**109 Sequence**

Liz Janssen, Fall Quarter 2013

**Paper 1:** Summary of “Mother Tongue”

**Context:** This week we’ve discussed strategies for summarizing texts, and we’ve practiced some of those strategies in class. For your first short paper, you’ll apply your summarizing skills to a text you’ve become familiar with this week: Amy Tan’s “Mother Tongue.”

**Assignment:** Write a 1-page summary of “Mother Tongue.” Remember, writing a summary requires that you make choices about the best way to represent the original text. A summary comprises the “they say” part of an argument; it tells readers the key points of the text and its basic points, *in your own words*. Your reader should not be able to tell your position on the summarized text—it should not include your opinion. It should also not include any quotations.

A summary should include:

* Some context to introduce the text and author (so that readers understand who wrote the text, why, and where it first appeared)
* The main points/claims
* Some explanation of the ways in which the author makes these points (i.e., what evidence is used to support them?)

**Format:** 1 page typed, double-spaced and in Times New Roman 12 pt. font with 1-inch margins on all sides. You must include a heading on your paper that includes your name, the title of this class (ENGL 109H), the essay number (Paper 1), and the date.

Please include a **writer’s memo** of 1 short paragraph, reflecting on your writing process and one or two of your specific writing choices.

**Assessment**

In my written feedback, I will address the following:

* The context provided for the text and author and whether it is sufficient to understand the overall position/situation of the text
* The strategic choices you made concerning which key points to include in your summary
* Your concise rephrasing and explanation of Tan’s essay as a whole

**Paper 2:** Revised summary *plus* response to “Mother Tongue”

**Context:** Over the last couple of weeks, we’ve been discussing what it means to join an academic “conversation” (recall the introduction and Chapter 1 of *TSIS*). Now, I’d like you to use the strategies we’ve discussed to both revise your summary of “Mother Tongue” *and* add your own “I say.”

**Assignment:** First, revise your summaries of “Mother Tongue” using my written feedback, and with your own responses in mind. Then, using the ideas we’ve gone over from *TSIS*, add your own response. Your response should clearly position your ideas *in relationship to* Tan’s: that is, do you agree with Tan’s view of language (with addition)? Do you disagree (with reason)? Do you respond in favor of some middle ground? Can you relate to her experience in some way—and if so, how is your experience with language similar or different than the one she describes?

**Format:** 1-2 pages typed (at least 1 full page and no longer than 2 full pages), double-spaced and in Times New Roman 12 pt. font with 1-inch margins on all sides. You must include a heading on your paper that includes your name, the title of this class (ENGL 109H), the essay number (Paper 1), and the date.

**Assessment**

I’ll be looking for:

* Evidence of thoughtful and strategic revision of your summary
* A tailoring of your summary to suit the purposes of this assignment (in other words, some of the details of your summary should lead into the focus of your response)
* An appropriate, critical and original response to “Mother Tongue”

**Paper 3:** My “Hidden Intellectualism”: Summary, Response, and Quote Analysis

**Context**: In short papers 1 and 2, you practiced setting up a summarized "they say" for your own "I say." In this short paper 3, you'll move on to a more directed response to a new text (Graff's "Hidden Intellectualism"), and add some practice with quote integration and analysis.

**Assignment:** Think about one of your non-academic interests—something that reveals your “hidden intellectualism.” This can be just about anything you spend substantial time thinking about, in ways that are (as Graff says) "reflective and analytical." In this essay, explore why and how this interest showcases your hidden intellectualism, and how yours relates (or doesn’t) to Graff’s. In other words, put yourself “in conversation” with Graff’s essay.

*Some guiding questions to consider* (you don't need to answer all of these): How well does your non-academic interest provide you with intellectual skills that are translatable to academic contexts? What are those skills? Do you think your high school or college "missed opportunities" to tap into that interest in order to engage you more deeply in academic intellectualism? Do you feel the same divide as Graff between academic intellectual culture and the culture of your "hidden" intellectual interest? What do you get from your "hidden" intellectual interest that school may not provide, and vice versa?

Your paper will need to include:

A brief **summary** of Graff’s essay (of about a half-page), so that your reader understands the key ideas you are responding to.

Your **response** (between 1 and 2 full pages), including at least one **quote** from Graff. Be sure to "frame" the quote--explain it for your reader, and analyze how it relates to your response.

**Format:** Between 1 1/2 ad 2 1/2 pages, double-spaced in Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins. Include the usual header.

Please include a writer's memo of one short paragraph, reflecting on your writing process and one or two specific writing choices you made.

**Assessment:**

In your paper, I'll be looking for:

* A summary that explains Graff's key ideas clearly and is clearly written with your own response in mind (sets up your "I say")
* A thoughtful response that demonstrates an understanding of Graff's essay and the concept of "hidden intellectualism"
* Effective quote integration and sufficient quote analysis

**Paper 4:** Close Reading Malcolm X

**Context:** This week we’ve read and tackled a text written in a slightly higher academic register than others we’ve explored so far: Malcolm X’s “Learning to Read.” There's a lot being said in this text and it challenges you to use your annotating skills in order to understand what X is saying, and how he is saying it.

**Assignment:** *Choose* and *close read* one passage of your choosing of “Learning to Read” and explore *what* X is saying in that passage and *how* he is saying it. Your chosen passage should be between about a half-page-1 page long. You can choose a passage you found particularly interesting, or one that was confusing or difficult, or one that you agree (or disagree) with—it’s up to you. It cannot, however, be the passage your group presented on in class.

Remember that close reading involves identifying words you don’t know, untangling difficult sentences, analyzing and interpreting word choice and phrasing, and tying concepts together. Your paper should explain, in some depth, between 2 and 4 specific writing choices and the effects they produce in you, the reader. Close reading also means tying a particular passage to the overall argument or idea of a text, so be sure to not only spend time applying a magnifying glass to your passage, but also to the essay as a whole.

Your paper should include at least one quotation of a phrase or sentence that you analyze; do not include more than three quotations total.

**Format:** Between 1.5 and 2.5 pages typed, double-spaced in Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins. Include the usual header.

Please include a writer's memo of one short paragraph, reflecting on your writing process and one or two specific writing choices.

**Assessment:**

I’ll be looking for:

* A thoughtful consideration of the passage you chose and explanation of why you chose it
* Complexity and depth of your analysis of the specific writing choices
* Explanation of how those writing choices relate to the larger passage or to X’s essay as a whole

**Paper 5:** Connecting the Parts

In an interview with CNN.com, Sir Ken Robinson is asked about the success of his TED lecture entitled “How Schools Kills Creativity.” Here is part of what he says:

“What is the argument? In a nutshell, it's that we're all born with immense natural talents but our institutions, especially education, tend to stifle many of them and as a result we are fomenting a human and an economic disaster.” (cnn.com)

**Assignment: Explain how Robinson supports his argument.** How does he convince his audience that schools stifle creativity?Think about what kinds of examples he uses to support his view. Does he refer to research? Does he narrate some personal anecdotes? How does he critique the current education system? What is wrong with educators today, in his opinion? You do not need to respond to all of these questions; they simply offer you a starting point to begin understanding how Sir Ken Robinson supports his argument.

**You also need to pay extra attention to your connecting of parts/ideas/sentences in this paper—in other words, cohesion.** Please refer to Chapter 8 of *TSIS*. I will be reading your paper with special attention to your use of transitions to achieve clarity in your writing.

**Finally, include and “sandwich” at least one quotation.** Choose your quote(s) carefully; decide whether it’s a phrase that would *not* be better paraphrased. Be sure to both introduce the quote and provide sufficient explanation/analysis of it. Please refer to the TED lecture and transcript as you work on this paper (both available on Canvas).

**Formatting:** Your paper should be 1.5-2 double-spaced pages in length with 1-inch margins and 12-point, Times New Roman font.

Please include a writer’s memo of about one paragraph, reflecting on your writing process and one or two of your specific writing choices.

**Assessment:**  In your paper I’ll be looking for:

* Thoughtful and thorough explanation of how Robinson supports his ideas/argument(s)
* The overall cohesion of your paper (including the effectiveness of transitions and the logical flow of ideas)
* Effective integration and analysis of at least one quotation

**Paper 6:** Comparative Rhetorical Analysis

**Context:** By now, we've read and analyzed a variety texts in this class; these texts have dealt with some similar themes, but the writers have employed a wide range of rhetorical strategies to communicate those themes. In this paper, you'll put your summarizing, quoting and rhetorical analysis skills to work as you put two of our course texts "in conversation" with one another.

**Assignment:**Write a *comparative rhetorical analysis* of David Foster Wallace's "Commencement Speech" and one other course text of your choosing (you may choose Tan, Graff, X or Robinson). Choose one or two specific aspects to analyze and compare across both texts. Think in terms of the "big picture" of rhetorical analysis; you may choose to analyze the authors' purposes for writing, how they respond to their respective contexts, how they engage their audiences, or how they choose and organize their evidence. To explain how effective these authors are in regards to your topic, you may need to apply the magnifying glass of close reading (for example, to analyze a specific word choice in order to demonstrate the author's purpose). Think about: is one text more effective than the other, in this specific aspect? Are these aspects similar or different, and if so, why? Be sure to not only analyze each text, but to explain how these texts are related (or in conversation with) one another.

This paper will need to include a *synthesis* of both texts: a brief combined summary of both, providing enough context for your reader to understand the main ideas and how they relate to one another.

You will also need to integrate and "sandwich" *two quotations.*

**Format:** 1.5-2.5 pages, double-spaced in Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins. Include the usual header. Please proofread your paper before turning it it! And please include a writer's memo.

**Assessment:**

In your paper, I'll be looking for:

* Responsible presentation of both texts' main ideas in your summaries
* Thorough, thoughtful and focused rhetorical analysis
* Explanation of the relationship between the texts in terms of the specific focus of your rhetorical analysis
* Effective quote integration and analysis

**Paper 7 (Long Essay):** First Draft

**Context:** Throughout the quarter, you’ve been writing short papers and practicing critical reading and writing skills. You’ve been analyzing and annotating various kinds of texts as well as developing responses of your own (using the “they say, I say” format). You are now ready to embark on the next step: a 4-6 page paper that incorporates all of our Learning Goals and simply builds upon what you already know how to do. For this essay, I want you to *synthesize* what you’ve read in order to *enter into an academic conversation* on the topic of education. Your specific topic, and the nature of your argument, is completely up to you.

**Assignment:** Choose at least two of texts we’ve read to put “in conversation” with each other—and then, after synthesizing what “they say,” enter that conversation with your own analysis and argument.

*Possible* questions for consideration: How does the perspective of one of these texts on education inform your understanding of another text? What does being “educated” mean to these authors—what are some similarities and differences—and what does it mean to you? What do *you* think are the most important aspects of education? How do you think “valuable education” should be primarily defined? What should it do? Where does one receive it? How could the education system be more effective—or do you believe the system we have is effective enough? How are your conclusions informed by these texts?

You will need to ground your own argument and analysis by considering the perspectives of at least **2** of the authors we’ve read (Tan, Graff, X, Robinson, and Wallace). Your paper will need to include at least **3** strategically chosen and thoroughly analyzed quotes.

Be sure to argue your claim in a thoughtful, analytic way and to provide sufficient evidence (from the texts and perhaps from personal experience) as support.

**Format:** Your first draft must be 4-6 pages typed (at least 4 full pages), double-spaced and in Times New Roman 12 pt. font with 1-inch margins on all sides. You must include the usual heading **and** a title and page numbers. Please **proofread** your paper before turning it in. And, as always, please include a writer’s memo.