones’ “Touchscreen” and David Lee’s “Pass On” on YouTube. Then I ask students to write their observations of how rhetorical technique is demonstrated by these two performers.
10. Activity: The Moth “Story” Cards. Each student takes a card, follows a prompt, and as we sit in a circle tells a brief true story of an experience that the prompt on the card suggests. Then we talk about how narrative aids in empathy (pathos) as we learn to listen to one another.
11. Activity; Each student must bring in a brief text (letter to the editor, short essay, etc.) and in groups of 3 or 4 examine each other’s offerings and comments on rhetorical analysis of these texts.
12. Prompt for the Formal Comparative Rhetorical Analysis
13. Taking Apart the First Text (Jones) Discussion and Lists
14. Taking Apart the Second Text (Anders) Discussion and Lists
15. Organizing Your Comparative Rhetorical Analysis Essay (Integrative Method versus Block Method)
16. Outlining, Rough Drafting, and Peer Workshops

We review MLA formatting, parenthetical references, quotes within quotes, and how rhetorical analysis involves analyzing the texts in terms of rhetorical strategies rather than summarizing the arguments of the two authors. Difficulties students experience are addressed and various exercises are offered to help.

Unit Three: Writing Research (“Research Lite” for Beginners). I am assisted in this by a visit from Hugh Burkhart who gives us a full hour-long presentation on how to access library assistance when

doing research. In this section, each student must pick a topic of interest, then narrow it to a single aspect of that topic and develop questions they might like to explore regarding that aspect.

1. Writing Around the Topic to Discover an Approach
2. Narrowing the Topic and Developing the Research Question
3. Students print out at least a page of one research text, bring it to class, and work in small groups with others whose chosen topics may give insight to each other, even if topics are different
4. Students must choose 3 or more other texts that shed light on their topic and their research question. Discussion takes place and students write their thoughts on their work and that of others.
5. Argumentation and Surveys: Two Types of Research
6. Examining Claims of Fact, Claims of Value, and Claims of Policy.
7. Discussing Warrants and Fallacies
8. Qualifying Your Research Findings “Not “This proves...” but rather “This would tend to indicate...” and writing observations not judgments, “The patient did not make eye contact and spoke in a monotone” rather than “The patient was depressed.”
9. Students must show results of some of their library searches.
10. Steering the student away from interjecting personal material.
11. Outlining, rough-rough drafting and refining.
12. Rough draft for peer review/workshop.
13. Rules and formatting of their research essays.
14. Final draft of 5-7 page double-spaced research paper with Works Cited, in MLA format. This will be turned in during Finals Week and will comprise their Final.

FYI I am usually exhausted by the time we finish our semester, but the results have been good generally, and it is always challenging.