

ENGL 1101: COMPOSITION I

Lecture Notes

Week 1

As you begin your journey of online communication, please read carefully pages the section 35c in **Harbrace**, “Netiquette and online writing,” on pages 435-437. Take them as your guide to online education!

Literature

When reading “**The Qualities of Good Writing**” by **J. Berke**, keep in mind that when you write a paper or deliver a speech, you are addressing an audience trying to achieve a goal. Before starting to prepare a paper or a speech, always try to answer, even if only mentally, the questions that Berke is suggesting to you at the end of this essay.

The qualities of economy, simplicity, and clarity that she is outlining in this writing are important, but they need to be employed wisely. Some types of writing must not focus on too much simplicity, or they will turn out mediocre. If when asked to write a lab report for a chemistry class, you are using SIMPLE words instead of specialized terms, your teacher might think you are not familiar with concepts taught in the class. “I put some blue juice in a glass jar and some white powder and waited to see if they mixed” might sound too kindergarten for a college lab report. Other writings must not be very revealing, so what could be perceived as a lack of clarity serves some purposes of building up some tension for the readers or stimulating the audience’s interest. For instance, if the author of a detective novel stated CLEARLY on page 1 who killed whom with what weapon when, where, and why, we would not think it is necessary to read the remaining 300 pages.

No recipe for good writing is perfect; nor can it be applied to all types of writing. So when you read such writing suggestions, make sure that you think of what writing situations would best fit them.

"Discovering Books" by Richard Wright

Are you the first in your family to go to college? Is your life a struggle to stay in school despite outside or inner pressures? This week, you will read about someone who sacrificed so much to get an education. While reading R. Wright’s story “Discovering Books,” consider the time when the events of the story take place and the social and racial realities of that time. How many white people had access to education and how many white people were actually interested in getting a professional career at that time? What economic and social opportunities were available to African-Americans in the period following the Civil War and preceding the Civil Rights Movement? What do you think the author is trying to persuade his readers to think or do? Take a look at the language of the story. What is the function of dialogue? What is the impact on the reader of this first-person account? Is the narrator hiding anything or revealing too much? Can you identify in this text Berke’s three qualities of good writing. Ask yourself how the author uses language to appeal to his audience and to carry out his purpose of influencing the mentality of

his readers and of prompting them to militant action. If you read the story trying to follow these ideas described above, all these questions should help you understand the meaning of this article.

This story should also serve you as a model for your personal essay because Richard Wright masterfully accounts about a crucial event in his life - getting access to education.

“We Real Cool” by G. Brooks

After reading “We Real Cool” by G. Brooks, think about how this poem could be turned into a rap song. What is the role of the rhythm in these verses? What is the rhythm of life for these characters? How many images of places and actions can you derive from this poem? What is the message of this poem?

Contrast the wasted time, energy, and potential in this poem with the author's determination to pursue an education in the story "Discovering Books." This "cool" lifestyle could also be a launching board for your personal essay in case you choose to give an account about a negative event in your life that served as a learning and turning moment.

Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Summarizing

After watching the documentary Genetic Roulette, think about the impact food technology could have on you and your family. What are some of the pro-active measures you can take to minimize potential damage?

When you quote, you write the text word-by-word as it was written or spoken by the author/speaker, and you use quotation marks at the beginning and at the end.

When you paraphrase, you use your own words to express ALL the ideas stated in the original text or speech.

When you summarize, you use your own words to express ONLY THE MAIN IDEAS in the original text or speech. A summary should not include ALL the ideas/information contained in the original text or speech.

Week 2

Grammar

From **chapter 1**, make sure you understand that there are two categories – parts of speech (articles, verbs, interjections, etc.) and parts of sentence (subject, predicate, complement).

Pay particular attention to the following issues:

- there are verbs and verbal phrases that can have the function of predicate, and there are verb forms that function as verbals (infinitive, gerund, and participle) that cannot form a predicate;
- prepositions and conjunctions are both linking words, but the prepositions link words or parts of speech while conjunctions link clauses; memorize the list of prepositions on page 9.
- notice the difference between **coordinating conjunctions** (for, and, nor, but, or yet, so - FANBOYS) that link clauses of the same type (either two independent or two

dependent) and **subordinating** conjunctions that introduce dependent clauses; please memorize the list of coordinating conjunctions mentioned in this paragraph and that of subordinating conjunctions on page 36.

- focus on the difference between direct and indirect objects and become familiar with the concepts of transitive and intransitive verbs

From **chapter 2**, please make a guide list for yourself while studying of the elements that are missing in a fragment sentence – (independent clause, subject, verb, etc.) and of what you need to do to fix a fragment. Fragments are some of the most common errors in students’ papers, so you need to study this chapter seriously.

Keep in mind that the whole **chapter 3** boils down to the following two sentences:

1. A comma splice is a sentence made up of two independent clauses separated by a comma.
2. A run-on or fused sentence is a sentence made up of two independent clauses that have no punctuation between them.

Both the above are wrong. In order to fix them, you can do any of the following:

1. place a period or colon between the two independent sentences
2. separate them with a semi-colon
3. place a comma and a coordinating conjunction between them

Literature

In “Beauty: When the Other Dancer is the Self,” Alice Walker unfolds the road from an accident that shattered her self-esteem to discovering her own inner beauty, a liberating experience that changes her view on life and on herself. While most of the narrative contextualizes the impairment of the author’s eye, offering details on her family’s economic and racial status, the real focus remains on her revelation that she holds a whole beautiful world inside her soul. It is the moment when she can find peace with herself and joy in her value as a human being and especially as a mother that really defines her existence.

Scott Momaday's story, "The Way to the Rainy Mountain," depicts the author's fascination with the history and culture of the Kiowa tribe as well as his grieving his grandmother's death. It is an account rich in feelings and traditions, all interwoven in a deeply poetic language. We get to know the author's childhood place through both the perspective of a child and of an adult. The narration goes beyond the personal realm to show the death of a culture and of a nation. This is what you should do with your **Essay**. When you relate your memorable personal event, show its significance not only for you, but also as a lesson for other people.

Week 3

Grammar

To nail down the comma usage rules in **chapter 12**, you have to review the conjunctions and types of clauses, especially dependent and independent ones. To test yourself if you understood the rules in this chapter, ask yourself why commas are used in the following sentences:

I would like to have some water, lemon, and sugar.

After dark, they need to stop painting.

We make more money today, but the quality of family life has decreased.

Keep in mind that:

1. We put a comma before a coordinating conjunction if that conjunction is followed by a **stated subject** – He loves her, but **he** doesn't want to spend money on gifts.
2. If the coordinating conjunction is not followed by a stated subject, there is no need to place a comma before this conjunction – He loves her but doesn't want to spend money on gifts.
3. If the order is DEPENDENT CLAUSE + INDEPENDENT CLAUSE, you put a comma after the FIRST clause – Although it rains/, we'll go to that party.
4. If the order is INDEPENDENT CLAUSE + DEPENDENT CLAUSE, NO comma is needed after the FIRST clause – We'll go to that party/ although it rains.
5. NEVER place a comma between a subject and a predicate even if you feel there is a pause between these words when you speak them out – Mary came back.

As you read **chapter 14**, remind yourself of the punctuation of independent clauses referred to in the comma splices and fused sentences as well as the usage of commas. The 14b section of this chapter brings in a new element, that of semicolons functioning as separators of phrases that already contain commas; think of semicolons as a higher rank of parentheses in math – brackets or accolades going around parentheses. A common error is the usage of semicolons where commas are needed, thus forming a fragment (see 14c).

Surprisingly enough, a large number of students are using the apostrophe to form the plural of most nouns. For example: There are many **desk's** in this room. **Chapter 15** will show you that this usage is wrong. The apostrophe is used for a limited group of plurals such as letters and abbreviations – x's; Ph.D.'s (see 15c). Note that the –s is used without any apostrophe for years – 1990s.

But the main two uses of the apostrophe are to show possession and to replace a missing number or letter. Do not confuse the –s showing plural and the –s for ownership. The ownership –s always needs an apostrophe either before it (for singular owners – *The mother's feeling was strong*) or after it (for plural owners – *The mothers' feeling was strong*). To test if an –s is there for plural or for ownership, try to rephrase using the preposition “of” – if you can change “the mother's feeling” to “the feeling of the mother,” then you need an apostrophe to show ownership.

However, in *The mother's feeling sad*, the apostrophe is there to replace a missing letter, namely “i” in the word “is.” The sentence is meant to be read as *The mother is feeling sad*, but because the “i” in “is” was dropped, the apostrophe took its place. The apostrophe can also replace missing numbers such as in the '90s in which it replaces the missing 19 from 1990s.

When reading **chapter 17**, focus on the use of the slash in rendering verses. Also note that a hyphen is used for compound words like “money-making” and “cold-blooded,” while a dash is

twice as long as a hyphen and is used interchangeably with commas and parentheses to contain explanations. Colons are also used before an explanation or a list. Do not forget that your own explanations or additions within quoted material will have to be contained in brackets.

MLA Format (to be used on your **Essay**)

The Modern Language Association (MLA) is the national leading expert in establishing the norms for English and Foreign Language papers, in terms of both layout and citing sources. We will focus on the MLA rules for citing sources when we get to the Research Project. For now, you have to use only the MLA layout format, which includes margins, heading, header, spacing, and font size and type.

Here are the steps of getting the correct MLA layout for ALL your English papers:

1. Open the WORD program
2. Go to File - Save As and save your new document in a recognizable place by choosing from the pull-down menu entitled Look in – desktop, flash drive (Removable Disk), floppy disk, etc. Give your document a title which should reflect the content of your essay.
3. Page Layout – Margins – Set all margins (top, bottom, left, right) at 1”
4. Make sure that the font of the paper is set at Times New Roman 12
5. Paragraph – Make sure that the Spacing Before and After is at 0 pt. and that on the Line Spacing you select Double.
7. Insert – Header – choose the first type of Header on the menu + Type your Last Name + Space + Insert – Page Number – Current Position – choose the first type of Page Number on the menu

Go back Home: Highlight the header move it to the right margin and change its font to Times New Roman 12

8. After closing out of your Header, your mouse cursor should be to the left of your page. If it's not there, click Align Left. On that first line, type your first and last name. Press Enter to go to the next line. Type Dr. Codrina Cozma. Press Enter. On the next line type Composition I. Press Enter. Type the date using the military format – day, month, year; for example, 22 August 2007. Press Enter. You have just finished doing your heading.
9. On the next line after the date, click the Center button. Type your title. Press Enter.
10. Press the Tab key to indent the first line of your essay. Start typing your paper.
11. You have to insert the header and the heading **ONLY** on the first page. The header will automatically appear on all subsequent pages.
12. It is important that you send your papers as WORD attachments to your teacher, and not paste them into the message box on the Essay link. When you paste them in, you cannot comply with margins, spacing, heading, and header requirements.

If you try to insert the page number manually by using the 1 key on your keyboard, 1 will appear as the page number on all the pages of your paper. Do NOT type your last name and page number WITHOUT FIRST GOING TO Insert.

Week 4

Grammar

In order to differentiate between adjectives and adverbs taught in **chapter 4**, you have to know what parts of speech each of them modifies. Adjectives can only modify nouns. Adverbs can modify other adjectives and verbs. Please also become familiar with the degrees of comparison of the adjectives and adverbs and note that they can be formed in 3 ways:

1. using the suffixes “-er” and “-est” for one-syllable adjectives/adverbs
2. using “more/less” and “the most/least” for adjectives/adverbs longer than one syllable
3. irregular forms such as “good-better-best,” etc.

As far as the negation is concerned, the textbook offers you the unusual case of words - such as “hardly,” “barely” – that do NOT look negative, but that have a negative meaning, which excludes the use of another negation after them. For example, since “hardly” is a word equivalent to a negation in meaning, it would be wrong to use two negations in the sentence – “I could not hardly walk after the surgery” -, so we say “I could hardly walk.”

Chapter 5 teaches you when it is grammatically correct to say “me and my brother” and when it’s right to say “I and my brother.” Pronouns have three features:

1. number (singular and plural)
2. person (1st, 2nd, and 3rd)
3. case (subjective, objective, possessive)

Please learn the forms of personal pronouns for all the numbers, cases, and persons as outlined in the table on page 71.

Also keep in mind that there are several types of pronouns – personal, relative, interrogative, and reflexive. The personal pronouns include the persons. The relative and interrogative pronouns have the same form, but are used in different types of clauses – statements and respectively questions. The reflexive pronouns always include the element “-self” in their spelling.

Pay special attention to 5b(2) in this chapter that explains to you why we use a pronoun in the objective case with “I saw him running” and 5b(6) why we use a possessive form of determiner in “I like his running for president.”

Also, read carefully 5b(7) in this chapter to understand the difference in meaning between:
Michael loves her more than **us**. = Michael loves her more than he loves us.
and

Michael loves her more than **we**. = Michael loves her more than we (do) love her.

The agreement rules in **chapter 6** are all about matching the number of the two words that have to agree – subject and predicate or a pronoun and its antecedent. People that don’t know that indefinite pronouns such as *anyone* and *everybody* are singular are likely to say **WRONGLY** “**Everybody** did what **they** liked” instead of “**Everybody** did what **she/he** liked.” Also note the special cases of collective pronouns or subjects linked by “neither...nor”/ “either/or.”

When reading **chapter 11**, try to make three different lists of words – one for abbreviations, one for clipped forms, and another one for acronyms. How do you distinguish them? When do you use them? Also note that commas and periods are used differently in other cultures to show decimals.

Week 5

Grammar

Chapter 7 is complex, but to make it simpler, keep in mind that all verbs that can be predicates have three main features:

1. tense
2. voice
3. mood

They also have number and person and a progressive aspect that shows an action in progress and involves the –ing ending at the end of the main verb.

Some verbs are auxiliary, such as have, do, and be; others are called modals because they are followed by a short infinitive and never accept an –s for 3rd person singular – must, can, will, etc.

You are expected to be able to recognize all the tenses, voices, and moods of the verbs. To get a clear mental picture of the chronological order of the actions shown by the verb tenses, take a look at the timeline below:

| Past Perfect | Past | Present Perfect | Present | Future Perfect | Future |
|--------------|------|-----------------|---------|----------------|--------|
| x | x | x | x | x | x |

The most important thing **chapter 9** teaches you is what words you should capitalize in the titles of your paper or in the titles of the works you cite in your papers. The **golden rule** is:

DO NOT capitalize **APCs** (Articles, Prepositions, and Conjunctions) in a title

If you are not sure what words are articles, prepositions, and conjunctions, revisit chapter 1.

The **exception** to the golden rule is that APCs are capitalized in a title when they are the first or the last words, i.e. “**The** Men Who Landed on the Moon” or “Who Was She Afraid **Of**?”

Chapter 10 is also about titles, but it tells you when a title should be italicized. You may want to take a look at **chapter 16**, too, after reading chapter 10, to see when a title should be in quotes as opposed to italicized. This information is especially useful in conjunction with **chapter 40** that teaches you how to cite using the MLA format, which you will need for your Research Project in this course. The bottom line is that you italicize the titles of COMPLETE works, and you put in quotes titles of parts of a work (chapters, articles) or short works like poems.

You will probably be surprised to find out from **chapter 16** that quotation marks are not used only for quotes, but they also serve to show irony (She is so “smart” that she failed English). Also use quotes when you refer to a specific word in a paper – A hundred years ago, the word “cyberspace” did not exist.

It would be a good idea to refresh your memory on the titles of works that must be italicized (see chapter 10) and compare those categories to the types of titles of works mentioned in chapter 16 as needing quotes.

Week 6

Review all chapters from the Harbrace book, the Verbs Handout, and all grammar explanations on this document (Lecture Notes) in order to prepare for the Grammar Quiz due at the end of this week.

Good luck on your Grammar Quiz! You may use your notes and textbook to answer the questions.

Week 7

Literature

It is my hope that you will relax and enjoy this week J. Brady's witty essay "I Want a Wife." As you read it, draw a vertical line in the middle of a fresh sheet of paper and write as a title in the first column PROBLEM; write down SOLUTION as the title of the second line. Then try to find in the text all the problems or needs of a husband and jot them down on your PROBLEM column. Then write down in the SOLUTION column all the solutions offered to each of these problems by the ideal wife described in this essay. As you can see, the author focuses on the solutions more than on the problems, which is what you will have to do on your Research Project. **HOWEVER, KEEP IN MIND THAT YOU ARE REQUIRED TO MENTION ONLY ONE PROBLEM AND ONE SINGLE SOLUTION IN YOUR RESEARCH PROJECT!**

Aside from trying to analyze this essay on a problem-solution frame, think about the type of wife and the type of husband presented by Brady. Are these types still around? Do these things still happen? Is this a situation that leads to most divorces in our society today? What does this text tell you about family values (monogamy), gender roles (which spouse is the breadwinner), education for women? You may consider some of these ideas for your Research Project as you ponder on this essay and on Vidal's article "Drugs."

G. Vidal states the problem and the solution in the first two lines of his essay "Drugs." And so should you on your Research Project thesis. Note that he does not focus too much on the problem; it is a well-known fact that there is drug dealing and that the government is fighting against it in this country. Instead, his whole essay revolves around the reasons for which his solution (legalization of drugs) would help cure the nation of this plague. He also addresses some of the arguments against his solution. As you read this text, make a list of all the reasons he uses to support his thesis. Make another list of the arguments he brings against his critics. Don't forget you will have to come up with three benefits of your solution in your thesis.

Week 8

MLA Research

When reading **chapters 36-39** in Harbrace, focus on the following:

- integrating sources – the information you find in other sources must become part of your paper in a way that would enhance the quality of your argument
- using signal phrases (p. 485) – never throw quotes or info in your writing without introducing them with your own words
- using captions for your graphics (p. 487)
- check the reliability and currency of your sources (pp. 495-496).

Weeks 9 - 12

Interviewing an Expert

You will have to interview an expert in field related to the topic of your Research Project.

Purpose – to get info that you will quote or paraphrase in your paper to support your solution or to refute an argument against your solution

Means – by phone, email, face-to-face, professional chat room

Interviewee - anyone who has a degree or direct experience with the problem or solution of your choice; it cannot be a friend who simply has an opinion on your topic. For example, if your Research Project proposes a solution for the problem of abortion, your interviewee must be someone who had an abortion (experience) or a gynecologist who performs abortions (formal training).

- verify the credentials of your interviewee

Questions – do not ask personal questions unless they are directly related to your topic

- ask at least 6 questions
- do not ask yes/no-questions
- on your transcription due this week, write down your questions and the answers you get

Chapter 36, section (e), starting on **page 468** in your Harbrace textbook will offer you other useful tips on choosing your interviewee and conducting your interview in a professional manner. Read it carefully!

Annotated Bibliography

In **chapter 39**, you will find a useful outline of the MLA rules of citation. Keep in mind that MLA requires that you cite BOTH in your paper (in-text citations) and on a list of sources at the end of your paper, a list called either “Works Cited,” or “Bibliography,” or “Annotated Bibliography.” Follow the rules in **38c – page 484** - on how to enter the sources for your Annotated Bibliography. Keep in mind that for every type of source (article, book, website, etc.) there is a specific way of citing according to MLA. When you cite an article, for example, the order and the type of publication info will be different from those of a book. Your entries should look like those on a regular Works Cited list, described in chapter **39**, but since yours is called an Annotated Bibliography, each source should have brief summaries (annotations) under it. See the Works Cited in the sample research paper (pages 611-612).

To complement your study of MLA citation rules, visit the MLA Formatting and Style Guide at Purdue University located at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/> You may also take a look at the MLA Citations Handout posted on your Class Documents.

Thesis

Formulating **a thesis** is crucial for the development of an essay. The thesis is an essay in miniature, and every element mentioned in it should be regarded as the seed from which each part of the essay grows. An effective thesis is specific and contains clear reasons to support its statement. You may formulate the thesis in one sentence or you may break it down in several sentences. For this particular persuasive research project, your thesis should identify the following elements: **the problem, the solution, and three benefits of the solution.**

Examples of an effective thesis:

Amnesty (**solution**) would be the best solution for the immigration crisis (**problem**) because it would eliminate costly deportations (**benefit 1**), it would offer families already here the chance to stay together (**benefit 2**), and it would protect the U.S. economy from losing an important section of its work force (**benefit 3**).

Week 14

It's time now to submit your final **Research Project**. If you have submitted the draft for your interview, Annotated Bibliography, and Thesis for your Research Project, please take into consideration your teacher's feedback on them before you revise these parts for your final Research Project. If you worked hard for the past few weeks, your effort on this week's final version of your Research Project should be minimal.

Week 15

Take advantage of the opportunity to make some bonus points by taking the Extra-Credit Test this week. Note that even if you answer correctly all the questions on this test, the maximum you can earn is 70 pts., which represent 7% of your final grade in this course.

Week 16

Review all grammar, readings, and documentary for the Final Exam.

Week 17

You have worked hard this semester, and you are almost there now! This week, you will submit your final exam which contains questions based on the grammar, MLA, literature readings, and the documentary you were assigned throughout this course. Some of the questions may be based on information provided in the discussions, Lecture Notes, or comments on your graded assignments. Although this is an open-book exam, it would be hard to answer the questions if

you have not prepared throughout the semester and if you have not actively participated in the discussions. Remember that you can use your textbook and notes, BUT the time constraints won't allow you to look for information and process it quickly enough to answer the questions.

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Thank you for being part of this wonderful learning experience! Hopefully you will take with you from this class valuable learning and writing skills that will make your college path considerably easier. Keep your Harbrace textbook for future reference for your other college papers. And keep your eagerness to study and to be successful at whatever you do!