

Reader response & Free write assignment descriptions

A good portion of this class will be centered on your writing notebook—a safe place for your thoughts on our readings and creative writing free writes. Although you are required to upload images of the graded assignments, please feel free to use your notebook for more brainstorming, sketching, story seeds, and thoughts on readings or discussion. I will be looking briefly at the notebooks once per unit when we are in conference, but do not need to read anything apart from the graded assignments unless you would like me to.

Reader response assignments (10)

There will be a total of 10 reader response assignments over the course of the semester based on the course readings. These will be handwritten in your course journal (exceptions for accommodations) during class. What I want to know are YOUR thoughts and ideas on the reading—favorite quotes, descriptions, things you felt particularly connected to or inspired by. There are no wrong answers. We will write for a few minutes at the beginning of class and then will share our thoughts and ideas. Your group members may be reading over these and you will need to post a photo of your writing to Canvas by the end of class for grading. The purpose of these assignments are to clarify your thoughts and ideas about the readings before sharing them with others in class, particularly giving a chance for full expression to those less comfortable in full class discussions. Seeing the readings you are most enthusiastic about and how we share ideas as a group may form what we read later in the semester and how we go about sharing our ideas and learning from each other.

Method: You need to do the readings. I have chosen relatively short and varied examples of the kinds of writing we will be doing in class. A mix of genre, occasional poetry, and some videos or multimodal essays. This is your only homework outside of your major essays and I expect you to take it seriously. I suggest reading notes (you can also do this in your notebook) to respond to particular things you liked or disliked, meaningful quotes you might reference in your responses, your immediate thoughts and take aways from the reading. You can look up information about your author or text or time period for more context, etc. You will be responding to a specific prompt at the beginning of class with specific questions and you should plan on sharing quotations for discussion, but you may also share other insights or overall feelings of connections. You may also share drawings, poems, descriptions or even just words that stuck out to you, and certainly questions that came up during your reading. We will then be discussing out responses and sometimes sharing them in your groups or with the class (you do not have to read them word for word). As these are handwritten and in-class assignments, you will not be graded on spelling/grammar, etc. 😊 They should be about a page in length but may vary on the time given and how many readings you are responding to.

Free write assignments (10)

There will be a total of 10 free write assignment in class this semester. These will be handwritten in your course journal (exceptions for accommodations) during class. This is really the best part of creative writing—think of it as brainstorming or essay seeds—channeling your creative ideas on paper without overthinking it. This is the best practice and the prompts will likely lead to ideas for your unit essays. The purpose of this is to get your ideas flowing, work on sensory details and description without the pressure of a major assignment. Think of them as snacks or appetizers or the warmups before a big game. You will be sharing these in groups or with the class, but hopefully this will become easier as we get to know each other. There is no judgement in first draft free writes, and we will all be in the same boat. Have fun with them! 😊

Method: The course readings are essential again as examples for the types of writing we will be doing in class. Take them as your inspiration (or perhaps what you don't want to do 😊). You will have a writing prompt at the beginning of class and will have a good amount of time to write a page (or more) in your journal on the topic. Try to write for the entire time and see what happens, this is often where the magic lives. You can get as creative as you want with it and it's okay to veer in a direction other than you intended (this may lead you somewhere great!). You may also add drawings or lines of poetry or lists or ideas to your free writes if you would like. This is your time. We will share and discuss these, and you do need to upload an image of your writing to Canvas for grading by the end of class. As these are handwritten and in-class assignments, you will not be graded on spelling/grammar, etc. ☺ They should be about a page in length but may vary on the time given and where your broccoli takes you!

Together these weekly assignments make up **20%** of your course grade.