

## The EUA Essay Writing Plan!

- 1. Understand the assignment: read the directions!**
  - a. Talk to your GSI or professor if you are confused!
  - b. Break the prompt up and thoroughly focus on each question or create your own.
- 2. Brainstorm, gather evidence, and plan**
  - a. One way to do this is to think: What is interesting to me about the text? Try to narrow it down to a formal technique of the author - is it the author's syntax? diction? shifts in tense? shifts in perspective? Etc.
  - b. Look at all the instances where you see this occurring. Mark down specific passages and try to analyze them. How is the author using a specific device? Why? What does it mean for the work as a whole?
  - c. Think about a way in which you can bridge many of these examples/pieces of evidence.
  - d. \*Tip: Create a document where you list every piece of evidence you find interesting and analyze each one. Then think about ways in which you can synthesize them.
  - e. \*Tip: It is probably a good idea to go in and see your professor at this point to get feedback about your chosen topic and its relevance.
- 3. Outline and draft**
  - a. Start to formulate a thesis based off of your subject of study - what is it and how is it working in the text? What effect does it produce?
  - b. With a working thesis, i.e., one that will most likely change, gather your evidence and analysis and try to arrange it in a logical order. It may be really helpful to hand write a full outline with a topic sentence, evidence, and analysis for each paragraph. Then, when you type out the essay you just have to fill in the context and transition sentences!
  - c. \*Tip: Don't feel pressured to write linearly. Consider saving the introduction and conclusion for the end. And feel free to move things around after you've written them.
  - d. \*Tip: It is probably a good idea to go in and see your GSI at this point. Check in with them about your topic, how you're going about it, and whether or not your plan works.
- 4. Write more fully, revise, and rewrite - on a large scale**
  - a. Begin to put your working outline into the shape of a paper. Write out as much as you can in full sentences, adhering to the structure you set up.
  - b. Then - check your work and revise. Look back at your thesis. Does your thesis still make sense? Do all your topic sentences relate to your thesis? Are your topic sentences all supported by specific evidence from the text and specific analysis of each piece of evidence? Is this all ordered in an appropriate way?
  - c. \*Tip: At this point, it would be a good idea to outline your essay again. Jot down your main points and evidence in order - does it still flow? Does it make a coherent argument?
  - d. \*Tip: Save everything you write in a separate document, at the bottom of the page, etc. That way, you can go back and use a paragraph, sentence, or piece of evidence if you later decide it would fit.
- 5. Edit - on a small scale**
  - a. By this time, you should have a pretty good looking draft! Now - go through it with a fine tooth comb! Check for grammatical errors, punctuation problems, formatting issues, and citation corrections. Presenting your paper in the best way possible is half the battle!
  - b. \*Tip: Check back to the assignment to make sure you're hitting all the formatting requirements.
  - c. \*Tip: Sleep before you complete this step - preferably at least one night before! We know it is incredibly hard to not leave your essay up to the night before, but try your best to give yourself time to process your work through sleep and time away from it.
  - d. \*Tip: Print out your paper and mark your errors with a red pen.
  - e. \*Tip: After some time away, try reading your essay aloud to catch errors. Also try giving it to someone else to read! And, finally, at any stage of the process, head to the SLC, your ResHall Academic Center, or a fellow essay writer for advice and edits.