

Contents

Section One: Introduction 1

CHAPTER 1: THE PURPOSE OF AN ESSAY ABOUT LITERATURE 3

Literature: Instruction, Delight, Imitation 5

The Literary Essay 7

Evidence 7

Communication 9

Subjectivity 11

How to Use This Book 14

Review Questions 15

Section Two: Research and Analysis 17

CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH WITHIN THE TEXT 19

Taking Notes About Literature 20

Recording Your Responses to the Text 21

Do I Like the Work? 21

What Words Stand Out? 22

What Feelings Does It Give Me? 24

Do I Identify With Any of the People Represented? 25

Is There Anything About How It's Written That Stands Out? 27

What Is the Work About? 30

Conclusion 33

Review Questions 34

CHAPTER 3: USING REFERENCE WORKS 35

The *Oxford English Dictionary* 36

Etymology 37

Definitions 39

Examples of Usage 42

Scholarly Editions 45

Encyclopedias 49

Conclusion 52

Review Questions 53

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH ABOUT SOCIAL AND**HISTORICAL CONTEXTS 55**

Topics for Research: Social Phenomena and Literary

Movements 56

Useful Resources 58

Using Your Findings 60

Conclusion 66

Review Questions 67

CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH ABOUT THE CURRENT CRITICAL**ASSESSMENT OF LITERARY WORKS 69**

Finding Critical Works 71

Assessing Publications 71

Using Bibliographies 72

Reading Critical Works 76

Taking Notes From Critical Readings 79

Conclusion 82

Review Questions 82

CHAPTER 6: INVENTING YOUR ARGUMENT 83

Arranging Your Evidence 84

Reviewing Your Labelled Evidence 84

Categorizing Your Evidence 85

Charting Your Evidence 88

Conclusion 94

Review Questions 94

Section Three: Composition 95

CHAPTER 7: COMPOSING YOUR ARGUMENT 97

Inductive Reasoning 98

Composing the Thesis Statement 99

Writing the Subtopic Sentences 99*Composing the Body of the Thesis Statement* 101*Concluding the Thesis Statement* 102

A Variation: An Essay Without Secondary Sources 105

Conclusion 108

Review Questions 109

CHAPTER 8: WRITING THE BODY OF THE ESSAY 111

The Body Paragraphs 111

Features of Strong Paragraphs 115

Writing the Conclusion and Revising the Introduction 116

The Conclusion 116*Revising the Introduction* 118

Conclusion 118

Review Questions 119

Section Four: Polish and Presentation 121

CHAPTER 9: EDITING AND PROOFREADING YOUR ESSAY 123

Conventions of Essay-Writing Style 124

Diction 124*Vocabulary* 125*Connecting Words* 126

Common Grammatical Errors 127

Apostrophes 128

Demonstrative Pronouns 129*Pronoun Agreement* 131*Verb Tense* 131

Common Errors in Punctuation and Sentence Structure 132

Semicolons 133*Comma Splices* 134*Sentence Fragments* 135

Subordinating Conjunctions 136

Conjunctive Adverbs 139

Conclusion 140

Review Questions 141

CHAPTER 10: DOCUMENTING YOUR SOURCES

AND PRESENTING YOUR WORK 143

Reasons for Documenting Sources 143

Documentation Practices 145

Presenting Your Work 147

Layout and Order 147

Illustrations 148

Multimedia and the Literary Essay 149

Exemplary Illustrations 150

Complementary Illustrations 151

Supplementary Illustrations 152

Last-Minute Checks 153

Conclusion 154

Review Questions 155

Section Five: Conclusion and Review 157

CHAPTER 11: THE PROCESS OF ESSAY WRITING—A SUMMARY 159

Collecting Evidence (Chapter 2, 3, 4, and 5) 159

Categorizing Evidence (Chapter 6) 160

Writing Your Thesis Statement (Chapter 7) 160

Troubleshooting the Thesis Statement (Chapter 7) 161

Writing the Body Paragraphs (Chapter 8) 161

Concluding Your Essay (Chapter 8) 162

Proofreading (Chapter 9) 162

Documentation and Presentation (Chapter 10) 162

Conclusion 163

WORKS CITED 165

SUBJECT INDEX 169