

Chapter 12

**Assessing Learning in Redesigned Online First-Year Composition Courses**

Tiffany Bouelle, Sherry Rankins-Robertson, Andrew Bouelle, Duane Roen

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## Appendix A: Assignments and Rubrics

### ENG 102: Writing Project—Writing to Solve Problems

#### Topic

Here are the generic criteria for a “good” topic: you have some passion for it; you want to learn more about it; it’s do-able. Think about some problem in your community, such as litter that does not get picked up, a shortage of shelters or food banks for the homeless, gang violence, job losses, high housing prices, a lack of parks, or big-box stores moving in or closing down. As you consider a local problem, keep in mind that you will need to define that problem and prove that it exists to your readers. Unless they can understand the problem, your solution will not make any sense.

#### In this project you must:

- State the problem in detail and its importance to the community
- Present background information in detail regarding the issue and the solution
- Explain possible **solutions**
- **Choose the best solution and indicate why it is the most effective at solving the problem**
- Ask for actions of some kind (funding, further study, etc).
- Aim for around 1000–1200 words

No matter what problem you choose, you will need to do a little research regarding the issue. Use **two** sources to help establish your own ethos. It doesn’t matter where you find the sources, as long as you deem them credible. Use MLA format when citing these sources. For help evaluating sources, see Chapter 19.

#### Helpful Hints

Choose a topic that interests you. Describe the problem clearly. Propose a solution that is workable. Justify your proposed solution. (This justification is essentially a classical argument, which means that, among other things, you need to address counterarguments.)

## Format

For this project, there are two components: a text-based part and a multimodal component. You must complete both the paper and the multimodal aspect.

## Paper

I encourage you to consider any of the formats mentioned in our textbook: (1) a practical proposal, with a letter of transmittal or 2) a policy proposal in the form of a newspaper or magazine article. In either case, follow the directions above for the written assignment.

## Multimodal Aspect

In addition to writing a proposal or a newspaper or magazine article, you must produce a Public Service Announcement that explains the problem, your solutions with extra emphasis placed upon the most feasible solution.

You have options for this portion of the project as well. You can either: 1) create a public affairs advocacy advertisement—in the form of a Webpage or 2) create a video with sound and picture. Regardless of the format that you choose, you need to provide support for your proposal. Think of this part of the assignment as a public service announcement. What does your audience need to know?

This link will provide you with an example of a video PSA completed by a student in a previous First-Year Composition class: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hLC0Sqqi4QQ>

## Rubric for Evaluating Writing to Solve Problems

Qualities	Highly Effective	Satisfactory	Needs Further Attention
<b>Addresses intended audience</b>	The writer clearly understands the needs of the intended audience and has adapted the writing to that audience.	The writer seems to understand the needs of the intended audience but hasn't fully adapted the writing to meet those needs.	The writer could demonstrate a greater understanding of the needs of the intended audience.
<b>A clearly defined problem</b>	The writer has clearly described a manageable problem and its causes.	The writer needs to do a little more to describe the problem and to establish that it is manageable.	The writer needs to do much more to describe the problem and to establish that it is manageable.
<b>Several solutions proposed/a well-</b>	The writer has clearly offered solutions and	The writer needs to do a little more to	The writer needs to do much more to offer an

<b>explained solution thoroughly discussed</b>	has provided an understandable and reasonable solution to the problem(s).	offer an understandable and reasonable solution.	understandable and reasonable solution.
<b>Convincing evidence for the effectiveness of the solution</b>	The writer has presented ample evidence that the proposed solution is effective.	The writer needs to provide more evidence that the proposed solution is effective.	The writer needs to provide much more evidence that the proposed solution is effective.
<b>A well-documented review of alternative solutions</b>	The writer's review of alternative solutions establishes that hers is the most effective one available.	The writer's review of alternative solutions could do more to establish that hers is the most effective one available.	The writer's review of alternative solutions could do much more to establish that hers is the most effective one available.
<b>A call to action</b>	The writer has offered a convincing call to implement the proposed solution.	The writer needs to do more to convince readers to implement the proposed solution.	The writer needs to do much more to convince readers to implement the proposed solution.
<b>Conventions</b>	The writer has attended to all the necessary conventions of writing to propose a solution.	The writer has attended to most of the necessary conventions of writing to propose a solution.	The writer needs to attend to more of the necessary conventions of writing to propose a solution.

## ENG 101: Writing Project 1 - Writing to Share Experiences

### Project Description

This project is intended to create an opportunity for you to share experiences and explore cultural and historical aspects of your family's tradition. Traditions can be everyday, periodical, or annual events. You may choose to focus on celebrations; if so, try to talk about a family celebration that is seen as more "everyday" rather than something big, like a wedding or birth. These events are difficult to take on as they are common for most families and the details have to be extremely specific. Instead, think about how a family honor birthdays, cultural

celebrations (e.g., Hawaiian’s Merrie Monarch Festival) or national holidays (July 4th or Thanksgiving).

You might think about developing a project about a specific or reoccurring family vacation. This will allow you to write about a location that has cultural, social, and historical significance to your family. Perhaps you may want to talk about everyday practices as part of the values, culture of the unit (e.g. movie night, Sunday dinner, etc.) Consider incorporating photographs as this will be a print based text in an appropriate genre for your audience. Authors must have participated in the event to share the experience of the event with a family, either their own family or another family. Due to the nature of this assignment, all projects must employ sensory details through narration and description and make a significant point with cohesive, developed content. All projects are required to include a self-reflection that corresponds to content found at the end of chapter 4.

### Helpful Hints

You might find it useful to talk to family members or friends because they can offer multiple perspectives on the concept. They can also help you remember details that may have slipped from your memory. Consult the photographs section from Chapter 18, “Communicating with Design and Visuals” to aid your writing process. Because writing about experiences will inevitably include writing some narrative and description, refer to those sections in Chapter 13, “Strategies That Guide Readers.”

*Caution: Because you will have a public audience for this project, you should avoid writing about any topics that are embarrassing to you or the other participants. Additionally, you certainly should avoid writing about any experiences in which illegal activities were involved, especially if those activities have not been adjudicated.*

### Grading Criteria and Rubric

It is critical that all drafts are submitted with the final copy and the self-reflection for any major project to be accepted. All projects will be evaluated on the areas shown in the rubric below.

Components	Highly Effective	Satisfactory	Needs further attention
<b>Addresses intended audience including use of tone and style</b>	The writer clearly understands the needs of the intended audience and has adapted the writing to that audience.	The writer seems to understand the needs of the intended audience but must do more to adapt the writing to meet those needs.	The writer should do much more demonstrate an understanding of the needs of the intended audience.
<b>Clear sense of</b>	The writer’s purpose—	The writer’s	The writer needs to do

<b>purpose</b>	e.g., to entertain/share experiences—is clear throughout the entire project.	purpose—e.g., to entertain, to inform, to educate—is clear throughout most of the project.	much more to clarify what the purpose is.
<b>Significant point and incorporates sensory details</b>	The writer has made an insightful, fresh point.	The writer has made a point, but it might be more insightful and fresher.	The writer needs to do much more to clarify the point of the narrative.
<b>Presentation of cultural and historical content</b>	The writer has presented rich cultural and historical details effectively.	The writer seems to have presented most details.	Some of the details seem missing or ineffectively presented.
<b>Evidence of critical thinking</b>	The writing has a creative approach.	The writing follows the basic guidelines provided in the assignment overview.	The writing fails to meet the basic requirements.
<b>Process</b>	Project displays evidence of work beyond three required drafts.	Project has been developed in a minimum of three drafts (peer reviewed; IA feedback; edited).	Project is in first-draft form and has not been reviewed.
<b>Ethics</b>	The writer has treated others ethically—e.g., protected the privacy of people in the project.	The writer may need to do a little more to protect the privacy of people in the project.	The writer needs to do much more to protect the privacy of people in the project.
<b>Conventions</b>	The writer has attended to all the necessary conventions of writing to share experiences.	The writer has attended to most of the necessary conventions of writing to share experiences.	The writer has attended to few of the necessary conventions of writing to share experiences.
<b>Selects appropriate genre and medium</b>	The writer has selected and justified the use of the genre and medium to fit the needs of the audience.	The writer has attempted to make a genre and medium selection, but cannot explain why selected.	The writer does not understand genre and medium, or has defaulted to essay.
<b>Metacognition</b>	The writer is reflective	The writer reflects on	No self-assessment

	about the rhetorical decisions made throughout this project.	some choices but does not fully account for writerly choices.	reflection included with the project, which affects writer's ability to explain audience and genre/medium.
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