

Dr. Richardson

COMP 101

Assignments

Fall 2010

The **belief narrative** tells a story about your personal engagement with “weird things.” In a paper of 3 – 5 pages, tell a story about how you think about “weird things,” describing what you used to believe in and why, what you do believe in and why, and what you might believe in and why.

You might, for example, tell the story of an especially important event in your life that profoundly shaped your past, present and future beliefs. Or you might discuss many different beliefs that you have had, do have, or might have. You might discuss your beliefs chronologically, or you might look for patterns of belief. Or you might do some variation of these. The subject can be interpreted to include many kinds of beliefs: natural and supernatural, scientific and spiritual, historic and contemporary. I want the assignment to be flexible enough to accommodate a range of possible essays and to give you the freedom to explore a form and structure that seem most suitable to you. Experiment, if you're so inclined, but keep in mind the purpose of the assignment as well as your audience/s.

You are not required to use any secondary sources for this assignment; the main purpose of this paper is to explore your current positions on the very broad topic of “weird things” and to start focusing more specifically on your interests with it. If you do wish to incorporate outside sources into your paper, be certain they are all cited properly.

The General Guidelines for Composition Assignments apply to this assignment; please refer to them often during your process and while you are preparing your product.

This assignment is due at the beginning of class on \_\_\_\_\_

Select a large topic of interest to you within the framework of “weird things.” Find and read carefully a variety of current, relevant, credible, scholarly and popular sources about the topic you have selected, then write a **definition paper** of 4 – 6 typed double-spaced pages that answers the question “What is it?” about your topic. Your paper should be a research-based report about the background and history of your topic. Try to convey information to your audiences in as neutral a way as possible. Attempt to keep your opinions and positions out of this paper. This assignment is due at the beginning of class on \_\_\_\_\_

When you have finished your definition paper, think about the specific issues or questions related to your large topic and the various possible solutions or answers that exist. What are the “big deals” involved in your large topic? What are the major positions that people hold, and why do they hold them? Do additional research on these particular questions, then write an **exploration paper** of 4 – 6 typed double-spaced pages that tells what the major issues about your topic are, and what the main positions on those issues are. Your paper should be a research-based report about who believes what, and why. Try to convey information to your audiences in as neutral a way as possible. Attempt to keep your opinions and positions out of this paper. This assignment is due at the beginning of class on \_\_\_\_\_

When you have finished your exploration paper, consider all the research, reading and writing you’ve done thus far. You have considered what your topic is, some of the specific issues involved with it, and various perspectives on those issues. Now, it is time to decide whether those perspectives are good or bad, and what you think about them. What do you think about your topic? What’s your position on those issues?

Where do you stand in relation to the “big deals” of your topic? Do additional research if necessary, then draft a **position paper** of 4 – 6 typed double-spaced pages that tells your readers what you think, why you think it, and why they should agree with you. Your paper should be a research-based argument that presents and defends your positions and your reasons for them. You are required to convey information correctly and honestly, but you should include your opinions in this paper. This assignment is due at the beginning of class on \_\_\_\_\_

Once you have a draft of your position paper, revise and polish it – along with your definition and exploration papers – into a **research paper** of approximately 12 – 18 typed double-spaced pages. You should not just attach your papers together without thinking about them as a whole. Keep in mind your audience/s and your purposes for writing. Some parts of your original papers might need to be revised; some transitions might need to be altered or developed. This assignment is due at the beginning of class on \_\_\_\_\_

The General Guidelines for Composition Assignments apply to each and all of these assignments; refer to them often while you are preparing final products for assessment.

Be sure you properly cite all sources you refer to, quote, or paraphrase in all of your essays using MLA or APA style of citation.

Your **Position & Progress Report** is an informal way for you to discuss your Position Paper with the class. It should be 3-5 minutes long and is required to include the following points:

- An introduction of your topic
- A BRIEF summary of what you've learned or discovered about your topic so far
- Your working thesis/position (your take so far, where you think you stand)
- Specific questions for the class about your topic, paper, sources, points, etc....

On the day of your report, you are required to hand in a typed, doubled spaced journal that discusses each of the points listed above. You must have your written response *and* give your report in class on the day you are scheduled to do so in order to receive points for this assignment. If you are missing either one, you will receive a 0.

This assignment is due at the beginning of class on \_\_\_\_\_