

**Grading Workshop:  
School of Education  
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# Minute paper (freewrite for one minute without worrying about grammar or structure)

- Why do we have students write?
- How does writing promote critical thinking?
- Critical thinking is “an investigation whose purpose is to explore a situation, phenomenon, question, or problem to arrive at a hypothesis . . . that integrates all available information and that can therefore be convincingly justified.” (Kurfiss, 1988, qtd. in Bean 21).

# The 3 components of “grading”



1. **Evaluating**—determining the success of students’ responses to an assignment



2. **Commenting**—responding to student writing in margins or at the end of the essay



3. **Marking**—dealing with sentence-level error

# Marking

(We'll proceed out-of-order through the grading components list, moving from what graders tend to stress about most to least)

# Marking Modes: Copy editor

*n-v agreement* All governments have similar goals but the ways in which they meet these goals differ <sup>n</sup> greatly. In comparing the ~~institutions which~~ <sup>ance of</sup> govern the power structures of modern societies, ~~These theories are~~ the elitist, the neo-Marxist, and the pluralist. These theories help to explain the relationship between a society and politics, and ~~why the systems work or fail~~ <sup>the success or failure of that system</sup>. In order to help answer the question of "Who makes the political decisions and policies?" one can use these theories to see whether a society is structured with the ~~greatest~~ <sup>so that the majority of</sup> power ~~is~~ <sup>is afforded</sup> belonging to an elite, a capitalist ruling class, or ~~to~~ <sup>class</sup> an indefinite number of interest groups. Once this <sup>structure</sup> has been determined, ~~it's~~ <sup>write out</sup> possible to understand what factors have the greatest influence on the decision-making process in that society.

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# Marking Modes: Minimal Marking (see Richard Haswell)

All governments have similar goals but the ways in which they meet these goals differs greatly. In comparing the institutions which govern the power structures of modern societies. These theories are; the elitist, the neo-Marxist, and the pluralist. These theories help to explain the relationship between a society and politics, and why the systems work or fail. In order to help answer the question of, "Who makes the political decisions and policies?," one can use these theories to see whether a society is structured with the greatest power belonging to an elite, a capitalist ruling class, or to an indefinite number of interest groups. Once this has been determined, its possible to understand what factors have the greatest influence on the decision-making process in that society.

# Marking Modes: Modified Minimalist

All governments have similar goals but the ways in which they meet these goals differs greatly. In comparing the institutions which govern the power structures of modern societies. These theories are; the elitist, the neo-Marxist, and the pluralist. These theories help to explain the relationship between a society and politics, and why the systems work or fail. In order to help answer the question of, "Who makes the political decisions and policies?," one can use these theories to see whether a society is structured with the greatest power belonging to an elite, a capitalist ruling class, or to an indefinite number of interest groups. Once this has been determined, it's possible to understand what factors have the greatest influence on the decision-making process in that society.

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# Marking Modes: Online minimalist

All governments have similar goals but the ways in which they meet these goals differs greatly. In comparing the institutions which govern the power structures of modern societies. These theories are; the elitist, the neo-Marxist, and the pluralist. These theories help to explain the relationship between a society and politics, and why the systems work or fail. In order to help answer the question of, “Who makes the political decisions and policies?,” one can use these theories to see whether a society is structured with the greatest power belonging to an elite, a capitalist ruling class, or to an indefinite number of interest groups. Once this has been determined, its possible to understand what factors have the greatest influence on the decision-making process in that society.



# Minimally mark a sample paragraph

- The six colored glass pieces are arranged in 4 different colors, those being two turquoise, a dark blue, 2 orange, and one greenish-yellow, depending on the way you look at it and where the sun is coming from. The glass pieces are placed in two grey rectangles. One rectangle being placed horizontally and one being placed vertically. The grey rectangles are very precise and shaped. The left, horizontal rectangle is more curved and has one piece which is hanging over the left supporting rock while the right, vertical rectangle is more sharp and edged with one piece “peaking” out of the right supporting rock, which looks to be like it was “cut out” of the original rectangle.

# Marking Modes: Responding to Multilingual Writers' Work

- Often can use the same marking mode as for native speakers.
- If language difficulties are serious, you may want to write your markings in complete sentences.
- Focus on marking top 3 patterns of error.

# Marking Multilingually influenced work (cont.)

- Might mark one (short) paper or paragraph for all kinds of error, explaining what type of error each is. Often students learning a language they are still mastering can't intuit what is wrong or what types of errors they are making until they are told.
- Then, direct students to grammar/syntax resources they can consult to develop their skills in these areas.

# Best Practices for responding to multilingual writing

- Be empathetic: learning a second language is difficult
- Treat difference (cultural and linguistic) as a resource
- Don't require specialized cultural knowledge
- Conference with students to understand language issues
- Use end comments to supplement marginal notes
- Grade according to a rubric
- Incorporate write-to-learn activities

# Evaluating

## 4 FEATURES OF AN EFFECTIVE ASSIGNMENT HANDOUT

1. Describe the task (Present the task as a disciplinary problem requiring a claim/argument rather than mere information)

# Features of an Effective Handout (cont.)

2. Specify a rhetorical context for the task by describing the writer's role, the audience, and the format or genre. Ask the writer to imagine herself in position of authority whenever possible with an assignment (teacher, trainer, supervisor, etc.)

# Features of an Effective Handout (cont.)

## 3. Explain the criteria for evaluation.

*Keep in mind: “**rubric**” means “a guide listing specific criteria for grading or scoring...” (Merriam-Webster). It does not necessarily mean assigning points or percentages to each criterion individually.*



# Two basic kinds of rubrics

## Analytic

- Separate scores for each criterion, e.g:
  - Ideas
  - Use of vocabulary
  - Grammar
  - Organization

## Holistic

- One score based on announced grading criteria

# Features of an Effective Handout

4. Explain the purpose of the assignment. You might do this orally as you introduce the assignment in class, or you might write your purpose statement into the assignment sheet.

(From John Bean “Features of an Effective Assignment Handout”)

# Work with peers to improve your assignments

- Have a colleague peer review your assignment (see Bean questions on back of handout)
- Practice grade norming with colleagues using your assignment sheet and rubric

# Evaluating Strategies: use formative as well as summative writing assessments

- Create repeated, short “write-to-learn” assignments that you can grade with a + / ✓ / -
- See:  
<https://wac.colostate.edu/resources/wac/intro/wtl/>
- What are some short assignments that you could give in your own class?
- What kinds of comments would you give on these assignments?

# Evaluating Strategies: Move Quickly By Addressing Higher-order Concerns First

- Focus most of your energy on the major criteria for success (*not* correctness, formatting, and the like)
- Thesis?
- Argument, claims?
- Evidence?
- Adequate sources used?
- Understanding of material is evident?
- Writing is understandable for the most part?

# Evaluating Strategies: Addressing Lower-order Concerns

- Lower-order concerns can be addressed with minimal marking or not at all, depending on assignment.
- Lower-order concerns can be addressed in
  - Grammar mini-workshop lessons (5 min. in class)
  - Grammar sources in print and online (Direct students)

# Commenting: 5 Tips

1. Discuss your assignment sheet in class
  - Point out those skills and tasks the assignment involves that you have been working on in class.
  - Discuss what matters most to you on the assignment sheet (Creative analysis? Argument? Organization?)

# Commenting: 5 Tips

2. Discuss your rubric along with the assignment sheet. Allow students time to ask questions about the rubric and to practice using it (e.g., through peer review, by grading sample papers)



3. Always leave a brief endnote (or longer one if using holistic grading).

# Commenting: 5 Tips

4. Aim to comment for revision, not punishment.

## 5. See yourself as a coach rather than a judge.

- Most college students have some significant sentence-level problems
- Most have had few opportunities to learn traditional grammar
- Most have rarely been asked to generate their own ideas or to use concepts
- In other words, few students have been adequately prepared for college-level writing

# Commenting: Case Study

What do you think the following mean? What is your reaction to such a comment?

- “Be more specific.”
- “Be concise.”
- “This isn’t fully thought-through as an argument yet.”

# Commenting Case Study: Emotions are in play

- One study of student reactions to such feedback found many undergraduate students felt personally offended by these (and similar) comments
- Students often respond *emotionally*, so prime them in class and avoid overcommenting
- Undergraduates can only focus on a few things for their next steps growing as writers

# Commenting: Timing

- Comments have been found to be **by far** most effective for work that is in progress—one draft of a paper moving to another.
- For this reason, commenting on drafts is better than commenting extensively (or, at times, at all) on final papers.

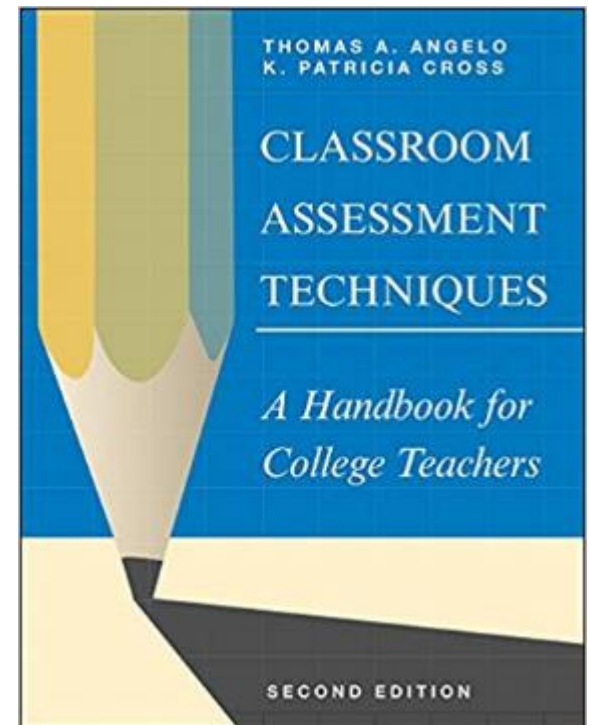
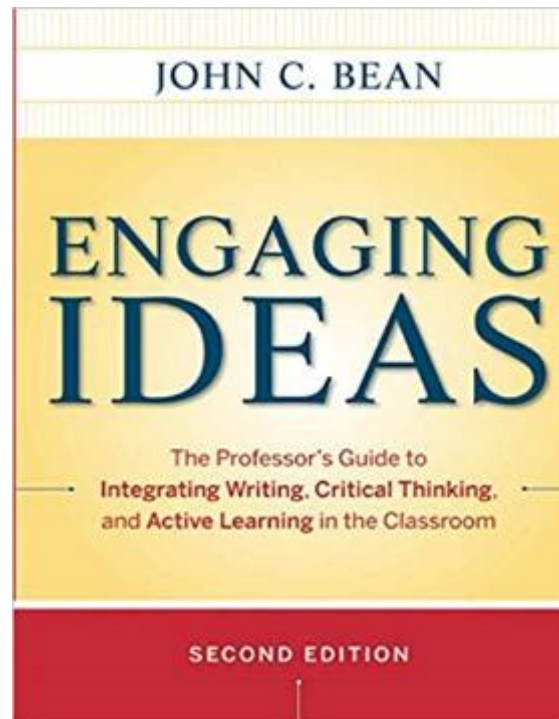
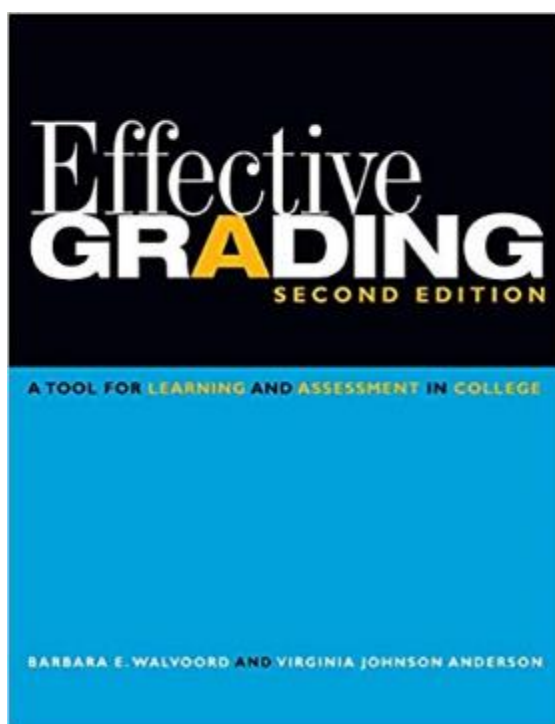
# Writing Program Support Areas



- Course design (CWP)
- Assignment “scaffolding” (CWP)
- Assignment design (CWP)
- Grading strategies (CWP)
- Writing Tutorial Services (WTS)



# Resources





# Resources

Angelo and Cross. *Classroom Assessment Techniques*. Jossey-Bass, 1993.

Bean, John. *Engaging Ideas*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. 2001.

WAC Clearinghouse. <http://wac.colostate.edu/>

Walvoord and Anderson. *Effective Grading*. Jossey-Bass, 1998.

“Working with Multilingual Student Writers: A Faculty Guide.”

Purdue Writing Lab.

[https://owl.purdue.edu/writinglab/faculty/documents/Writing\\_Lab\\_ESL\\_Faculty\\_Guide\\_2017.pdf](https://owl.purdue.edu/writinglab/faculty/documents/Writing_Lab_ESL_Faculty_Guide_2017.pdf)

Writing Tutorial Services, Pamphlets on Common Writing Issues.

<http://www.indiana.edu/>

Dr. Kanwit  
English 100

Observational Essay on Your Hometown (150 points)

**Due Dates:**     **Rough Draft\***  
                          **Final Draft**

\*Please note that you must submit a full-length rough draft to receive full credit on the final draft.

**Length: 3-4 pages** (double-spaced and typed); see the model essay on Canvas for format guidelines

**Role/Audience:**

You are the primary observer in this assignment. You can choose to write your observation in either the first or third person. See the essays in our reader for models of observational essays. Your audience for this assignment is your instructor and classmates, who will likely not have seen what you are observing (or will at least not have seen it in the same way), and are interested in your particular insights.

**Task:**

Write an observational essay about an intriguing place, person, or activity in your hometown. Observe your subject closely, and then present what you have learned in a way that both informs and engages readers. Be sure to select a subject with which you're very familiar and that you've seen/experienced many times. A lack of familiarity with your subject will weaken the overall impression and details in your essay.

Please also include a video or other multimedia presentation that helps to describe your hometown.

**Purpose:**

This essay will give you practice in closely observing a subject and in writing clearly about your observations. Observational writing is the basis for many other kinds of writing that will be important to you in this class, in other college courses, and in your career.

**Criteria for evaluation:**

- convey a **dominant impression** of your hometown
- provide appropriate **details** that support this dominant impression
- construct **clearly organized and well-developed body paragraphs** with logical transitions between paragraphs
- write **clear sentences** that avoid grammar or spelling problems
- construct a **video** or other multimedia presentation that complements your essay

John Paul Kanwit  
 Observational Essay Rubric  
 (Adapted from a model at <http://citl.indiana.edu/resources>)

<b>Trait</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>
<b>Organization</b>	organization of the paper is clear to the reader; has strong topic sentences and transitions	overall structure is clear, but some topic sentences and transitions may be missing	some paragraphs seem off-topic; organization not clear to the reader	disorganized; paragraphs may be too long or too short; no helpful topic sentences
<b>Dominant Impression (thesis)</b>	clear dominant impression that is developed throughout the essay	dominant impression is present, but could be conveyed more strongly	dominant impression is vague or implied rather than explicit	dominant impression is missing from the essay
<b>Supporting Details (Evidence)</b>	evidence from the artwork is appropriately chosen and cited to support impression	good evidence is identified, but is not always described and developed fully to support the impression	some evidence is presented, but not in a way that fully supports the impression	scant evidence is presented to support the impression
<b>Writing and mechanics</b>	sentences are grammatically correct and clear to the reader; essay meets the required length	a few grammatical errors or problems in sentence-level clarity might be present; essay meets required length	numerous problems with grammar, clarity, or mechanics; paper may be somewhat short of required length	sentences are so unclear or poorly written that they cannot be understood; paper may be well short of required length

## Peer Review of Observational Essay

For each of your group members, type complete and careful answers to the following prompts. Your goal is to help each writer revise effectively. Do not simply answer “yes” or “no” to the prompts; instead, show each writer where and how to improve. You should write a short paragraph (4-5 sentences) for each prompt. Your peer review will be graded based on: your detailed coverage of all five prompts; your ability to provide actionable feedback; and your sentence level clarity/professionalism.

Prompts:

1. First Impression: read the draft without stopping, and then write a few sentences giving your general impression. What is particularly effective in this draft?

Read again to suggest improvements:

2. What is the dominant impression that you get of the place, person, or activity? Where is this conveyed? How could the dominant impression be improved? Has the writer chosen an appropriate authorial role (first or third person) to describe the place? Why or why not?

3. To what extent do descriptions and details help to convey the dominant impression? How could the writer make the descriptions of the place more vivid and detailed-oriented? Where are details sufficient? Where are more needed?

4. What kind of organizational scheme does the writer use (topical, spatial, narrative)? How could the organizational scheme be improved? Where are transitions between paragraphs effective? Where are these transitions less effective?

5. How effective is the sentence-level clarity of the essay? Where is the writing particularly strong? Which sections need more work? Are there patterns of errors that prevent you from fully understanding and enjoying the essay?

## Minimal Marking Example

JCFA's [use full title] Mystery Arch

Students at College see this arch everyday, but do any of them really stop and look at it or even wonder why it is there? This arch is very detailed. With six colored glass pieces, four overhead rods, and two large cement stands supporting it [frag]. The arch is placed directly in front of The Johnson Center for Fine Arts. I had not stopped and payed much attention to this arch until I chose to write about it. I noticed details little odds-and-ends about this arch that I never would have if it [were not] wasn't for writing this paper. The arch is sitting on a pile of rocks that are [is] shaped in a circle. I have noticed that the arch is not kept up very well, which is interesting to me; something so beautiful should be taken care of. I will be observing the arch looking at it from Hoover-Cline Residence Hall. [change last sentence to convey dominant impression].

**Based on what you've learned, how would you minimally mark the following paragraph?**

The six colored glass pieces are arranged in 4 different colors, those being two turquoise, a dark blue, 2 orange, and one greenish-yellow, depending on the way you look at it and where the sun is coming from. The glass pieces are placed in two grey rectangles. One rectangle being placed horizontally and one being placed vertically. The grey rectangles are very precise and shaped. The left, horizontal rectangle is more curved and has one piece which is hanging over the left supporting rock while the right, vertical rectangle is more sharp and edged with one piece "peaking" out of the right supporting rock, which looks to be like it was "cut out" of the original rectangle.