

Changes: Experiencing and Writing about Coronavirus

Instructor

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Overview

Writing is challenging and made even more so under the evolving conditions that Covid-19 has placed us into. This assignment asks you to write about some of your experiences as a result of Covid-19. You can talk about some or all of the following, or about something else that you'd like to share:

- the changes you've experienced as a student (e.g., online classes, changes in class assignments, changes in teacher engagement),
- technology issues (e.g., access, computer needs),
- changes in living arrangements (e.g., moving out, being forced out, moving home),
- work loss or cutback
- food and basic necessity issues,
- separation from loved ones,
- the loss of socializing in what used to be normal places (e.g., coffee houses, nightclubs, parks, beaches)
- Health concerns and issues, your and those around you

Purpose

Being in isolation forces us to keep our thoughts inside our heads. This writing assignment is designed to allow us to get some of our ideas out of our heads and onto paper. By doing so, we are actually doing something that is mentally healthy for us because, as we write, we make sense of all the swirling ideas, images, and experiences in our minds. If you feel writing about your experiences with the pandemic might be too traumatic, let your teacher know so s/he can explore another subject with you.

Audience and Format

This writing assignment can be approached several ways. You can,

- address a letter to a classmate, friend, or family member, e.g., "Hey, out there," "Dear Mary," or Hi Dad."
- write a collection of responses to some of the prompts listed above in Overview, or explore issues important to you.
- depict what you're experiencing in images by including painted, sketched, drawn, or photographic images that you embed into your project.

Your project can range from one to five pages.

Steps

1. In a freewrite, list, or other discovery approach you're comfortable with, write down all the memorable changes and events you're experiencing from the Covid-19 pandemic (see suggestions above in Overview).

2. From your list, which one or ones do you feel the need to write about? Remember, it is through writing about our experiences that we make sense of the world we live in.

3. Once focused on your key topic (or topics), take a moment to think through these experiences. If you can, talk about your project with a classmate, friend, or family member (by phone, email, Zoom, Skype, Facetime, etc.) about what you're focused on.

4. Take your key points and begin writing a draft. Use your key points to spring into and explore your focused points; let them take you where they will.

5. Read all your drafted ideas.

6. Try and locate a thread or key experience from all you've thought and written about so far. Write down your thread or key experience in a sentence or two that captures your point. Use this thread or key experience sentence to then refine and organize the experiences you wrote about in your drafts.

7. Share your story with others, and at:

[Link to Coronavirus Stories Website](https://studio.colostate.edu/coronastories/)
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