

English Composition Exam (Part 2: Essay)

Updated Spring 2021

Overview

Consider an issue, a concern, or a question of interest to you.

You will write an essay (**1200 words, roughly 4-6 pages including Works Cited**) that includes your ideas and thoughts as well as the ideas/thoughts of others. You will employ your topic to write an essay that engages with the ideas of others in agreement or disagreement or both – the point here is to present your ideas and/or experience within the context of a larger conversation that is already taking place.

Getting Started

As you consider what topic you want to pursue, consider staying ‘close to home’... meaning, since you have free reign here, choose a topic that impacts your life or is relevant to your livelihood, something that you have seen or have experience with – your contribution will generally be stronger.

Fishbowl Brainstorming

If a topic worthy of 1200 words does not immediately jump out at you, consider throwing all of these words into a bowl and choosing out 2 or 3 and doing a quick internet search to see what comes up:

Education – Environment – Diversity – Health – Technology – Global – political – economic – capitalism – accountability – morality – theology – responsibility – governance – community – service – historical – precedence – relevance – contemporary – improvements – access – wealth – advancement – neighbor – machinery – modern – gender – race – poverty – homogeneity – religion – spirituality – colonialism – the ‘outdoors’ – industry – business – suppression – recreation – vacation – activism – natural disasters – pandemic – disease – race – gender

Digging Deeper

If you haven’t noticed already, you have a bit of freedom. What will you do with it? What topic do you want to spend time with and what voices are you compelled to listen to and interact with? You will have to do a little **research**. You may use both scholarly (*see academic databases via Eternity Library webpage*) and popular sources (*see list of acceptable sources to consider*). Keep in mind, all sources must be cited according to the **EBC Style Guide** and you must cite **at least three (3) unique sources** (not including scripture).

Submission and Grading

The underlying goal of the assignment is two-fold; first, to measure your ability to communicate in writing and second, to verify your ability to do (and use) research. This means that your goal is both to articulate your ideas as well as those of others with clarity and purpose. There will be no fact-checking nor judging of the value or worth of any opinion – you may essentially say anything you like about anything that matters to you, as long as you say it well.

You will be graded on your ability to organize your thoughts and **summarize** others’, while accurately using relevant grammatical structures of the English language.

You must have an introduction with a thesis, a conclusion, and transitions between body paragraphs. You must demonstrate the ability to weave together your ideas with those of others, to paraphrase and summarize rather than copying in long direct quotes, and to employ accurate grammar and clear sentence structure. You must format your paper according to the EBC Writing Style Guide and include a works cited list as well as parenthetical citations.