A HANDBOOK
FOR THE TEACHING
OF ENGLISH 79:
PREPARATORY ENGLISH

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San Joaquin Delta College
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SEQUENCE OF ENGLISH COMPOSITION

AT

DELTA COLLEGE

Level III
English 1A

Level II
English 79

Level I
English 87
English 70
Level I Basic Writing Program

English 70

And

English 87

English 70 is a basic writing course, designed to build thinking and writing power in personal, college, and work settings. Each student compiles a portfolio to display examples of her/his writing, including a summary of a short article from The Final Draft student magazine; a short composition with revision; a letter for a real audience in the real world; and an in-class timed writing responding to a selection from The Final Draft student magazine.

Working in collaboration, English 70 faculty evaluate student portfolios to gauge readiness for English 79 or English 87, a bridge course between English 70 and 79. Students may earn grades with recommendation to either Level II composition for English 79 or with recommendation to English 87.

English 87 is an intermediate basic writing course, specifically designed to give students more practice before they enter English 79. Each student practices writing short essays, demonstrating growth in organizational and developmental writing skills, in addition to strengthening sentence level skills.

Further details about Delta’s English 70 can be found in the English 70 Instructor Handbook for English 70, available from the Writing Center Instructor in Shima 217.
The English 79 Program
Level II

Program History
English 79 is a pivotal composition course in the sequence of writing classes at Delta College. In 1986, Delta College recognized that many of its "college-level" students enrolling in English 1A, the freshman composition transfer course, were in fact not prepared to achieve success with college-level writing tasks. As a result of this recognition, the English faculty designed English 79, a preparatory composition class whose instruction bridged the gap between paragraph-level courses (then the English 70 series) and full-blown essay courses (English 1A, English 1B, and English 1D). Eventually, English 79 became the designated AA degree composition class, a designation which made the course serve two essential purposes: it ensures written literacy skills for AA and certificate candidates, and it enables students who matriculate with pre-college skills to develop the skills necessary to successfully complete college writing tasks. Between 700 and 1000 students complete English 79 each semester, giving it one of the largest enrollments of any English program on the campus.

Program Philosophy
There is a remarkable consensus among English 79 instructors about the purpose and success of the course. Designed as a developmental course, English 79 is premised on the notion that students from widely varying backgrounds with a diverse range of literacy skills can master a basic essay format and the rules of Standard Written English. Most instructors in the English 79 program structure their courses on the revision model, including prewriting, rough draft review, editing, and final reading days. The curriculum includes instruction in the grammar, syntax, and punctuation rules of Standard Written English; repeated practice with the writing process; the reading and analysis of model essays; and drills with demand writing skills.

The English 79 Mastery Essay
During the sixteenth week of the semester, all students enrolled in this course undertake a mastery essay, which determines whether or not they elevate to Level III and become eligible for English 1A. This essay is generally expository in nature, and students are asked to write an essay based on a reading distributed via the English 79 Mastery Information Packet, which all students will have purchased as one of their "texts" before the mastery. Students have two topics from which to choose. Students write the mastery essay during an eighty-minute class period. The essays are marked with class code and social security number (soon to be student ID numbers), and the English 79 faculty holistically score them one week after the administration. The scoring process is a blind one, with discrepancies (pass/fail disagreements in the awarded scores) resolved by an experienced third reader. Students must pass the mastery essay and pass the course with a C in order to be eligible for English 1A; the student may pass by Portfolio. The passing or failing mastery essay contributes to 40% of their course grade.
Program History
English 1A is a college-level composition class that is a requirement for graduation from all four-year degree programs in the California University system. Students who score Level 3 on the assessment-placement test at Delta are eligible to take English 1A, although they may take a lower level composition class if they wish. The course presupposes that students have mastered the basic rules of Standard Written English as they apply to syntax, grammar, and punctuation and are ready to experiment with style and structure in order to fulfill a particular purpose and/or accommodate a specific audience.

Program Philosophy
Instructors in the English Department are in agreement as to the writing standards that English 1A students must meet, but they may choose to present the material in different modes. Some instructors prefer to teach to the rhetorical pattern of the essay; others prefer material that is thematically linked; others may combine the two methods. Most instructors use some form of the revision model, which emphasizes prewriting, writing, revision, and peer reaction. Textbooks for the course range from those that focus solely on the essay format to those that include poetry and short story selections thematically related to the essays. Close reading of the literature for an understanding of structure, tone, and authorial purpose as well as for content is an integral part of the course.

The English 1A Voluntary Mastery Essay
The English 1A voluntary mastery essay is administered at the end of the semester. Similar to the English 79 Mastery Essay, the 1A Mastery Essay requires that a student adopt an argumentative stance on an issue or problem. Students are presented with a short essay, which they must summarize and paraphrase. They have fifty minutes in which to formulate a thesis and support it. All instructors who require that their students take the mastery essay participate in the holistic reading of the essays. Some instructors choose to use the essay as an ungraded assignment for which the student earns participation points; others assign it as a graded essay; still others use it as an indicator to the student of his relative success on a demand writing assignment. Since virtually all colleges and universities require that matriculating students produce an entrance-writing sample of a similar nature, many instructors feel that the mastery essay provides the student with valuable practice. To prepare the student for the mastery essay, many instructors have timed writing exercises built into their curricula.
English 79 Course Outline

SAN JOAQUIN DELTA COLLEGE DISTRICT
CREDIT COURSE OUTLINE and ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

PRE-LAUNCH DATE: 03/30/05 SUBMITTED BY: Candace Andrews

DEPARTMENT AND COURSE NUMBER: ENG/079

DISCIPLINE(S):
   ENG - English

TITLE OF COURSE: Preparatory English

CATALOG STATEMENT:
This course is designed to prepare students to enter college level English composition. The emphasis in the course is on writing well-developed paragraphs in an organized essay, improving reading comprehension, and reviewing grammar and usage. This course satisfies the English requirement for the Associate Degree.

CROSS LISTED COURSE:

STUDENT UNITS:
   Min Units: 5.00   Max Units: 5.00

LECTURE HOURS PER WEEK:
   Min Units: 5.00   Max Units: 5.00

LAB HOURS PER WEEK:
   Min Units: 0.00   Max Units: 0.00

FACULTY UNIT HRS:
   LECTURE UNITS: Units: 5.00
   LAB UNITS:      Units: 0.00

ENTRY SKILLS: (exit and entrance competencies from course requisites as well as competency levels are)
   Reading Level II and
   Composition Level II.

REQUISITES:

COURSE PREREQUISITES:
CO-REQUISITES:

ADVISORIES:
C As an advisory for those intending to go on to English 1A - the proposed course, Reading 94A, Critical Reading for College English

LIMITATIONS ON ENROLLMENT:

FIELD TRIP REQUIREMENTS: Not Required

GRADE OPTIONS: 0: A-F or Inc.

COMPARABLE COURSE LIST: (schools, course codes and numbers from data field)
ENGWR 102 American River College, 2004-2005 Online Catalog, page 118

TRANSFER/DEGREE APPLICABILITY
Associate Degree only and not Transferable

COURSE PROPOSED FOR:
(From data check list for example: Associate Degree, Certificate of Achievement, Certificate of Completion, Deletion, District General Education, Honors Course, New Course, Renewal - inactive course, Revision, Topic Course)
Associate Degree
District General Education
Revision

COURSE CHANGES MAJOR OR MINOR: Minor

DESCRIBE PROPOSED CHANGES: (text from data field)
Prerequisite correction; addition of reading to catalog statement; updated textbooks; clarification of evaluation

COURSE REPEATABILITY: NO
REPEAT COUNT:
REPEAT UNITS:
RATIONALE:

COURSE MAY BE CHALLENGED: YES
RATIONALE:

DISTRICT GENERAL EDUCATION ELEMENTS PROPOSAL: (one ELEMENT is selected from list in data field.)
District General Education
LEARNING SKILLS Group A

RATIONALE FOR ADDING COURSE TO DISTRICT GENERAL EDUCATION (COMMENTS):

ACADEMIC AND STUDENT SUPPORT RESOURCES

LEARNING RESOURCES:
Current level sufficient

COMPUTER RESOURCES:
Current level sufficient

DISABLED STUDENT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES:
Current level sufficient

OTHER RESOURCES:

TEXTBOOK RESOURCES:
Typical texts include a reader, a rhetoric, and a handbook or a textbook that combines all three.
TEXT BOOKS (information from data fields)

MANUALS (information from data fields)

PERIODICALS (information from data fields)
SUPPLIES (information from data fields)

None

GOALS:
General Goals: Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:
1. Read essays for content and main idea.
2. Generate ideas about which to write.
3. Explore and evaluate ideas, form opinions, and examine the validity and strength of those opinions.
4. Write clear, correct sentences in various common patterns.
5. Compose essays, based on the process model, in various common modes.
6. Write in-class timed essays.
7. Proofread, edit, and revise written work.
8. Effectively extract text from professional essays.
9. Avoid plagiarism.
10. Understand the concept of writing as communication for a specific audience.

COURSE OBJECTIVES/STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
Specific Objectives: Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:
1. Read, discuss, and analyze model essays.
2. Generate ideas about which to write through the process of freewriting, brainstorming, and/or clustering/mapping.
3. Distinguish between fact and opinion; an opinion supported by facts and an opinion supported by hearsay or prejudice; a weak argument and a stronger argument.
4. Write simple, compound, and complex sentences that are correctly punctuated and syntactically sound.
5. Compose an on-demand timed essay in response to prompts and readings.
6. Compose an essay, based on the process model of multiple drafts, which is organized and developed according to the writer's audience and purpose and which displays different rhetorical skills.
7. Through self-evaluation, peer editing, and instructor comments, revise essays for global problems such as problems with structure, content, and/or development; edit and proofread essays for surface errors such as problems with grammar, usage, and spelling.
8. Paraphrase, summarize, and quote source material for summaries and essays.
9. Distinguish between paraphrasing, quoting, and copying; give credit where credit is due.
10. Master the basic essay format and basic rules of standard written English, which include organizing an essay around a central controlling idea; developing main idea paragraphs with effective use of supporting details; and writing clear, complete sentences that demonstrate adequate facility with grammar and syntax.
OUTLINE OF TOPICS:

The following topics are included in the framework of the course but are not intended as limits on content. The order of presentation and relative emphasis will vary with instructors.

1) Critical Reading and Analyzing Essays as a Context for Writing
   a) Pre-reading activities such as pattern and concept guides, questions to initiate inquiry, and vocabulary
   b) Post-reading activities such as discussion and collaboration, study questions, and summary writing

2) Pre-writing Techniques
   a) freewriting and guided freewriting
   b) brainstorming
   c) clustering and mapping
   d) outlining

3) Essay and Paragraph Development
   a) Formulation of a single thesis statement or controlling idea
   b) Development of topic sentences
   c) Patterns of paragraph development such as reasons and examples, description and narration, comparison/contrast and argumentation
   d) Use of transitional words, phrases, and sentences to unify ideas

4) Re-writing, Editing, and Proofreading Processes including peer collaboration for feedback and help with global revision

5) Use of Dictionaries and other Reference Materials to help with word choice and vocabulary

6) Grammar and Usage
   a) Phrases and clauses
   b) Sentence structure
      i) Complete sentences vs. fragments, run-ons, comma splices
      ii) Subordination and coordination
      iii) Parallel structure
   c) Clear pronoun reference
   d) Agreement
      i) Pronoun/Antecedent
      ii) Subject/Verb
   e) Verb forms and endings
   f) Mechanics, such as capitalization, punctuation, and spelling

SAMPLE ASSIGNMENTS:

READING:

Students will read short, but challenging essays on a variety of themes and topics. Readings should be Level II essays (ninth-twelfth grade level) on the Flesch-Kincaid Readability Scale. Students will read essays such as

WRITING:
Students will write a minimum of 5,000 words divided among various assignments such as
1. writing in a journal;
2. keeping a reading log;
3. writing summaries;
4. writing an essay that contrasts two teachers, two restaurants, two parenting styles, or two friends;
5. writing an expository essay on the benefits of, or problems with, television, materialism, or technology;
6. writing an argumentative essay supported by evidence after reading several essays on one theme such as advertising, gender roles, or music.

OTHER:
1. Students will watch educational films, listen to guest speakers, and/or attend performances such as those presented by the Cultural Awareness Programs Committee as required by the instructor.

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:
Methods of instruction may include, but are not limited to, the following: (from methods of instruction data page).
1 Internet-Delayed Inter
2 Lecture
3 Other (Specify)
4 Dist Ed-Other
5 Demonstration. Whole group and small group discussions. Peer group collaboration and individual consultation. Oral presentations by students. Films which supplement reading material. Guest speakers.

METHODS OF EVALUATION:
A student’s grade will be based on multiple measures of performance. These methods may include, but are not limited to, the following:
Students will write a minimum of 5,000 words of expository prose. Students must pass the Mastery Essay or pass by portfolio in lieu of the failing mastery AND receive a grade of C or better in the course in order to advance to Composition Level III.
1. Because English 79 is a competency-based course, the course grade will reflect both the work a student completes through the semester and the skill level the student has achieved by the end of the semester. The final grade for the course will be determined on the basis of the graded assignments (worth 60%) and the Mastery Essay (worth 40% pass or 40% fail).

2. The Mastery Essay is a timed essay written during the sixteenth week of the semester. The student will be required to write an expository/analytical essay on a topic of general interest in response to an essay. The Mastery Essay is graded holistically on a five-point scale by two, and sometimes three, English 79 instructors. Scores of 3-5 are passing; scores of 1 and 2 are failing.

3. Passing English 79 with a grade of "C" or better requires passing the Mastery Essay or passing by Portfolio* as well as having a satisfactory grade in the course.

4. Along with passing the Mastery Essay or the portfolio, the student will be graded on essays, written summaries, class participation, quizzes, a final examination, and other assignments as established by the instructor. At least one method will be used which will require the student to demonstrate critical thinking as evidenced through writing and/or problem solving.

5. *The portfolio must be endorsed by the instructor and must include two in-class demand essays and one out-of-class revised and edited essay, all of which demonstrate mastery of expository, analytical prose as delineated on the English 79 Scoring Guide. The portfolio will also include the failed Mastery Essay and a letter written in class by the student to the portfolio committee explaining why his or her portfolio is deserving of a passing score. A committee of English 79 instructors will review and make a final, binding decision on each portfolio.

DISTANCE EDUCATION INSTRUCTION

DELIVERY METHODS:
- Online Forum
- Online Lectures
- Threaded Discussions
- E-Mail

OTHER METHODS:
To facilitate interaction between the instructor and the student in this on-line environment, a virtual discussion method will be used. This discussion will provide the opportunity for weekly student contact and will take the form of one or more of the following: threaded discussion, e-mail, and/or chatroom.

QUALITY ASSURANCE:
- student evaluation, faculty peer evaluation
EVALUATION METHOD:
online quizzes, discussion posts, and papers submitted into discussion areas or other electronic space such as drop box or email attachment

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

CONTACT TYPES:

Online Course - Weekly
Email - Weekly
Online Forum - Three times per week.
Telephone - As needed

INSTRUCTIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

CAN DATA:

SAM CODES:E = Not Occupational

Transfer Types:
Course cannot be transferred to CSU
Course cannot be transferred to UC

TOP CODES:
1501.00 - English Written expression

Assessment Level:

VTEA Code:
0 - Not Applicable

Instructional Code:
M - Intermediate

ORIGINATOR: Candace Andrews
PROPOSAL ORGINATOR: *****
ORIGINATION DATE: *****
PROPOSAL DATE: *****
Some English 79 Suggested Textbooks

While the intent of this list is not to be prescriptive, English 70, English 79, and English 1A have distinct goals, objectives and outcomes; therefore, no textbook or reader used in one course should be used in another. An exception to this would be the handbooks, which are most often used for reference and may be used by students throughout their college career.

I have created this list from textbooks that all of us frequently use in English 79, and I have had a "readability test" done on them to determine their applicability for our level II writing course.

Under "Sample Readings," the new 79 Course Outline reads:

Students will read short, but challenging essays on a variety of themes and topics. Readings should be Level II essays (ninth-twelfth grade level) on the Flesch-Kincaid Readability Scale. Students will read essays such as

6. Mukherjee, Bharati, "Two Ways to Belong in America."
7. Scheid, Ann, "'Where Have All the Flowers Gone?': Is Humanity Its Own Worst Enemy?"
8. Staples, Brent, "Black Men and Public Space."
9. Tan, Amy, "My Mother's English."

Textbooks

Typical texts include a level II reader, a rhetoric, and a handbook or a textbook that combines all three.

Some 79 Textbooks that combine all three:


**Typical 79 Readers** - Many of the readers include a rhetoric.


**Some Handbooks, Workbooks, and Texts** that focus on grammar and sentences: (These would be used to supplement a reader or a textbook. They are not intended to be used alone.)


Sample Master Syllabus

Preparatory English
English 79

Instructor:

Semester:

Class Days and Time:
This is a five unit class, which meets five hours per week

Office:
Phone and voice mail: ; e-mail:

Office Hours:
Writing Center: Shima 217 - Located inside the Tutoring Center
You may take an English 73B class in the Writing Center concurrently with English 79, or you may go to the Writing Center for what we call "drop-in" appointments, though you need to schedule these ahead of time. The tutors in the Writing Center will not edit your papers, but they will help you learn how to improve your writing. The Writing Center is a valuable resource for students, and it is free!!!

Prerequisites: Level II Composition and Level II Reading. Each of these may be reached by a qualifying score on the Assessment Test. Composition level II can be reached by a qualifying score in English 70, successful completion of English 87, or successful challenge into Level II (by taking the Retake in the Assessment Center).

Catalog Description: This course is designed to prepare students to enter English 1A. Emphasis in English 79 is on writing well-developed paragraphs in an organized essay and on reviewing grammar and usage. This course counts toward the Associate Degree.

Required Texts: See list of sample textbooks. + English 79: Preparatory English Information Packet (available in the bookstore after the second month of class).

Supplementary Text:

Required Supplies: Paper and pens; a folder with side pockets or a three ring binder and binder paper; highlighter pens of different colors; a small stapler; a spiral notebook for your journal. I will be talking about buying a journal in class. I do not accept papers written in pencil or papers that are torn from spiral notebooks. Final drafts must be word-processed and double-spaced.

Course Objectives and Overview: English 79 is designed to prepare you for English 1A as well as other college classes by helping you to learn the basic skills to think clearly and concisely in writing. You will learn to write clear, complete sentences, develop well-supported paragraphs, and organize the paragraphs into an essay based on a controlling thesis statement. Emphasis will be placed on converting private writing to public writing and the essay format.

Methods of Instruction: Methods of instruction may include all of the following: lecture, demonstration, class discussion, peer group collaboration, and individual consultation.

Course Requirements (Obligations of Students):
Attendance and Participation: Consistent attendance and participation are essential. Your effort and participation will largely determine your progress and you need to be here in order to participate! We often write in class, and this kind of participation requires that you be here. I will take roll each class meeting, and you will be dropped if you are absent six times during the semester. A partial absence may be considered as a whole absence. However, good attendance is very, very important. Save your absences for when you are sick or for an emergency. Don't make appointments during class hours. *There is no such thing as an excused absence!* I expect you to be here every class meeting! Late entry and/or early departure may constitute an absence.

Late Work: I allow **one** late **final** essay for any reason; however, no late essay will be accepted after one week from the initial due date. *(Drafts will not be accepted late; quizzes and homework cannot be made up.)* This one late final paper may be an in-class essay that you were absent for or it may be an out-of-class essay. However, you have only **one** late paper for any reason.

Course Content:

Students must write a minimum of **5000** words. The course will include instruction in:

1. Reading and analyzing essays.
2. Pre-writing techniques.
3. Re-writing and revision techniques.
4. Editing and proofreading processes.
5. Development of topic sentences.
7. Formulation of a single thesis statement that clearly expresses the central idea of the essay.
8. Use of examples and support for your thesis.
9. Use of transitional words, phrases, and sentences to unify ideas.
10. Grammar and usage.

Methods of Evaluation:

60% of your grade will be determined by an average of your class participation (including essays, public writings, journal writing, homework, quizzes, tests, and a final examination). For all out-of-class essays, rough drafts will be mandatory; these drafts will count toward your completed essay grade. You cannot miss more than one essay or one public writing assignment in order to pass the class.

40% of your grade will be determined by a final mastery assessment to be read and graded by other instructors from the Communication Skills Division.

Misc.: *Leave beepers, cell phones, headphones, radios, etc. etc. at home or, if you must bring these to school, turn them off in the classroom. Children are not allowed in the classroom.*
Sample English 79 Weekly Syllabus

The following sixteen-week syllabus is based on the interactive writing textbook Write for A Reason by Patricia Teel Bates (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1991).

WRITING FOR PERSONAL REASONS

Week I
M  Registration
   Introduction to the Course
   Explanation of the Mastery Essay
W  Lecture: From Paragraph to Essay
   In-class Sample One
F  Personal Inventory, 3-10

Writing: A Problem-Solving Process

Week II
M  Reading, 11-20
W  Writing, 21-25
F  Sentence Structure, 191-198

Week III
M  Class Newsletter, 26-35
W  Sentence Structure, 199-207
F  Lecture: Paragraph Purposes

Personal Writing: From Memory to Insight

Week IV
M  Assignment: Essay One
   Reading, 38-49
W  In-Class Sample Two
F  Coordination and Subordination, 208-214

Week V
M  First Ideas: Essay One
   Writing From Memory, 52-55
W  Nutshell Statement: Essay One
   Verb Forms, 216-220
F  Read Around: Essay One
Voices From the Past

Week VI
M  Essay One Due
   Assignment: Essay Two
   Reading, 64-71
W  In-Class Sample Three
F  Verb Forms, 220-230

Week VII
M  First Ideas: Essay Two
   Writing, 72-81
W  Nutshell Statement: Essay Two
   Subject-Verb Agreement, 233-238
F  Read Around: Essay Two

WRITING FOR PUBLIC REASONS
Public Writing From Personal Opinion

Week VIII*
M  Essay Two Due
   Assignment: Essay Three
   Reading, 93-99
W  In-Class Sample Four
F  Reading, 100-105
*This three-week segment is laid out in detail in the following pages.

Week IX
M  First Ideas: Essay Three
   Critical Thinking, 106-118
W  Nutshell Statement: Essay Three
   Prewriting Opinions, 119-124
F  Pronouns, 240-247

Week X
M  Getting Feedback, 125
W  In-Class Sample Five
F  Read Around: Essay Three

Public Writing From Sources

Week XI
M  Essay Three Due
   Assignment: Essay Four
   Reading, 131-142
W  Writing, 143-147
In the remaining days of the semester, individual conferences can be held to advise students of their mastery essay scores and to counsel them into the next writing class.
English 79
Detailed Three-Week Curriculum Plan
Objectives/Vocabulary/Activities

The following curriculum plan is a revision model cycle for leading students through the complete writing process from receipt of essay assignment to completion of rough and final drafts. The primary goal of this three-week unit is to introduce the argumentative writing process and to distinguish it from the processes of reflective and narrative writing which students have practiced in the previous weeks. The secondary goal is to identify and practice the subset of critical thinking skills, primarily the sequences of induction and deduction, which underlie the evidence-gathering process. Because the textbook assignments and exercises are self-explanatory, they are not extensively elaborated upon here. Homework assignments, with few exceptions, are not designated as such here. Instructors can use their own discretion in deciding which of the exercises and prewriting sheets to collect and evaluate. Instructors may also find that their own pacing will not correspond to the schedule of activities presented in this three-week segment, so some activities may be delayed or deleted to suit individual teaching styles.

The movement from personal to public writing upon which the following cycle is premised is treated thoroughly by James Britton’s transactional/poetic/expressive model of discourse and by Robert Scholes’ writer/topic/reader paradigm. (Both Britton and Scholes distinguish among what Scholes has called writer-based writing, such as personal narrative, and topic-based writing, which is essentially objective exposition, and reader-based writing, which is intended to direct or to persuade. See James Britton's The Development of Writing Abilities and Scholes and Comley's The Practice of Writing.) For basic writers such as those enrolled in English 79 at Delta College, the ability to move beyond writer-based modes and into topic and reader-based ones creates the cornerstone of their college-level writing repertoire. (As James Britton argues, however, the ability to write about personal experience is a prerequisite for the ability to write about external subjects. Therefore, the following curriculum occurs approximately seven weeks into the semester, after students have had ample practice with writer-based subjects.) From immediate tasks such as passing the English 79 Mastery Essay to more distant demands such as writing research-based reports, acquiring the complex of abilities necessary to distinguish between writing about oneself and writing about the external world for an external reader is essential. While all of us recognize the value and reward of personal writing (and justifiably spend portions of our class time encouraging it), the following curriculum assumes the responsibility we all have to empower our students with adult literacy skills appropriate for academic and professional use.
Writing for Public Reasons

Public Writing From Personal Opinion

The following is a detailed set of lesson plans for weeks eight through ten from the preceding semester-long syllabus. Each part of the lesson plan is described with objectives, vocabulary, and activities. Instructors may tailor their adoption of the individual segments to the time available in their class meetings. While the lessons appear as discrete units, occasionally it is necessary to have lessons spill over into following class sessions, or to leapfrog with the insertion of demand writing practice or grammar review. The material presented in Monday of Week VIII, for example, may appear to be more than one could present in an 80-minute class because it includes both the culmination of a previous essay and the introduction of the next assignment. However instructors choose to segment their lessons, the principles of continuity and coherence are achieved by devoting the initial class moments to a reminder of the previous class content and the closing moments to summation and emphasis of key concepts.

I:

The Eighth Week of the Semester

M Essay Two Due
Assignment: Essay Three
Reading, 64-71
W In-Class Sample Four
F Reading, 100-105

Week VIII

M Essay Two Due

Objectives: 1. To reward student writers of all abilities
2. To provide praise for specific skills
3. To model supportive engaged responses
4. To reinforce the concept of writing as communication

Vocabulary: 1. Criticism, constructive and destructive
2. Specific detail
Activity: By this time in the semester, students are comfortable with their classmates and their instructor. On this due date for Essay Two, the instructor can offer students the voluntary opportunity to read (or have read) their essays out loud. Writers may choose to read their own essays and reveal their identity; they can swap with a classmate and read another’s essay (revealing or concealing identity as they wish); or they can have their instructor read their essays anonymously. (An especially rewarding option is for the instructor to request to read the paper of an anonymous weaker student, one who would not ordinarily volunteer to share, and to give it an "edited" powerful reading, inserting corrections if necessary without drawing attention to errors. The anonymous writer is always emboldened by such treatment of his work.) The instructor lists, in the order in which they are read, the titles of the selected essays on the board. At the conclusion of the readings, each member of the audience is responsible for completing a five-minute "Listener's Response" (see appendix 1) to the author of the essay he most enjoyed, explaining specifically what he found appealing about the essay. The instructor can model supportive, specific praise by briefly commenting on a single element of each essay after it has been read. All students earn flat points for completing these listener responses, which are recorded and then forwarded to the authors. As a wrap-up to the voluntary readings, the instructor can remind students that they should include their classmates as well as their teacher when considering their immediate audience.

This is an activity whose duration is hard to calculate, but by the eighth week of the semester instructors will know whether they have a vocal class or not. Some students will regularly choose to share their work; others may seem to have taken vows of silence. Even the most withdrawn writers will tend to buy into the readings when they see that the payoff is pure praise, and participants sometimes respond more attentively to the comments of their peers than those of their teacher.

Assignment: Essay Three

Objectives: 1. To transition between writing for and about the self to writing for a reader about the external world
2. To introduce the general subject matter for the essay
3. To instigate student involvement with the subject by group brainstorming
4. To begin the individual topic selection process

Vocabulary: 1. Objective/Subjective
2. Writer, topic, reader-based writing
3. Opinion, fact, evidence
4. Purpose

Activity: As a preface to the discussion of the subject matter for this essay, the instructor can offer a simplified version of Aristotle’s Rhetorical Relationships, commonly presented as the "communication model" (see appendix 2) in contemporary speech textbooks. After identifying the elements of the relationship and analyzing the way each plays a role in determining the nature of the message, the instructor can ask
students to apply the model to different situations from their lives: calling home to
Mom to ask for money, explaining to a girlfriend why a relationship is ending, arguing
with a college teacher about a perceived unfair grade. Students have a canny ability to
sense the importance of tailoring an argument to an audience when they analyze these
situations from their own lives; the instructor can lead them to transfer this ability to the
subject matter at hand by asking "How would you talk about X if you were talking to
your best friend? To your grandfather? To someone who didn't know you?" Stick
figures outlined on the board can represent the speaker/writer and the listener/reader
relationship, and students can apply the rhetorical terms to the personal situations they
describe. By building on the complex communication skills that even basic writers
practice in their daily lives, this activity can begin to lift student abilities to a more
abstract level.

Following abstract discussions with a concrete exercise is generally good
pedagogy, and group work can make what students might perceive as boring tasks
light-hearted yet purposeful. The instructor can ask students to contribute to a topic
bank, which is recorded on the blackboard or overhead projector. (These topics can
become the inspiration for the students’ individual essay topics, as well.) When about
six reasonably limited contemporary topics (issues are best) have been collected, the
instructor assigns students into numbered groups. Each group is given the same task:
as a group, they are to brainstorm ideas and then compose two paragraphs. The first
paragraph is to treat the topic in a writer-based manner (for example, why I am afraid
of being unemployed). The second paragraph is to treat the topic in a reader-based
manner (what a college-student can do in order to avoid unemployment). When the
paragraphs are done, volunteer readers from each group give blind readings of their
paragraphs, so the rest of the class must guess whether the paragraph is writer or
reader-based. To close this exercise, the instructor can reinforce the idea that the
upcoming essay is to be written in a reader-based mode.

**Reading: 93-99**

**Objectives:**
1. To study an example of reader-based writing, Gloria Steinem’s "Words and Change"
2. To distinguish statements of fact from opinions

**Vocabulary:**
1. Thesis and Supports
2. Specific detail
3. Opinion, fact, evidence
4. Organization

Instructors may choose to work with text readings in a number of ways. Some
general advice about discussing essay readings with Level II writers is helpful,
however. Opening the discussion by offering to answer student questions ranging from
meaning to specific vocabulary helps to alter the traditional dynamics in which the
teacher plays the role of grand inquisitor. If students realize that advanced readers
exploit their ignorance by asking questions about what they don’t know, they feel more
comfortable posing their own questions, which should become increasingly
sophisticated. If the class is quiet, then the instructor can focus on specific ideas or
vocabulary in a non-threatening manner by asking, "Does everybody understand what Steinem means by sexual harassment? Who can explain this for us? Can anyone give an example which would define this concept in the way Steinem uses it?" A second strategy for opening discussion is to work out agreement about the essay's thesis and its supporting points. Sometimes students are capable of amazing misreadings, and gentle adoption of basic reading strategies never hurts. Regular oral reading, with which the instructor can model intonation which assists meaning, is an appropriate Level II strategy. Asking for volunteer student readers varies the monotony of a single voice and is an extremely reliable comprehension index. A quick summary of interpretations and a restatement of the thesis make effective closure to this discussion. Instructors can remind students that when they undertake the composition of their own essays, they will be performing the reverse procedure of the distillation of meaning they have just engaged in. While their own thesis and main ideas are about to be fleshed out by the writing process, they have just learned to trim away with their search for main ideas in the reading process.

W  In-Class Sample Four

Objective: 1. To provide demand writing practice in preparation for the English 79 Mastery Essay

Vocabulary: 1. The shortened writing process
2. Monitoring time
3. Thesis, reasons, and examples

Activity: By this time in the semester, the instructor can begin weaning students from communal collection of reasons and examples to support the thesis statements identified in the topic questions. As much as possible, the class conditions should simulate the actual mastery essay administration; however, instructors can still offer to help individual writers who bring their essays up for advice. A reminder about saving time to proofread and check spelling at the end of the period is useful, or students relapse into polishing every sentence as they write, which tends to make them run out of time. It's sometimes helpful to put time guidelines on the board: "At 10:45, everybody should be done with prewriting. At 11:30, people should be working on conclusions. At 11:45, everyone should be proofreading and using the dictionary."

To make the demand writings fit smoothly into the total curriculum, the instructor can design topics which echo the discussion of the previous day's reading. In this case, students might agree or disagree with a quote from Steinem:

"Attributing a financial value to work in the home would go a long way toward making marriage an equal partnership, as the Equal Rights Amendment would also do, and toward ending the semantic slavery inherent in the phrase women who don't work."
Respond to the above passage. Do you feel that giving financial value to housework would make marriage an equal partnership? Or do you feel that giving housework a financial value would not make marriage an equal partnership? Take a stand on the topic. Using reasons and examples, support your stand.

Instructors can encourage students to use material expressed by their classmates in the previous day’s discussion. By weaving the demand writing samples into the tapestry of the larger course, students will begin to understand that written communication—whether planned or impromptu—requires skills they can exercise daily.

F Reading, 100-105

Objectives: 1. To study an example of reader-based writing, Phyllis Schlafly’s “The Power of the Positive Woman”  
2. To distinguish statements of fact from opinions

Vocabulary: 1. Specific detail  
2. Opinion, fact, evidence

Activity: Instructors can approach teaching the Schlafly essay by juxtaposing it with the discussion of the Steinem essay. It’s helpful to ask students if they see potential topics for themselves in their reactions to the contrast between the two. Reinforcing the concept of reader-based writing is appropriate here.

If group analysis becomes tedious, the instructor can break the class into groups of five students and assign a segment of the essay to each group. Their task is to identify the main idea and the supporting points in their passage, and then conclude by offering their evaluation of the passage to the class. During the small group work, the instructor can float through each group asking if students need assistance with vocabulary or concepts. At the close of small group work, each group presents its findings to class. An alternative group strategy for dealing with the paired essays is to have students create a contrast chart of the significant distinctions between the two authors. Students earn flat points for participating in this exercise. At the close of this class, the instructor can point out how both Steinem and Schlafly, while clearly writing for external audiences, have rooted their arguments in their own outlooks and opinions. This is an ideal occasion to remind students that as they search for their own essay topics, they should use their interest as a barometer to determine whether or not they’ve selected good topics. Asking if they think whether Steinem and Schlafly really care about what they’re saying is an indirect way to illustrate the importance of believing one has selected a worthwhile topic. To transfer the skills practiced in reading, the instructor can ask for volunteers to describe their individual essay topics and the interests that guided them to their choices.
II: The Ninth Week of the Semester

M First Ideas: Essay Three
   Critical Thinking, 106-118
W Nutshell Statement: Essay Three
   Prewriting Opinions, 119-224
F Pronouns, 240-247

Week VIX

M First Ideas: Essay Three

Objectives: 1. To introduce students to the evidence-gathering process
2. To practice limiting topics
3. To define and practice inductive and deductive prewriting strategies
4. To guide students in completing their own simple precis statements (herein called nutshells)
5. To reinforce the distinction between anecdotal material (examples) and generalizations (reasons)

Vocabulary: 1. Limiting topics: narrow and broad
2. Induction and Deduction
3. Audience
4. Generating Ideas

Activities: Students have now spent a week reading about, discussing, and practicing writing on contemporary issues. On first idea day, they are responsible for committing to the issue on which they will write their 500 word out-of-class essay. If the instructor is lucky, some idea in the previous week’s activities will have sparked enough interest for each student to have discovered his own subject. If some students haven’t, the instructor can ask the class for their “extra” topics—whatever ideas they think would make good argumentative essays for their classmates to write on. (It’s important to instill in students the responsibility for selecting their own topic. Students who may write copiously about personal experience sometimes freeze when asked to
write about the external world, so it's often necessary to show students how to trace the route from their personal opinions to an argumentative stance in the form of thesis statements.)

Modeling the prewriting process before asking students to plot out their essays in their nutshell form (see appendix 3) can be an exercise for engaging students in their own topics. The instructor can "pretend" to be a student planning an essay, and can begin a board-based generating of ideas by saying something like, "I want to write about sexual harassment. Is this a topic that I should narrow? How can I narrow it?" Students will offer various elements of the issue which can be jotted down, and the instructor can model how interest and knowledge can shape the final topic selection. Perhaps the limited version is "sexual harassment of men by women." At this point the instructor can stop and stress the importance of narrowing the topic, listing "Selecting and Narrowing a Topic" as the first step of the prewriting process, a process students will shortly imitate with their own topics.

At this point the terms induction and deduction should be introduced. With a brief lecture and references to mundane learning experiences, the instructor can distinguish between collecting evidence in order to find a generalization or thesis statement and collecting evidence in order to fulfill a generalization. Students can grasp the idea that when one is collecting reasons and examples to support a stand which is already held, he is working deductively; when one is collecting reasons and examples in order to arrive at a stand, he is working inductively. (It's helpful to apply these processes to daily life in order to reinforce the distinction between working from particular to general or general to particular. Students will see that the ideal thinking processes employ both patterns in sequence, such as in the scientific method of inquiry.) With the sexual harassment topic, the two strategies can be illustrated. The instructor can pause and ask whether students can determine the approach they will be taking with their own topics. Again, the instructor can list step two of the prewriting process as "Collecting Evidence."

After summarizing the basic idea-generating strategies (mapping/clustering, listing, questioning, outlining, positive/negative listing, tree diagramming), the instructor can direct students in prewriting their individual, limited topics. The goal of the individual work at this point is to have all writers exit the class with a tentative thesis ("Formulate working thesis" is listed as step three of the prewriting process) and a collection of ideas which will yield topic sentences at the next class meeting.

If the distinction between anecdotal evidence and reasonably sound generalizations has not yet been illustrated (or even if it has!), it's a good idea to review this with students. Some students may want to use single examples as the basis for topic sentences, e.g. Sally may think that three observed episodes of sexual harassment at MacDonald's can constitute the body paragraphs of her essay when they more logically serve as evidence of the generalization that sexual harassment is practiced at MacDonald's. This is an especially helpful review for those writers who tend to shortchange their prewriting—those who are inclined to prewrite with the minimal number of entries. Instructors can request that students semi-organize their prewriting
entries in columns labeled "Examples" and "Generalizations"--the point being that the generalizations column will yield better possibilities for the upcoming topic sentences.

To close this lesson, instructors can remind students that writing is a process and that the more a writer exploits every stage of the process, the better his final work will be. (Instructors can collect the individual prewriting sheets and assign points--this is a good time to check whether students are understanding and applying the concepts of topic limitation and idea generation.)

**Critical Thinking: 106-118**

**Objectives:** 1. To introduce the types of evidence

**Vocabulary:**
1. Opinion  
2. Evidence  
3. Facts  
4. Testimony  
5. Statistics  
6. Examples  
7. Illustrations

**Activity:** The exercises requiring students to identify and distinguish between types of evidence work well as a precursor to paragraph development of the essays on which they are working. The class can work through the exercises as one large group, and the instructor can periodically request that students draw analogies between the text samples and their own subtopics generated during prewriting.

**W Prewriting Opinions: 119-124**

**Objectives:** 1. To provide a model of the prewriting process

**Vocabulary:**
1. Freewriting  
2. Main point  
3. Subpoints  
4. Lead and end  
5. Bare-bones outline

**Activity:** The textual explanation of prewriting on these pages can be used as a preface to the actual prewriting students will engage in, as a source of topics, or as illustrative exercises.
Completing the Nutshell

Objectives: 1. To assist students in completing their individual nutshell statements
2. To identify and correct comprehension problems of individual students
3. To reinforce the previous week's vocabulary and skills

Vocabulary: 1. Thesis statement
2. Topic sentence
3. Paragraph development
4. Organizing pattern
5. Audience
6. Purpose

Activity: The instructor returns the prewriting sheets gathered during the previous class meeting and makes general comments regarding the quality of the ideas. Students are now ready to transform their prewriting ideas to the more formulaic entries on the nutshell statement form. The best illustration of the process of articulating prewriting to a nutshell statement is a model. The instructor can model with her own prewriting, or she can request student samples. Perhaps John isn't sure of how to cast his main point into the single sentence thesis statement, or Delores may not see how posing parallel topic sentences is an aid to composing. By coupling extensive models with offers of assistance, the instructor can insure that all students produce passable nutshell statements by the end of class. As students work individually, the instructor can conference with those who seem to require extra help with either their general understanding of the task or the specific details of their topic. It doesn't hurt to stress to students that thesis and topic sentences must be complete sentences and that the more specific the language is, the better the expression of ideas will be.

At the conclusion of the class, the nutshell statements are submitted for points and for instructor comment. A careful review of the nutshells will reveal whether students are comprehending the essay's form and function--and a few well-placed words of advice and direction will often turn potential disasters into delights.

Pronouns: 240-247

Objective: 1. To review and practice pronoun use in Standard Written English

Vocabulary: 1. Pronoun
2. Reference
Activity: Instructors have their own personal styles and convictions about presenting grammar lessons. Most agree that an interactive lesson works better than a strict board and lecture routine, however. It is an obligation of English 79 to provide a review of the basics of Standard Written English, so one way or another, grammar needs to be addressed.

One strategy is to build grammar lessons with sample sentences drawn anonymously from the students’ writing. Students will harken more attentively to the exposition of a point when their own work is being dissected. Another strategy is to assign teams which are responsible for explaining one grammar concept to the class, guiding the class through a set of exercises, and answering any questions posed by the class. While students may moan about such a responsibility, if the instructor promises to answer any group questions before the presentation, they will generally commit themselves to the chore. Finally, an instructor might open a discussion of an issue such as case by putting several nonstandard sentences on the board or overhead and asking, “Who can tell me what’s wrong with these sentences?” Surprisingly, while they may not recognize traditional grammar terminology, students will be able to identify and revise nonstandard uses, and then the instructor can lead into the mechanics of how pronouns ought to operate in certain contexts.

(An English 79 instructor would do well to acknowledge that while the value of detached lessons in grammar is widely debated, students will probably not learn the vagaries of Standard Written English unless someone frequently points out what they are. A second important point is that instructors can acknowledge the existence of nonstandard dialects and their propriety in certain settings while presenting the rules of Standard Usage. Finally, grammar lessons are ideal situations in which ESL students can demonstrate their strengths, since they learn English grammar with a dedication that native speakers rarely exhibit.)

An effective closure to any grammar lesson is to wrap-up by asking students to explain the main principles that have been covered and by offering a few sample sentences for students to rewrite. Beginning the class session following one dealing with grammar with a similar review helps to cement the principles into the students’ writing repertoire.
III:
The Tenth Week of the Semester

M  Getting Feedback, 125
W  In-Class Sample Five
F  Read Around: Essay Three

Week X

M  Getting Feedback: 125

Objectives:  1. To model both self-evaluation and peer evaluation
2. To offer students criticism before their work is submitted for a grade

Vocabulary:  1. Draft
2. Revision
3. Sentence-level revision
4. Content revision
5. Development
6. Distance: Time and Emotion

Activity:  This day can be used to model the revision process by following the activities in the book, including reviewing the sample student essay therein; to catch up on activities that were not completed earlier; and to provide individual conferencing to students who are having trouble completing or developing their essays. Some students may require a more intensive review of methods for developing paragraph ideas. Two lessons that might be inserted here, if time allows, are a review of paragraph construction and a demonstration of introductory and concluding paragraph tactics. The goal is for all students to be able to enter Friday’s class with a complete draft of their essay so they can share in the read-around. Instructors might consider this as a writing workshop day in which whatever needs to be addressed is treated, and whoever needs to be conferenced with is assisted.

W  In-Class Sample Five

Objective:  1. To reinforce both demand writing skills and the argumentative mode

Vocabulary:  1. Proofreading
2. Standard Written English
3. Organization

Activity: Again, a topic drawn from the previous week's work is useful. Instructors can make specific comments to individual students about what to focus on during this fifth sample. Javier, for example, may need to focus entirely on revising comma splices; Thao on verb endings; Alice on controlling her rambling examples. One way to personalize instruction is to offer to scan individual essays toward the end of the class period. Without whipping out a red pen and making corrections, the instructor can steer individual students toward making their own sentence-level revisions. By this time in the semester, students can probably list the three most common sentence-level errors they tend to make, and the instructor can encourage them to eliminate those by themselves.

Read-Around: Essay Three

Objectives: 1. To strengthen skills in assessing essay content
2. To strengthen skills in recognizing sentence-level errors
3. To give each student a chance to ask for one-on-one revision advice from the instructor
4. To create a climate of group work/group success

Vocabulary: 1. Introduction, Body, Conclusion
2. Paragraph Development
3. Examples and reasons
4. Relevance
5. Interest

Activity: There are many methods for conducting read-around sessions or peer review groups. Some basics are helpful in designing group membership and in assigning the specific goals of the read-around. First, intentionally designated groups generally function better than student-self-selected or random counted groups. An instructor can assign one strong writer to each group and then try to balance with students of various skills and language backgrounds. Sometimes it's helpful to acknowledge the stronger writer and assign her the role of "mentor." An instructor should avoid letting good friends, ESL writers, or behavior problems dominate the membership of any single group. Second, group size often determines the success or failure of a read-around. Groups smaller than three or larger than 5 generally disintegrate because the dynamics of participation become so altered. Third, the instructor should always make clear--with a handout or board instructions--the sequence of activities the group will engage in (see appendix 4). Verbally delivered instructions tend to become extremely garbled in group tasks. Fourth, all students should be accountable for completing some kind of written evaluation, whether on a communal form or a separate sheet, of the essays they have reviewed (see appendix 5).

Most composition pedagogy suggests that during a read-around session, peer evaluators should be given specific, limited guidelines as to what they are to critique. For instance, in this week's read-around, students could be asked to determine whether the writer has kept his essay reader-based, whether he's developed his topic ideas.
sufficiently, and whether his pronouns follow standard usage. (In other words, it’s a bad idea to shuffle the drafts and just tell the students to read. They need to know what they’re reading for, or else they’ll fall into the "I liked it" vein of commentary.) If students say, as they sometimes do, that they aren’t capable of evaluating another’s work, a good comeback is to offer to consult on any of their comments. The instructor can check whether a peer evaluator is correctly revising punctuation or spelling before the evaluator pens his criticism. Floating through the groups and acting as a consultant, arbitrator, and model reader is helpful--it’s usually a ticket to disaster to retreat to a corner of the room and read the Wall Street Journal.

A reasonably organized process is to ask the groups to read through their sets of three or four essays, and then to treat one essay at a time. The peer evaluators can direct their comments to the writer, who can respond to their questions. They can also write down their suggestions on a sheet which is attached to the essay in question. Instructors can get sluggish discussions moving by sitting in on a reading and asking questions: "Did Larry develop his explanation of employer responsibility enough? I'm still curious about...." "Would you like to see Vilay create a snazzier introduction? I am a little bored by this one...” By the time the group has worked through its set of essays, each writer should have gained a rough draft review sheet including the comments of his peer editors. Students earn flat points for participating in the rough draft read-around, and they should submit their review sheets with their rough and final drafts on the due date.

Read-around can close with an offer by the instructor to stay late and answer any unposed or unanswered questions. Instructors can ask whether students were in groups that were too big, too small, too quiet--and adjustments can be made for the next read-around.
Guidelines for Writing Effective Assignments

Two basic principles are essential to keep in mind when creating effective writing assignments, whether for basic or advanced students. The first is that instructors should never create assignments which we ourselves could not respond to. Asking our students to compose on topics or in styles that we cannot is simply illogical. The second is that we must acknowledge the vast range of intellectual cultures represented by our students and design our assignments to appeal to a population whose interests, values, and belief systems often differ dramatically from our own. The following are helpful commandments also:

1. **Suit the difficulty of the task to the length of time students have to work on the assignment.** If possible, give students a timeline with explicit due dates for specific portions of the writing task. For example, they might turn in their prewriting on a Monday, complete their nutshell statements on a Wednesday, finish their first body paragraph by a Friday, and so forth. Make length requirements crystal-clear.

2. **Consider the skill level of the students at each point in the semester.** Obviously, simpler tasks are more appropriate earlier, more complex tasks later. As tasks become more complex, it doesn't hurt to remind students of the composing building blocks which they have already mastered.

3. **Intend each assignment to emphasize a single rhetorical skill.** If you have been stressing techniques of description for two weeks, the incoming essay can be judged mainly for student's competence with descriptive language. Let techniques of comparison and elaborate analysis sit on the back burner for this assignment.

4. **Model assignments, both in the composing process and final draft form.** Students will comprehend instructor expectations better if given an example, from which you can abstract traits. Using samples from your own classes invites student interest.

5. **When evaluating completed work, respond first to what the student has done well.** There is always something to praise in student work, just as there is always something criticize. Most composition pedagogy discourages the encyclopedic recitation of errors, and students rarely pay attention to long lists of corrections. Limit criticism to two or three of the most serious areas for improvement.

6. **Create assignments which build and elaborate upon skills developed earlier.** You might, for instance, work on simple analysis before assigning a comparison paper, for which the ability to analyze is implied.
An Introduction to the English 79 Mastery Essay

All students enrolled in English 79 must take the Mastery essay, which constitutes 40% of the course grade (40% pass or 40% fail). Level II composition students may qualify for Level III (eligible for English 1A) in two ways: by passing English 79 with a grade of "C" or better, or by passing into level III composition by means of a retake in the Assessment Center. The retake cannot effect the student’s grade in English 79 in any way.

The Mastery essay is administered in class by individual instructors at approximately the sixteenth week of the semester. Students have eighty minutes to write a well-constructed essay on a general topic based on a student essay from Delta Winds, Delta’s student essay magazine. The reading, as well as additional information about the English 79 Mastery Essay, can be found in the English 79: Preparatory English Mastery Information Packet, published each semester. Students are required to buy this packet in Delta's bookstore. It costs approximately $3.50. The English 79 Coordinator will place a complimentary copy in each instructor’s mailbox, when they become available, usually at the end of the second month of each semester. It contains both the new student essay, upon which the current mastery will be based, and sample passing essays from a past semester. There are many previous topics available in Shima 217 as well, which you may photocopy for your students’ practice.

Again, for sample passing essays, see English 79: Preparatory English Mastery Essay Information Packet. For previous essay topics and essay topics + essays, contact the English 79 Coordinator or go to the Writing Center (Shima 217) and ask for same. Below is general list of previous topics.

English 79 Mastery Topics
Fall 1989 - Spring 2005

All of the following practice topics and the practice topics with their accompanying essays (Fall - 2000 and after) are in a file in the Writing Center - Shima 217. There is also a blue binder if you want to look at each topic before you pull one or more to duplicate. Please do not take any of the materials out of the binder. The material in the binder matches that which is in the file drawer. However, the newer topics, which are based on a reading, are arranged in the drawer in descending, rather than ascending order.

The Mastery Topics Between Fall 1986 and Fall 1989 are not available.
The Mastery Topics Between 1989 - Spring 2000 are argumentative in nature with no accompanying reading. They cover the following subjects:

Fall 1989     First Impressions
Spring 1990   See Spring 1999/Anger
Fall 1990     Teenage Marriages
Spring 1991   Parent Training
Fall 1991     Driving Privileges for High School Drop-Outs
Spring 1992   See Fall 1998/Good Manners
Fall 1992     Do American High Schools Prepare Students for College?
Spring 1993   Community Service
Fall 1993     Is An Authoritative Classroom Style An Advantage to Student Learning?
Spring 1994   Young People As Consumers
Fall 1994     See Fall 1999/Role Models
Spring 1995   Television
Fall 1995     See Spring 2000/Best Things in Life
Spring 1996   Disciplining Children
Fall 1996     Mandatory School Uniforms
Spring 1997   Teenagers and Responsibility
Fall 1997     Group Work
Spring 1998   Movies at Home vs. Movies in a Theater
Fall 1998     Good Manners
Spring 1999   Anger
Fall 1999     Role Models
Spring 2000   Best Things in Life

Topics Based on a Reading - Two Prompts + an Essay

Fall 2000     "The Right Shoes Equal Acceptance" Materialism/Social Discrimination
Spring 2001   "Natural Disaster" Beauty and Advertising
Fall 2001     "Compassion's Harvest" Karma/Helping Others
Spring 2002   "The Real Root of All Evil?" Overpopulation
Fall 2002     "Hooked on Caramel_Colored Gold" Junk Food in Schools/Personal Eating Habits
Spring 2003  "The Story of Juan Sánchez" Happiness/Moving Away; a short story also accompanies this topic
Fall 2003   "Racism and Sexism in Advertising" Stereotypical Images/Power of Advertising
Spring 2004 "Cell Phones at Public Events" Public Rudeness/Banning Cell Phones
Fall 2004   "Forgotten Children" Fathers and Child Support
Spring 2005 "Prescription Drug Ads" Maintaining a Healthy Lifestyle/Benefits of Prescription Drug Ads or Benefits of Relying on Doctors

**Summer Topics**

Summer Topics are frequently "recycled"; however, these are some that are different from the above. They are located in the back of the above topics in the file cabinet.

1994  Technology
1995  Clothes as an Expression of Character
2000  Relationships
2001  "Anger" (essay) Anger
2002  "Speechless at McDonald's" Discrimination

If I "recycle" a topic for the summer, I pull it both out of the binder and out of the drawer, so it won't be used as practice
Prior to the authentic Mastery essay, you can have your students practice demand writing in which they generate ideas, organize and write a complete essay, and proofread for sentence level corrections in a single class period based on "old" mastery topics. However, once students obtain their packets, they may not practice writing essays on the current mastery essay. Though you may discuss and brainstorm ideas, the mastery essay is still a test.

When reading the mastery essays, instructors will be paying special attention to the following:

1. Thesis responding accurately to the assigned task
2. Adequate and organized development of the subject
3. Sufficient specific information to illustrate and/or support the thesis
4. Adequate use of language
5. Correctness in punctuation, spelling, and grammar

Mastery Essays must be written in ink or word-processed
Dictionaries will be allowed.

Instructors will read the mastery essay based on the following holistic scoring rubric. Scores of 3 and above are passing; scores of 2 and below are failing. Some instructors choose to use this scoring rubric for scoring class essays as well.
English 79 Scoring Guide

5  A 5 essay clearly demonstrates competence in writing in both form and content, although it may have occasional errors. A 5 essay --effectively addresses the writing task; --is well-organized; --develops the thesis with details and examples; --displays competence with English grammar; --demonstrates sentence variety.

4  A 4 essay demonstrates competence in writing in both form and content, though it will have occasional errors. A 4 essay --may address some parts of the writing task more effectively than others; --is generally well-organized, though it may be more formulaic than a 5 essay; --develops the thesis with a sufficient number of details and/or examples; --displays competence with English grammar, although errors will occur; ---demonstrates some sentence variety.

3  A 3 essay shows beginning competence in writing in both form and content. A 3 essay --addresses the writing task but may address it in a partial or incomplete way; --is adequately organized (and may not contain five paragraphs); --uses some details and/or examples to support the thesis; --demonstrates adequate but inconsistent or undistinguished facility with grammar and syntax.

2  A 2 essay contains problems in either form or content, although it may demonstrate some competence. A 2 essay --responds inadequately to the writing task; --it may fail to organize ideas in a logical way; --it may fail to support the thesis with specific examples; --it may accumulate errors in grammar and/or syntax to a distracting degree.

1  A 1 essay contains problems in either form or content or in both form and content. A 1 essay --fails to respond to the writing task; --it may show no control of organization; --it may fail to develop the thesis with specific details or examples; --it may demonstrate serious and persistent errors with grammar and syntax.
Options for English 79 Students Who Fail

English 79 students who fail the Mastery Essay have several options for achieving Level III in composition. They are:

1. Repeating English 79. Students who earn a "D" or "F" in a course may repeat that course. The new grade will replace the old grade in the students' overall GPA, but the old grade will remain on the students' transcript. (Note: Students' financial aid packages may be affected by their choosing to repeat a course in which they have previously earned a "D" or "F.")

2. Retake: challenging Level II. Students who do not earn a "C" or better in English 79 may challenge Level II by going to the Assessment Center, Goleman 122, and requesting a Level II Composition Retake. This does not alter the students’ standing or change the grade in their English 79 class, but, should they pass the retake, they become eligible to enroll English 1A.

3. Filing a portfolio. With the instructor's endorsement only, a student may file a portfolio in lieu of a passing score on the Mastery Essay. See the portfolio guidelines for information on this process.

Many times, we, as English teachers, recommend that a student get more practice in writing before attempting to take English 79 again. The following classes are recommended before retaking English 79 if you need more help with your writing.

English 73AB, the writing lab course. Students may choose to practice writing in the lab setting and then attempt to challenge through the Assessment Office. The writing lab course's advantage is that it allows students to work one-on-one with instructors.

Reading 92: Reading and Writing for Personal Growth and Career Success. This is a level I course; however, it is an excellent choice for gaining more practice in reading and writing.

Note: Students must earn a "C" or better in English 79 in order to meet the composition requirements for the AA or AS degree.
English 79 Mastery Essay: 
Portfolio Criteria

Function
The portfolio process gives individual instructors the opportunity to endorse the work of students who deserve a second assessment of their writing skills. These are usually students who have done well in class and have had excellent attendance, although they failed the Mastery. The portfolio process should be made available only to those students who meet the criteria below. It is not intended to be an alternative vehicle for the placement of borderline students. Students cannot submit portfolios without their instructor’s endorsement; it is entirely the instructor’s decision whether or not to file an individual portfolio.

Format
1. The portfolio must include a minimum of three complete essays written prior to the Mastery Essay. The student’s failing Mastery Essay must be included as well.

2. The essays should demonstrate mastery of analytical and/or expository prose. They should not be purely descriptive or narrative.

3. Two of the essays must be demand in-class writing samples; one of them should be representative of the student’s out-of-class work, accompanied by rough drafts if possible.

4. Each essay must demonstrate minimum competence in writing as delineated on the “English 79 Scoring Guide” by a score of 3.

5. The student must write a brief letter (two or three paragraphs) to the Portfolio Committee telling why his or her portfolio is deserving of a passing score. This letter should be written in class.

Portfolio submissions should be clearly identified by:
   Instructor Name and Course Code Number,
   Student Name and SS Number

Assignment descriptions or handouts should accompany each paper submitted in the portfolio.

Portfolios must be submitted to the English 79 Administrator one week from the Reading Day.
Appendix 1: Listener's Response

English 79: Preparatory English

Name__________________________

Listener's Response
5 Points

Title of Essay________________________________________

Using standard letter format, take five minutes and compose a short letter to the author of __________________________________ in which you explain what you liked about the author's essay and why you liked it. Remember to consider the author's thesis and the way the body of the essay supported and developed the thesis. Include references to specific parts of the essay. What advice can you offer this author about future essays? You may sign your own name.

Turn this in after you've completed your letter. Your points will be recorded, and it will be forwarded to the author.
Appendix 2: The Rhetorical Relationships

The Message
Thesis
Purpose
Organization
Language
Style

The Reader
Interest
Knowledge
Assumptions
Bias
Demographic Profile

The Writer
Interest
Knowledge
Purpose
Time
Access to Information

The Universe
Shared Experience
Shared Perception
Shared Realities
Appendix 3: The Nutshell Statement

Prewriting and Planning

Working Thesis:

Topic Sentence One:

Topic Sentence Two:

Topic Sentence Three:

Nutshell Statement

The purpose of my essay is to

My audience is people who

I will support my thesis by

My organizing pattern will be
Appendix 4: Read-Around Guidelines

Read-Around Guidelines:
Rough Draft Review Day
5 Points

1. Form groups of three or four members.

2. Pull your chairs into a small circle.

3. Introduce yourselves.

4. Staple your read-around sheets to your essays.

4. Circulate your rough drafts clockwise. Everyone should give each draft two or three careful readings.

5. Mark sentence-level changes on the manuscript; write down your larger comments as answers to the questions on the read-around sheet.

6. When you've read each essay, select one. Focus your discussion on this essay and direct your comments to the writer. The writer can ask questions, too.

7. Repeat this process with each of the remaining essays.

8. Ask your instructor for help whenever you need it. Tip: Remember that your group goal is to enable each of you to earn the highest possible score on this essay. If your group has any questions or concerns that you can answer, be sure the teacher hears them!
Appendix 5: Read-Around Sheet

English 79: Preparatory English

Villegas

Writer's Name:_________________________________

Read-Around Group Members______________________

Rough Draft Review:
Read Around Sheet

Introduction

Attention-Getter: How well does thi

Thesis: How narrow, clear, and complete is it?

Preview Sentence: How clear and parallel is it?

Body

Topic Sentences: How well do they match the wording and order of the preview sentence? How logical are they?

Development: Is each body paragraph at least seven or eight sentences long? Is there a balance of example and generalization?

Concluding Sentences: How well do they tie into the thesis?

Conclusion

Does this conclusion make you feel like you are glad you read this essay?
Could it be fancier?