



WRIT 101 Inquiry Project 3 Assignment Sheet

Where You Live and What You Live For: The Life-Place Personal Essay

Four to six pages, plus Works Cited (1,000 to 1,500 words; graphics do not count toward page count)

Due at the start of class Thursday, April 17

Composition theorist Bruce Ballenger writes, “As a form, the personal essay places the writer at center stage. [...] In this sense the personal essay is much like a photographic self-portrait.” For this assignment, you are going to expand the idea of the personal essay beyond the isolation of yourself as a subject and explore what it means to be *you* right now in *this* place.



Assignment

In this assignment you will practice inquiry through research, observation, exploration, and reflection. As a college student, you’re making Missoula your home (temporarily, or perhaps you grew up here), and this final essay challenges you to consider how where you live now—your current *life-place*—shapes who you are and how you try to live. You will choose a specific location and explore how that place relates to what you believe about the world. You will practice dialectical movement in your writing as you describe the place in rich, evocative detail, then “rise up the mountain” of reflection to show the importance of that place and describe how it relates to what you believe. You will engage both personal experience and outside research. In its final form, your essay should:

- Describe a specific place
- Reflect on its importance to what you believe
- Engage narrative writing to tell a (non-fiction) story
- Use descriptive language, scene, and detail to engage the five senses
- Have a thematically significant title
- Show evidence of dialectical movement
- Use *at least three* quotes from outside reading, class reading, or external research
- Effectively answer *so what?* by the end
- Show distinct revision from previous drafts



Required Drafts and Artifacts

These items should be neatly organized and presented in a pocket folder or report cover (no paper clips, binders, envelopes.) You must include the following to receive full credit:

1. All uncollected homework from the unit
2. Highly polished, formatted revised draft (as specified in Formatting Guidelines)
3. Sketch
4. All workshop worksheets and mark-ups from peers
5. One additional artifact of your choice demonstrating an important step or choice you made during the writing process
6. All research journals
7. PDFs (emailed) or printed copies of all original sources used in the essay
8. Email me a PDF or Word Doc copy of the final draft



Evaluation Criteria

As with all major assignments, I’ll give you comments and a check-system mark rather than a letter grade. I will read your final draft to determine success with the assignment goals, plus

- Completing all steps in the writing process
- Developing best practices when conducting academic research
- Participating in workshop
- Practicing conventions for introducing and documenting sources in MLA style, in the text and in Works Cited
- Practicing conventions of formatting, grammar, punctuation, etc. appropriate to the writing situation