

Project-at-a-Glance

Rhetorical Purpose: To **summarize** and **respond** to a one author, adding to a current conversation about home and identity, and the complications that come with those connections.

Audience: Other well-educated writers interested in issues about home, difference, and identity.

Pages: 4+ full pages or 1000 words, not including your Works Cited page or Writer's Memo.

Format and documentation: MLA Style (Times New Roman 12 pt. font, black ink, one-inch margins, page numbers, a Work(s) Cited page, and a header) and citation (in-text and a bibliography/Work(s) Cited page). MLA citation and style help is available through ZSR Library's website (<https://zsr.wfu.edu/research/citation>) and in *EasyWriter*. We'll also touch on citations in class, but you do not have to memorize this. Given your audience and purpose here, to establish credibility, do look them up!

Total Possible Points:
200

WRI 111 Writing Home Spring 2018 Unit 1: Entering the Conversation Project 1: Popular Article Response

"The job of a [writer] is to push at and question what has been said before, to re-think and reinterpret the texts he or she is dealing with...playful, questioning, and assertive...what [writers] have to say is bound up inextricably with the books we are reading, the movies we are watching, the music we are listening to, and the ideas of people we are talking with. Our creativity thus has roots in the work of others—in response, reuse, and rewriting." – Joseph Harris

Project Overview

Most writers respond to each other's ideas through writing. One way they have these conversations is by composing **response essays** to other writers; this is a kind of talking, but a very public kind and in print. As we'll discuss, effective writing has common features but also is situational. Different kinds of communication are called *genres*. A genre's purpose and audience can give us many clues to how we as writers can effectively enter conversation; asking questions about a genre's audience and purpose is always powerful, and we'll begin to do that in this first project.

In this genre of writing in particular—a summary and response—writers attempt to **build on and further a conversation**. And here, you will take on the role of a writer who has something to say in response to **another writer's work in a current conversation about the complex concept of home today**. Thus, as we'll learn, more effective writing tends to come from you, as a writer, making choices that reflect **your rhetorical situation**, or **your audience and purpose**. It's always powerful to ask: *who* am I writing for? *Why* am I writing?

Our Learning Objectives

- To **participate, actively read, and write** in a current conversation as an academic writer and reader.
- To practice **critical thinking, analysis, and reading**.
- To practice **using textual evidence** (quotations, paraphrases, and most of all, summary).
- To practice **crafting an organized argument** with a beginning, middle, and end.
- To practice **writing and research as process** through free writing, drafting, responding to other writers' drafts, processing constructive yet critical feedback, and significant (radical) revision.
- To practice **ownership and reflection about yourself as a writer, thinker, and human using specific textual evidence from your own work and potentially other texts, including class readings**.

Sources: At least **one** of these three popular articles, all in our course pack:

“Aria: A Memoir of a Bilingual Childhood”
by Richard Rodriguez

“Black and Blue”
by Garnette Cadogan

“Where the Heart Is”
by Leslie Berlin

You may use other **credible** sources that add to your evidence but the **central focus** of your argument should be responding **to one of the above essays**.

Due Dates:

Full rough draft due 24 hours before your workshop on Tues. Feb. 13, Wed. Feb. 14, or Thurs. Feb. 15.

Sign ups for group draft workshops soon; watch our daily calendar on our website and we will be talking more about this in class. We'll share drafts via a class Google Drive folder; that's where you upload yours and find your workshop partners' writing.

Final folder (with workshop drafts, final draft, Writer's Memo, and signed rubric): Mon. Feb. 19

On to details...

home and identity. All of these authors ask (and try to answer), “what is home to me?” Is it something just physical, or more complex than that? Is it all good, or more interesting and complicated than that? How does your or other's notion of “home” contribute to identity, culture, and class? Is there a current conversation/event about home in y/our larger experiences where you spot connections to our readings?

Once we've read and talked about these three articles, **you'll select one essay to respond to.** You're not just a student, but also a writer, and will be entering this conversation actively, not watching from the sidelines. **As you work through drafting and revising your response, ask yourself: what is your home/identity specifically to you and why? Keep in mind the most interesting and successful responses are often precise and complex, a result of openness and curiosity.**

They avoid generalizations and vague claims. They offer carefully chosen evidence. They anticipate counterarguments. Sometimes they can even be grounded in a writer's own experiences. Such responses are not a disagreement for the sake of disagreement, but rather, are reasoned, careful, and evidence-based reactions, or arguments—an **attempt to consider a problem from another point of view and further a discussion.** Your argument can—and should—evolve as you draft. As writing is thinking, strong writers allow their thinking to change as they listen and learn more.

Higher Order Concerns: Research, Evidence, & Organization (the Bigger Things)

Here, you'll be entering a contemporary conversation about home, identity, and difference. To do that effectively, you'll want to balance what *you* have to say with what *others* say.

Thus, evidence in this project will likely include some summary, as you probably want to contextualize and clarify what you are responding to. As we'll learn, scholars in the humanities quote, paraphrase, and summarize from their sources to provide targeted and credible evidence of language and ideas, demonstrating that they are working within a discussion.

And strong writers build on what others say. Additional evidence in this writing situation **might** include relevant personal narrative, experience, logic, and anecdotes; if you would like to use another credible outside source or even many, you may, but consider what your audience will find reputable. The final number of your sources will not fulfill some arbitrary quota, but will rather depend on what is sufficient to prove your argument. Make sure your evidence is clear and precise; that it contributes to your argument; and that it follows the conventions of

proper paraphrasing, summarizing, and quoting through citation and documentation. We'll talk about this in class, but since you are entering a conversation, you'll want to weigh what others have to say with what you want to add and demonstrate that **intertextuality** for your own credibility.

Consider the **general features of strong and effective writing** we've discussed. Consider how they might apply to a formal response. How will you pay attention to your audience here? Your purpose? How will you have a clear, measured, narrow, and specific central point, or thesis? How do you craft a beginning, middle, and end, or create organization? How can you prove with precise evidence you're in a conversation with other writers? What does evidence even look like for this audience and purpose? As we'll see in class, the genre of response follows the organization of a formal academic essay, with a title, an introduction, a thesis, focused body paragraphs, and a conclusion with evidence cited in text supported by a bibliography (since we're working in the humanities in this project, we'll be citing in MLA style). Your response should include **a summary** of the article as well as **your reaction**, backed up with **credible textual evidence**. You might structure your essay as a simple summary, then respond, or break the article down point-by-point, and respond to each. Make sure you **connect these observations back to your thesis**. In your conclusion, don't just circle back to your thesis. You'll want your writing to go someone—to take readers on a journey—so try to extend your argument, bringing up further implications, questions, problems, or research that might be done.

Lower Order Concerns (the Smaller Things)

Your audience in this assignment, generally well well-educated readers (including your classmates) value clear, concise prose, documented evidence, and engagement in a conversation. Strive for a formal but engaging and objective tone with attention to the grammatical and stylistic conventions of standard written English (look these up if you need to or ask for help). You may need to explain any unfamiliar terms your audience might not know. Finally, don't forget to proofread your work. A polished final draft will enhance your *ethos*, or credibility, with your audience.

WRI 111 pro tips!

Drafts: Drafting isn't optional for this project. Not turning in a draft for peer response/workshop will mean you'll miss out on earning participation & homework points; worse, it will mean you won't benefit from feedback before the final draft is due.

Writer's Memo: This also isn't optional. Remember that you can earn participation points this way, too. Instructions follow; make sure you leave a little time at the end of your process for this last step.

Late Work: Per our course policies, late work will be deducted 15 points per day (including holidays and weekends). Late projects must be turned in person. Please see the course policies section of our syllabus or course website if you have more questions.

Finally, like all our major projects, you must complete this project to pass our course.

The final steps in this project will be to write a short Writer's Memo and assemble your project folder. Don't forget! Instructions follow.

Need more help? You got it. Come to office hours (you can sign up on the sheet on my door to ensure your time) or email me for an appointment. Or remember: trips to the Writing Center are free, welcome, and wise as you accumulate to college writing. Register at

<http://college.wfu.edu/writingcenter/appointments>.

Project 1 Writer's Memo Instructions

Whew! And you thought you were done, I know. You're almost there. Promise! You got this.

This memo will be the final step once your draft is complete and you're ready to assemble your project folder. Give yourself a little bit of time for this. This memo is not graded for content and is not attached to any assessment of your project. It is, however, worth 10 points, a significant portion of your final homework and class citizenship grade—so it's not optional.

In this memo, the goal is to take readers behind your Project 1 process with narrative and precise textual evidence from your writing.

This is a kind of writing called reflection writing and it is a way to work on becoming a more self-aware writer/general human being; really, research backs this up! This is similar to the writing we've been doing in our Writing Journals and the learning objective is the same: this self-reflection on your writing and process will help you grow as a self-aware thinker and writer, which is something we take seriously as part of your undergraduate education at Wake Forest. We like thinkers! We like question seekers. It's why we admitted you. And we want to prepare you for a lifetime of thoughtful living and learning.

Address your memo to me (it's like a letter). In that letter, please tell me your top HOC and/or what would you specifically like me to comment on as I read your final draft.

Additionally, consider the following questions (you don't have to answer all of them) as a guide for reflecting on your process. Use specific evidence (including feedback and workshops) from your experience to prove your argument. Answer critically, honestly, and true; **pretend you're holding a mirror up to your writing process.**

- What, generally, was your process like? What did you learn about yourself as a writer, thinker, and human here? What drove your interest and curiosity (e.g. you uncovered something in a Writing Journal/free write, or you revised and expanded on something we talked through looking at an early draft)?
- As a writer, what part of this project works best to you? Why?
- What **radical revision** tactics/prompts did you try and why? What did you **specifically revise** between drafts? Why?
- What do you think still needs revision and what you work on if you had more time? Why?
- What were your challenges and mistakes? Why and how? How did you overcome them, if you did?
- What will you do differently in our next project, and beyond? Why?

Sign and date the memo when you print it out and before you place it in your project folder with your drafts, signed rubric, marked sources, and any other evidence you'd like to include to make an argument for your process as a writer.

See you in class!

Professor G

Suggested Process

*You will likely move between these phases recursively (you may not even use all of them) and we'll be working on some of these in and out of class. Every writer's process is different. Please use these ideas as suggestions if you're feeling overwhelmed, blocked, or stuck. **You're always more than welcome—and really, encouraged—to chat with Prof G or visit the Writing Center if you want to work through some or all of this process.***

1. After you've **read** this sheet and **asked** questions, it's time for us to start reading in this conversation we're jumping into: a current conversation about education. As we read and discuss these three articles, we'll be doing some invention writing to get you started. Your job at this stage is to read and think and re-read and re-think and listen. Consider which article you most feel drawn to toward "talking to." Pretend you're meeting all three of these writers in person; **who is the most interesting to you, and why?** What do you have to say in response?
2. **Once you have your article selected, re-read it critically** and **annotate** your article. Pay attention to your reaction as you read, and jot it down in the margins. Really. Writing (like, physically taking a pen to paper) on your article will help, as will notes. Highlight interesting points. Look up phrases or words you don't understand. Note points you disagree and/or agree with, and why. And can you summarize the article, or articulate the author's point of view?
3. **Begin to formulate your response.** Feeling stuck? Try some invention and drafting techniques (freewriting, freespeaking, looping, clustering, questioning, etc.).
4. At the same time, **read** examples of this (perhaps) new-to-you genre, article responses. We'll be analyzing one together. As you read (or re-read), ask yourself, how are these authors paying attention to audience and purpose?
5. **Generate** a working thesis (a measured stance, or point of view) and rough plan for your response, perhaps even an outline. It can be a sketch outline; don't worry about that ancient Roman numeral plan.
6. **Begin drafting.** Depending on the kind of writer you are, you may have a lot to say at this point, or you may have very little. It's normal to have to return to **research** and **alter your thesis/argument** as you work, so return to any part of this process if you need to. Don't be fooled by this list; writing is not linear. Writing is process and often reiterative!
7. **Revise, revise, revise.** Rewrite using Higher Order Concerns feedback first for real change: evidence, organization, and how you address your purpose and audience. **Seek out** more feedback and/or research if you feel you need it.
8. **Edit** and **proofread** your draft. Double-check textual evidence, formatting, and citations in MLA style. Remember: you can look this up.
9. Using your writing journals and your experience, **write a 1-page Writer's Memo**, critically reflecting on your process, choices, and challenges in this project.
10. **Turn in** your final draft with **your workshop draft, marked source materials, memo, and a signed copy of Project 1's rubric in a soft folder** so I can see your process. Your process materials are part of your final grade.

At any stage, asking questions, taking a trip to the Writing Center and/or visiting with Professor Giovannelli are wise and welcome. Fortune favors the brave! Show your drafts early and often!