Essay #2 - Response/Illustration essay  
Check your calendar for due dates of prewriting, first draft, and final draft.

The assignment: You will write a response essay, loosely patterned after the sample essay on pp.62-66 in Models for Writers. Read that essay before you begin.

- In your own essay, you will develop an extended response to the ideas presented in one of the essays in your book or one of the essays in “This I Believe.” (In other words, instead of the one-paragraph response you wrote for your Summary/Responses this term, you will write a response that extends for several paragraphs.)
- Carefully read the section on “Illustration” in your text (325-28). Your response may take one of two forms: a “single striking example” (325-26) or “a whole series of related examples” (326-27). Your text provides clear examples of each form. Read those examples carefully so you are clear on the differences between them.

Format: Write a 2 ½ to 3 page essay (at least 750 words - Put a word count in the heading of your paper.), following all formatting instructions provided on p.3 of your syllabus.

Step One - Choosing a topic: Find an essay in Models that you haven’t read yet that deals with a topic that deeply interests you, or use an essay from “This I Believe.” (The easiest way to access “This I Believe” essays is to click on the link at the bottom of our WR115 website. Once you get to the NPR site, you might want to click on “Essay database.” Then you can browse the essays by age or by theme.)

Step Two - The “so what” factor: Formulating a thesis statement: Each response you wrote this term began with a sentence that focused your response. Similarly, in this assignment, you will need to formulate a thesis statement that focuses on the main point (the “so-what factor”) you want to make through this essay. In Models for Writers, the authors state, “The thesis statement determines the content of the essay: Everything that the writer says must be logically related to the thesis statement” (73). For more information on thesis statements, read pp. 12-14 in Models.

Here are some ideas to help you form a thesis statement and focus your essay:

- Think of whether you agree or disagree with the author’s main point. What examples could you provide to support your opinion?
- What connections do you make to this essay, and what point would you make about those connections? That point can become your thesis statement.
- Read the “Suggested Writing Assignments” section after your essay. You might use one of those prompts to help you form a thesis statement.

Step Three - Write a rough draft: Get started writing by writing a rough or “down” draft (see Anne Lamott article). Write at least one page. This draft may be typed or handwritten.

Step Four - Drafting the essay: Follow this plan for your essay:

1. Write a brief (5-7 sentences at most) summary paragraph of the essay you are responding to. It should include:
   - a topic sentence (first sentence) that includes the author, title, and author’s main point.
   - major points the author makes in the essay.
   - a concluding sentence that provides a transition to your next paragraph.
2. Write a paragraph (or two) that introduces and reflects on your topic and includes a thesis statement. Look at the first and second paragraphs in the essay “The Excuse ‘Not To’” as an example (pp. 62-66 in Models).

3. Choose one method to develop the response part of this essay. A “single striking example” is really a single story or anecdote that shows how you connect personally to the source essay AND supports your thesis statement. A “whole series of related examples” is just that: several examples (each developed in a paragraph) to support your thesis.

4. Include at least one or two direct quotes from the source essay. You may have more if it seems appropriate, but don’t overload your essay with quotes. The focus should be on your own ideas, supported by ideas from the essay. Do, however, show readers how your response connects to the source essay.

5. Write an ending paragraph. Consider this advice from the authors of Models for Writers: “An effective ending does more than simply indicate where the writer stopped writing. A conclusion may summarize; may inspire the reader to further thought or even action; may return to the beginning by repeating key words, phrases, or ideas; or may surprise the reader by providing a particularly convincing example to support a thesis” (143-45). Your ending should provide readers with a satisfying sense of resolution.

CHECKLIST for Essay #2:

1. Write the title, author, and page number of the essay you are responding to:

2. Please write your thesis statement here:

3. Rough draft (the “down” draft)

4. Writing Exercise #7: Outlining Essay 2/Creating a thesis

5. First full, typed draft

6. Writing Exercise #8: Beginning strategy/Ending strategy/Summary of Essay #2

7. Final draft

8. Writer’s Reflection: In one or two paragraphs (typed, double-spaced), reflect on your writing process for this essay. (problems, challenges, parts of your essay that you think are especially successful, parts you might still work on if you revised one more time, and so on)

Special Note: Please put a word count in the heading of your final draft.