

First-Year English Syllabus

English 1310 and 1320
College Writing I and II



Department of English
Texas State University

First-Year English Syllabus

This syllabus outlines policies common to all sections of first-year English at Texas State University. Please read the syllabus carefully, and ask your instructor to explain any information that you do not understand.

Course Information

English _____ Section _____ Room _____

Days _____ Time _____

Instructor _____

Office _____

Hours _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Required Textbooks

Handbook *The Bedford Handbook 9e*

Reader _____

A college dictionary approved by the instructor

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Description of First-Year English

In first-year English, you will study the principles of expository writing—the kind of objective, audience-directed prose used in college and beyond to explain and defend ideas. First-year English classes focus on developing ideas and expressing them clearly, considering the effect of the message, fostering understanding, and building the skills needed to communicate persuasively. First-year English classes involve the command of written literacy skills that enable people to exchange messages appropriate to the subject, occasion, and audience.

Because reading, viewing, and writing are inextricably linked, first-year English also emphasizes critical reading and viewing, teaching you to analyze and understand a variety of texts, including expository and literary texts that represent diverse voices and ideas, visual images, and your own writing.

First-year English has long been a cornerstone requirement in the undergraduate curriculum because of its practical value in the classroom and on the job. The two courses in the first-year English sequence address the Texas State General Education reading and writing competencies:

Reading. Students will demonstrate the ability to comprehend, analyze, and synthesize a variety of texts and genres.

Writing. Students will demonstrate the ability to draft, revise, and edit focused, organized, and appropriately developed documents for specified purposes and audiences.

At Texas State, the first-year English requirement also looks beyond these competencies. It aims to discipline thought and expression, giving you the opportunity to study the art of writing for its intrinsic worth.

Some of the defining characteristics of first-year English are as follows:

- It introduces you to the writing process, helping you understand the multi-stage, recursive nature of that process.
- It equips you with skills and strategies needed for each stage of the writing process—from finding a topic to proofreading a finished paper.
- It explores writing as a means of communication and as a tool for learning. Writing to communicate challenges you to produce clear, coherent prose adapted to purpose, occasion, and audience. Writing to learn gives you tools for understanding complex texts and ideas—and for exploring your own thoughts and experiences.
- It offers frequent opportunities for writing. Besides producing papers with related drafts and revisions, you may comment on the work of other students, respond informally to assigned readings, or keep a writing log.
- It challenges you with a variety of thought-provoking texts and offers strategies and diverse perspectives for reading and understanding those texts, both print and visual. Reading selections and visual images provide ideas for discussion and writing and serve as texts for rhetorical and stylistic analysis.
- It prepares you to integrate the work of others into your own writing, showing you appropriate ways to cite and document that work.
- It provides instruction and practice in using technology as a tool for writing.

English 1310: College Writing I

English 1310 is a course in expository writing. You will study the principles of effective composition, with emphasis on the improvement of papers through revision and the critical reading of substantive nonfiction texts. While self-expressive and narrative writing may serve as a means of supporting ideas within a given paper, such writing is not, in itself, the focus of the course.

After completing English 1310, you should be able to draft, revise, and edit texts in which you demonstrate the ability to formulate a thesis (central idea) in an orderly way; form clear and effective paragraphs and sentences; use an appropriate vocabulary; and apply the grammatical conventions of written English.

Additionally, according to the Core Objectives for the Communication Component of the 2014 Texas Core Curriculum, in English 1310 you will

1. demonstrate command of oral, aural, written, and visual literacy skills that enable people to exchange messages appropriate to their subject, occasion, and audience.
2. demonstrate creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, as well as analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information.
3. effectively develop, interpret and express ideas through written, oral, and visual communication.
4. relate choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making.
5. recognize different points of view and work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.
6. demonstrate critical thinking skills, communication skills, teamwork, and personal responsibility.

See Appendix A, page 18, for a sample English 1310 course calendar.

English 1320: College Writing II

English 1320 is a continuation of English 1310, with emphasis on expository writing as a means of analyzing and understanding texts. While some instructors teach literary texts in English 1320, the course is not an introduction to literature. Rather, it is a composition course in which you learn to read critically and to draw on written sources to support your ideas. All papers in the course are documented, with at least one of them (1000-word minimum) requiring the use of several print and/or online sources.

After completing English 1320, you should be able to draft, revise, and edit texts in which you demonstrate the ability to understand and analyze a variety of texts; quote, paraphrase, and summarize print and/or online sources to support your ideas; and use standard procedures of citation and documentation.

Additionally, you must continue to meet the objectives outlined for English 1310, including the six Core Objectives for the Communication Component of the 2014 Texas Core Curriculum.

See Appendix B, page 21, for a sample English 1320 course calendar.

Writing Assignments

Both English 1310 and 1320 require a minimum of 4000 words of graded writing divided among at least five papers. The final exam is in addition to this minimum. Besides the papers you submit for a grade, you will do a good deal of other writing in the course, including drafts, commentaries on the work of other students, and impromptu reactions to reading assignments. You may also be asked to keep a journal or writing log, and/or post to an online class forum or blog.

Reading Assignments

Your instructor expects you to complete every reading assignment. But you should not assume that all assignments will be discussed specifically in class or given equal treatment if they are discussed. Instructors may emphasize material of particular relevance to a given class, but they always assume that students have read the entire assignment before coming to class.

Using the Course Textbooks

The Bedford Handbook 9e—a comprehensive guide to writing—is required for all sections of English 1310 and 1320. You will find this book useful not only in first-year English but in any course that requires writing.

Even if your instructor does not make extensive reading assignments from *The Bedford Handbook 9e*, you should regard the book as an essential reference tool—a resource to keep at hand as you draft, revise, and edit your papers.

The following table suggests several particularly useful sites that you may want to mark by placing small post-it notes or post-it tabs on the indicated page in your handbook.

The Bedford Handbook Tabs

Page	Content	Write on Tab
24	Prewriting strategies	Prewrite
30	Thesis statement	Thesis
38	Outline format	Outline
42	Strategies for drafting	Draft
64	Strategies for revising/rewriting	Revise
104	Common transitions	Trans.
264	Unbiased language	Lang.
402	Using commas	Commas
422	Using other punctuation	Punct.
583	MLA in-text citation format	MLA in-text
596	MLA works-cited format	MLA WC
656	Sample MLA paper	MLA sample
815	Sample resume	Resume
817	Sample email	Email
818	Glossary of usage	Glossary
855	Index	Index
Back Pages	Revision symbols	Symbols

The other book required in first-year English is a collection of readings that serve as a basis for class discussion and as a source of paper topics. A good part of what you gain from first-year English—including the ability to read more perceptively—depends on your careful and conscientious attention to assignments from this text.

Disability Accommodations

The University adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines required to afford equal educational opportunity.

If you are a student with a disability who will require one or more accommodations to participate in your first-year English class, please contact your instructor as soon as possible. You will be asked to provide documentation from the Office of Disability Services. It is your responsibility to register with that office and to contact your instructor in a timely manner to arrange for appropriate accommodations.

Other Members of the Class

Exchange names, phone numbers, and email addresses with several members of your class. Because you are responsible for all assignments, even when you are absent, you should know how to reach a classmate in an emergency. You may also want to contact a classmate to discuss an idea for a paper or to seek advice about an upcoming assignment. Think of your first-year English class as a community of writers; strive to become an active member of that community.

Conferences

All instructors keep regular office hours and encourage students to take advantage of those hours. When you observe a persistent problem in your writing or have questions about an assignment, seek help from your instructor. If you cannot meet the instructor during regular office hours, make an appointment for another mutually convenient time.

Attendance and Participation

Because the skills taught in first-year English are cumulative, regular and punctual attendance and active participation are essential. Many instructors conduct their courses as workshops in which students draft and revise their papers and comment on one another's work. You cannot benefit from such activities unless you are there to participate. You should therefore plan to attend, be on time to, and actively participate in every class meeting.

If you must be absent because of illness, your instructor may require a written statement from the Student Health Center or a private physician before excusing the absence. Each instructor may establish a specific attendance policy; if yours does, make sure that you understand it.

Personal Technology

If you bring a laptop, netbook, or tablet computer to class, you should use it only for class work, such as taking notes or working on some stage of an assigned paper. You should not check email, Facebook, or your bank balance; watch videos; play games; or in any other way distract yourself and your classmates from what is going on in the classroom. Each instructor may establish a specific policy regarding classroom computer use; if yours does, make sure that you understand it.

Please turn off and put away your cell phone at the start of class. If an emergency situation requires you to be available by telephone, confer with your instructor for his/her preference for handling this situation.

Class Discussion of Reading Assignments and Ideas

The university classroom is a diverse community. During class discussions, you may hear points of view with which you disagree, as well as express points of view with which others will disagree. Remember that such exchanges are critical to both the development and the communication of informed opinions and beliefs.

So expect to disagree with, refute, and/or challenge the ideas of others. However, when doing so, remain calm, polite, and respectful at all times toward your classmates, your instructor, and their ideas.

Class Discussion of Student Work

Students learn much about how to improve their own work by reading and discussing the work of other students. Your instructor may duplicate some of your and your classmates' papers to use as texts for discussion by the entire class. You should therefore consider your work available for public discussion by an audience (your class) once you have turned it in.

Deadlines

Students have rightly protested that those who hand in late work enjoy an unfair advantage over those who complete work on time. Your instructor is not obliged to accept late papers or to allow you to write an in-class assignment after the rest of the class has done so. Late work—if your instructor agrees to accept it—may be penalized by grade-reduction. If you have a legitimate excuse for lateness, speak with your instructor in advance. Each instructor may establish a specific policy for late work; if yours does, make sure that you understand it.

Format for Papers

A standard format for typed papers is illustrated on pages 583-588 of *The Bedford Handbook 9e*. Unless your instructor tells you otherwise, follow this format in preparing final copies of your papers.

Final Exams

The final exam in first-year English is a substantial in-class paper. The paper may be impromptu, or your instructor may announce topics in advance and allow you to bring notes. In any event, the paper itself must be drafted and revised during the regular final exam period. The exam will count for no more than 20% of the course grade.

Grades

The grade you earn on a paper indicates the way you have met the demands of a particular assignment; it is not a cumulative grade, nor does it assess your character. While your instructor may use tests and class participation to measure your performance, your final grade in first-year English is based primarily on the papers you write.

All graded papers, except the final exam, are returned to you during the semester in which you write them. Your instructor may ask you to keep papers for use later in the course. In any case, you should routinely save copies of all your work.

To help you stay informed about your course performance, many instructors will record your grades on TRACS Gradebook 2. Keep in mind, however, that grades recorded on Gradebook 2 are not necessarily comprehensive; for example, they may not include points earned for journals, quizzes, portfolios, or the final exam. The grades in TRACS are *not* official.

Grading Standards

The following general standards apply to all papers written in English 1310 and 1320. Early in the semester—and as the course progresses—your instructor may spell out specific criteria in addition to these.

C *C* indicates a satisfactory performance. A *C* paper demonstrates positive qualities and avoids serious errors. The positive qualities include the presentation of a central idea that is adequately developed and competently organized. The errors to be avoided include serious flaws in the construction of paragraphs and sentences, in the selection of appropriate words, and in the use of conventional written English. The style of the writing is generally clear.

B The *B* paper surpasses the *C* paper by demonstrating a higher level of effectiveness in the organization and development of a central idea. The *B* paper shows greater complexity of thought and development, while sustaining clarity in expression. It has few or none of the common errors in the use of conventional written English. The style of the writing is generally fluent and polished.

A The *A* paper is outstanding work. It is clearly a superior performance according to the criteria of clarity of expression and logical development of a central idea. It shows originality of thought and imaginative competence in the development of the material. It engages and holds the reader's attention and invites rereading. The style of the writing is consistently fluent, polished, and distinctive.

D *D* indicates an unsatisfactory performance. A *D* paper is flawed by any one or several of the following: weakness in establishing or developing a central idea; serious errors in sentence or paragraph construction; serious errors in grammar, spelling, or the mechanics of written expression.

F *F* indicates an unacceptable performance. An *F* paper is flawed by one or more of the following: failure to follow the assigned topic; failure to conceive, state, or develop a central idea; serious repeated errors in sentence construction or paragraph development; serious repeated errors in grammar, spelling, or the mechanics of written expression.

See Appendix C, page 24, for a sample student paper with instructor annotations.

Academic Honesty

The complete Texas State University Honor Code and University policies on plagiarism are available online at www.txstate.edu/effective/upps/upps-07-10-01.html.

The English Department expects all students to be familiar with the Honor Code and related policies.

The Texas State University Honor Code states,

As members of a community dedicated to learning, inquiry, and creation, the students, faculty, and administration of our University live by the principles in this Honor Code. These principles require all members of this community to be conscientious, respectful, and honest.

We Are Conscientious:

We complete our work on time and make every effort to do it right. We come to class and meetings prepared and are willing to demonstrate it. We hold ourselves to doing what is required, embrace rigor, and shun mediocrity, special requests, and excuses.

We Are Respectful:

We act civilly toward one another, and we cooperate with each other. We will strive to create an environment in which people respect and listen to one another, speaking when appropriate, and permitting other people to participate and express their views.

We Are Honest:

We do our own work and are honest with one another in all matters. We understand how various acts of dishonesty, like plagiarizing, falsifying data, and giving or receiving assistance to which one is not entitled, conflict as much with academic achievement as with the values of honesty and integrity.

The Pledge for Students

Students at our University recognize that, to insure honest conduct, more is needed than an expectation of academic honesty, and we therefore adopt the practice of affixing the following pledge of honesty to the work we submit for evaluation:

I pledge to uphold the principles of honesty and responsibility at our University.

The Pledge for Faculty and Administration

Faculty at our University recognize that the students have rights when accused of academic dishonesty and will inform the accused of their rights of appeal laid out in the student handbook and inform them of the process that will take place.

I recognize students' rights and pledge to uphold the principles of honesty and responsibility at our University.

Plagiarizing is submitting work that is in any way not your own. Refer to *The Bedford Handbook* 9e, pages 563-68.

Any cases of verifiable plagiarism, whether deliberate or accidental, will result in a failing grade on the assignment and may result in a failing grade for first-year English. (Note: Peer review and consultation with your instructor or a tutor at the Writing Center do not constitute plagiarism and are encouraged.)

Your instructor may ask you to write and sign the Texas State student academic honesty pledge on all written work in the course. Your instructor may also require you to submit your papers to Turnitin, an online program that will check your work for originality. If your instructor requires these measures, he or she will provide specific directions.

Writing Center and SLAC

The Texas State Writing Center (located on the first floor of Academic Services Building-North, across from The Den) offers individual writing tutoring for all Texas State students, including those taking English 1310 and 1320.

While tutors cannot edit your papers for you, they can work with you during any stage of the writing process—from exploring an idea to polishing a draft.

Your instructor may advise you to visit the Writing Center or may require that you do so. You may also seek help on your own. Visit the Writing Center's Website at www.writingcenter.txstate.edu to make an appointment with a tutor. For additional assistance, call 512-245-3018.

The Student Learning Assistance Center (SLAC), located on the 4th floor of the Alkek Library, also offers free tutoring for student writers. Call 512-245-2515 for information, or visit SLAC's online site at www.txstate.edu/slac.

Flowers Hall Computer Labs

The English Department offers some sections of first-year English in computer labs located in FH G13, FH 114, and FH 120. When classes are not in session, the computers in these labs are available for general student use. An English coursework printing lab is available in FH G06.

Online Resources

Your instructor may ask you to use online sources to supplement course readings or to support ideas in a documented paper. You will find detailed information about using both print and online sources in *The Bedford Handbook* 9e, chapters 50 (“Thinking Like a Researcher”) and 52 (“Evaluating Sources”). Alkek Library offers a valuable tutorial specifically for English 1320 students at libguides.txstate.edu/content.php?pid=398440&sid=3262565.

If your instructor has a course TRACS site, you can access it via your active Texas State email account.

Other Writing Courses

If you would like additional writing instruction beyond first-year English, the Department offers various advanced courses in expository writing, technical writing, professional writing, creative writing, and editing. The Department also offers a writing minor and an English major with emphases in writing and rhetoric and in creative writing. For more information, visit the English Department in Flowers Hall 365, or call 512-245-2163.

Appendix A

Sample Course Calendar

English 1310: College Writing I Fall Semester / M-W Schedule

Instructors design their own course calendars for English 1310. The following example will give you a general idea of what to expect.

The Bedford Handbook 9e = BH

Reading the World: Ideas That Matter 2e = RW

Week 1

M Introduction to the course: college reading, writing, and thinking

W **Paper 1** written in class

THEMATIC UNIT I: HOW DID WE BECOME WHO WE ARE?

Week 2

M *Labor Day holiday*

W Paper 1 returned and discussed; RW 549-565 (critical reading);

BH chapter 4, section 4a (pp. 109-115) (active reading); RW 144+ (Wilson)

Week 3

M RW 527+ (Anzaldúa); Paper 2 assigned

W Thesis/plan for Paper 2 due; workshop; BH chapter 1, sections 1a-d (pp. 11-39) (exploring, planning, and drafting)

Week 4

M Typed draft of Paper 2 due; BH chapter 3, sections 3a-3c (pp. 87-99) (building paragraphs)

W Second typed draft of Paper 2 due; peer review; BH chapter 2, section 2a (49-57) (revising; peer review)

Week 5

M **Paper 2** due; workshop—papers annotated, proofread, and discussed; bring *BH* to class

THEMATIC UNIT II: HOW CAN EDUCATION CHANGE US ?

W *RW* 53+ (Newman); 76+ (Okakok)

Week 6

M Paper 2 returned and discussed; review of writing conventions using *BH*

W *RW* 63+ (Freire); 68+ (Feynman); 46+ (Douglass); Paper 3 assigned

Week 7

M Thesis/plan due for Paper 3; workshop; *BH* chapter 3, section 3d (pp. 99-105) (coherent paragraphs); chapter 1, sections 1e and 1g (pp. 39-42; 46-48) (introductions and conclusions)

W Typed draft of Paper 3 due; peer review; bring *BH* to class

Week 8

M **Paper 3** due; workshop—papers annotated, proofread, and discussed; bring *BH* to class

THEMATIC UNIT III: HOW CAN SOCIAL ACTION CHANGE US?

W Printout of Birmingham clergy statement; *RW* 202+ (King)

Week 9

M Paper 3 returned and discussed; review of writing conventions using *BH*; Paper 4 assigned

W Thesis/plan due for Paper 4; workshop; *BH* chapter 8, sections 8a-8c (pp. 200-204) (effective sentences)

Week 10

M Typed draft of Paper 4 due; peer review; bring *BH* to class

W **Paper 4** due; workshop—papers annotated, proofread, and discussed; bring *BH* to class

THEMATIC UNIT IV: HOW DO IMAGES AND IDEAS REPRESENT AND INFLUENCE US?

Week 11

M *RW* pp. 558-561 (reading visual texts); view images in *RW*, pp. 33, 87/C1, 269/C4, 271, 504/C8

W Paper 4 returned and discussed; review of writing conventions using *BH*

Week 12

M *RW* 159+ (Lao Tzu); 184+ (Machiavelli)

W *RW* 238+ (Obama); Paper 5 assigned

Week 13

M Thesis/plan due for Paper 5; draft Paper 5 in class

W *Thanksgiving holiday*

Week 14

M Typed draft of Paper 5 due; peer review; *BH* chapter 15, sections 15a-15d (pp. 245-250) (sentence variety)

W **Paper 5** due; workshop—papers annotated, proofread, and discussed; bring *BH* to class

Week 15

M Review of writing portfolios; begin preparation for final exam

W Paper 5 returned and discussed; review of writing conventions using *BH*; course evaluations; preparation for final exam

FINAL EXAM: IN-CLASS PAPER

Appendix B

Sample Course Calendar
English 1320: College Writing II
Spring Semester / T-H Schedule

Instructors design their own course calendars for English 1320. The following example will give you a general idea of what to expect.

The Bedford Handbook 9e = BH
everything's an argument 6e = EAA

UNIT I: UNDERSTANDING ARGUMENTS

Week 1

T Introduction; course policies
H **Paper 1** written in class

Week 2

T *EAA* chapter 1
H Paper 1 returned and discussed; selection from *EAA*

UNIT II: ANALYZING ARGUMENTS

Week 3

T Paper 2 assigned; *EAA* chapter 6 (rhetorical analysis); selection from *EAA*
H *BH* chapter 6, sections 6a-c (pp. 141-156) (reading and writing arguments); chapter 55, section 55a (pp. 570-573) (quoting); selection from *EAA*

Week 4

T Thesis/plan for Paper 2 due; workshop
H Typed draft of Paper 2 due; peer review; works cited page; *BH* chapter 2, section 2a (50-57) (revising with comments); chapter 56, section 56b (596-651) (works cited)

Week 5

T **Paper 2** due; BH chapter 2, section 2c (pp. 67-8) (proofreading)

UNIT III: DEVELOPING ARGUMENTS

H *EAA* chapter 7 (structuring arguments) (pp. 123-151); selections from *EAA*

Week 6

T *BH* chapter 6, sections 6d-6g pp. 156-61) (constructing arguments); selections from *EAA*

H Paper 2 returned and discussed; selections from *EAA*; Paper 3 assigned

Week 7

T Thesis/plan for Paper 3 due; workshop

H Typed draft of Paper 3 due; peer review (global)

Week 8

T Revised draft of Paper 3 due; peer review (editorial); works cited page

H **Paper 3** due; proofreading; bring *BH* to class

Week 9 *Spring Break*

UNIT IV: RESEARCHING ARGUMENTS

Week 10

T *EAA* chapter 16 (academic arguments); Paper 4 assigned

H Library and Web research (meet in Alkek); *BH* chapter 50 (thinking like a researcher), chapter 52 (evaluating sources)

Week 11

T Bring library/Web sources; *BH* chapter 54 (citing sources; avoiding plagiarism) (pp. 563-569); chapter 55 (integrating sources) (pp. 570-582); Paper 3 returned and discussed

H Typed draft of Paper 4 due; peer review

Week 12

T **Paper 4** due; proofreading; bring *BH* to class

UNIT V: WRITING ACADEMIC ARGUMENTS

H *EAA* chapter 16 (academic arguments); selection from *EAA*

Week 13

T Selections from *EAA*; Paper 5 assigned

H Thesis/plan due for Paper 5; Paper 4 returned and discussed

Week 14

T Typed draft of Paper 5 due; peer review

H **Paper 5** due; proofreading; bring *BH* to class; course evaluations

Week 15

T Review of writing portfolios; in-class writing in preparation for final exam; bring *BH* to class

H Paper 5 returned and discussed; bring *BH* to class; preparation for final exam continued

FINAL EXAM: IN-CLASS PAPER

Appendix C

The following student essay, by English 1310 student Lesley Warren, was written in response to this prompt:

Is it necessary to suffer in order to really learn? Include thoughts on whether teachers should have the power and/or support of school boards and parents to teach using methods such as Jane Elliot's. Use examples from the documentary (*Eye of the Storm*) and from your own experience to support your argument.

Lesley's essay provides an example of the format, tone, and style appropriate for college writing. The annotations provided to the right of the essay highlight some of its qualities and characteristics and include cross-referenced entries to *The Bedford Handbook*, 9e.

Lesley Warren
English 1310

The student author's name and the course are double spaced and typed flush with the left-hand margin.

A Class United: The Lasting Effects of a Lesson in Diversity

On April 4, 1968, Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated. The next day, in Riceville, Iowa, a third-grade student asked his teacher, "Why'd they shoot that king?" It was then that the teacher, Jane Elliot, knew there was no way to simply explain why

Two double spaces separate the heading from the centered title. No additional spaces separate the title from the text. (See *BH* 656 for a sample MLA paper.)

In this introduction, Lesley includes two hooks: a startling fact and a bit of dialogue. (See *BH* 41 for a discussion of introduction hooks.)

something so horrible had happened to a man who had been “Hero of the Month” in her classroom only a few months earlier. Elliot knew that for these children to understand a horrible thing such as discrimination, she would have to force them to experience it. The experiment Elliot began, although controversial, changed the lives of her students forever. Jane Elliot’s story shows that sometimes students must suffer in order to learn difficult lessons.

After the death of Martin Luther King, Jr., Elliot decided to try an experiment that she had been thinking about for years. She decided to split her class according to eye color. On the first day of the experiment, she said the blue-eyed people were the better people. She told her class that the brown-eyed people were stupid, that they could not use the water fountain, and that they could not play with the blue-eyed people. She made the brown-eyed people wear special collars. The children completely turned on one another, for no other reason than the fact that someone in authority had said some of them were better than the others.

Lesley underlines her thesis statement, as requested by her instructor. The thesis asserts her central idea in a single sentence that provides a clear focus for the essay. (See *BH* 30-35 for a discussion of thesis statements.)

Note that each paragraph is indented. (See *BH* 656 for a sample MLA paper.)

To support her thesis, Lesley describes in detail the experiment she mentioned in her opening paragraph. (See *BH* 91-92 for a discussion of using examples and illustrations as support.)

After providing her illustration, Lesley explains how this was a “difficult lesson,” one that involved “suffering,” which is her thesis. (See *BH* 89-90 for a discussion of sticking to the point.)

The next day, Elliot said that the brown-eyed people were better than the blue-eyed people. She told her class that the blue-eyed people were stupid, that they could not use the water fountain, and that they could not play with the brown-eyed people. She made the blue-eyed people wear special collars. Once again, the children turned on one another, except this time the brown-eyed people were superior.

Although the lesson was harsh, the students would not have truly understood prejudice without experiencing it firsthand. “I knew it was time to deal with this in a concrete way, not just talk about it, because we had talked about racism,” Elliot said. The students were finally able to grasp what it felt like to be discriminated against based on something that they could not help or change about themselves. They were able to feel the injustice of knowing that they were no different than their classmates, but were still being treated as inferiors.

In August of 1984, a high school reunion brought Jane Elliot’s third grade class back to Riceville. They requested to see the 1971 *Eye of the Storm* documentary and relive the lesson in discrimination. In

Lesley begins her second body paragraph with a transition that informs the reader that the experiment had an additional part. (See *BH* 104.)

In order to emphasize similarities between the two groups’ responses, Lesley uses parallel grammatical form in the first and second body paragraphs. (See *BH* 101.)

Lesley uses the transition “although” to contrast the harshness of the experiment with the benefit of the experiment. Lesley is also using here language from the prompt. (See *BH* 104 for common transitions.)

Because Lesley is quoting a film, she does not have a page number to cite.

The transition here is achieved by alluding to the subject of the previous paragraph: Jane Elliot’s third grade class. (See *BH* 103-04 for strategies for transitioning between paragraphs.)

discussion, the adult students all said that the lesson was worthwhile, and they carried it with them throughout their lives. They, in turn, taught their own children not to discriminate. They shared their own experiences with racism and prejudice and, because of this experience, they were able to influence others. As one of the former students said, “You just get this burning feeling in you that you just want to let it out and put them through what we went through to find out; they’re not any different.”

In 1968, a third-grade classroom learned that discrimination is injustice. They learned this through two days of suffering, but it was a lesson they never forgot. Jane Elliot saw a chance to make a difference, and that is exactly what she did. If every child had been put through this lesson, perhaps the world would be a more tolerant place today.

Lesley’s argument is made stronger by providing corroborating evidence. (See *BH* 160-63 for a discussion of using evidence.)

Lesley has chosen a quotation that proves her point in this paragraph and that links back to her thesis. She has opted to quote because the language is especially vivid and expressive. (See *BH* 570 for a discussion about using quotations appropriately.)

Lesley concludes by reiterating her thesis, not repeating it. Although she reminds the audience of the positive effect of Elliot’s experiment, by speculating on what might have happened had more children participated, Lesley asks her readers to consider the wider implications of her thesis. (See *BH* 46-48 for a discussion of conclusions.)

An online version of the syllabus is available at
www.english.txstate.edu.

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9.1.14

Resources for Writers

English Department

Flowers Hall 365 / (512) 245-2163

Texas State Writing Center

Academic Services Building-North / (512) 245-3018

Email: nw05@txstate.edu

Hours: M-T-W-H 10 am-7 pm;

F 12-5 pm; Sun 6-10 pm

www.writingcenter.txstate.edu

Student Learning Assistance Center (SLAC)

Alkek Library, 4th Floor / (512) 245-2515

www.txstate.edu/slac

English Department Mac Lab

Flowers Hall 120 / (512) 245-9134

English Department Windows Labs

Flowers Hall G13 / (512) 245-2169

Flowers Hall 114 / (512) 245-2397



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