

Appendix A

ASSIGNMENTS FOR ENGLISH 1 ESSAYS

ASSIGNMENT 1: A SIGNIFICANT EVENT

Subject: In this essay you will recount some event from your past that has particular significance for you. Generally, such pieces fall under the category of “How I got to be the way I am . . .” or “The day I learned a lesson . . .” or “Why I changed my mind . . .”; that is, they are examples of experiences that have shaped your identity or your values.

You will use narrative and description, but your purpose will be reflective. You may choose to explicitly name the change or realization you experienced, or you may leave it implicit in the essay.

Audience: Think of writing this for submission to an anthology of outstanding essays by college students.

Length: Roughly 750 words.

Due: Draft for discussion
Paper to be evaluated

ASSIGNMENT 2: A PORTRAIT

Subject: In this assignment you will present a portrait of a person who is, for some reason, important in your life. You will describe, but you will also narrate, because events and actions define people as much as physical description. You will probably want to put your character in action and to show us people’s responses to this character. You may want us to hear the sound of your character’s voice.

Think again about focusing and “telling facts,” the details that make us see and *hear* and *feel*.

Audience: Again, think of writing an essay that might be selected for our text, one written for an audience of literate college students as a model of expository prose.

Length: Roughly 750 words.

Due: Draft
Final form

ASSIGNMENT 3: PROBLEM/SOLUTION

Subject: Write an essay proposing a solution to a particular problem. Look for something close at hand, a problem that really does affect you. For this paper your audience will have to be quite specific, a person or group who might be in a position to help solve the problem.

Length: 750 words

Due: Draft
Final

ASSIGNMENT 4: EVALUATION

Subject: For this assignment you will be asked to write an evaluation *in class*. You may bring with you a text and/or notes on the subject of your evaluation.

Think of this essay as a piece of writing for an audience who reads *The Evening Herald*. This may be a review of a cultural event, an evaluation of some feature of life on campus, a course, a teacher, a text, a fast-food chain, or a french fry.

Again, in this essay you wish to persuade, to present your judgment with authority, detail, clarity and conviction.

Due: In class

ASSIGNMENT 5: A PROFILE

Subject: This last paper for the course is to be a profile; that is, it will be a description of a specific person, place, or activity. Generally, profiles urge us to see something new in a subject; they often involve surprise or contrast, a perspective

on the subject that forces us to re-evaluate it. They are close-ups with a very strong controlling theme.

Choose something accessible; use field notes and/or interviews; spend time shaping your material to arouse reader interest and curiosity. (“The best beginnings are surprising and specific.”)

Length: 3 – 5 pages

Due: Draft
Final