ENG 1001G-011: Text-Building: Composition and Language

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Our Purposes in This Class

Who Am I?
Mr. Kenneth Webb • kpwebb12@gmail.com • @English1001 on Twitter
Office Hours: MWF after class until 11:00 and by appointment • Coleman 2110
Please call me Kenny or Mr. Webb • Currently I am a writer of a thesis, assignment sheets, research papers, tweets, a blog, two podcasts, and Dungeons & Dragons adventures.

Who Are You?
Whether you choose to think of yourself this way or not, you are a writer. Writing is crucial not only to your success in college and beyond, but it is becoming increasingly important to recreation and a successful social life. If you’re unsure about what kind of writer you are, don’t worry. We will take some time during the first week to think about just that.

What Are We Doing Here?
As writers, we are here to create things, to compose things. We will be looking at genuine documents (writing that you can find out in the real world), studying them to understand how they work, and using them to construct our own documents. By the end of this class, you will be able to do the following:

• Analyze a writing model in order to understand how it works or doesn’t work.
• Guide your own writing process by understanding genres of writing.
• Annotate a piece of writing in order to comprehend it, challenge it, and use it for your own purposes.
• Identify meaningful writing issues within your own and others’ writing and generate potential solutions.
• Use specific strategies and tricks to improve your writing at the level of both text and sentence.

Course Policies

Attendance
Come to class every day, and come ready to write. We don’t have a ton of reading in this class because we do so much work in class. For this reason, there are no free absences in this class except for documented medical emergencies. For each day you are absent, you will lose 1% of your final grade for the course. For every two days you are tardy, you will also lose 1% of your final grade. If you are absent ten or more days, you will fail the course.
Course Policies Continued

Classroom Conduct
Above all, treat each other and me with kindness and respect. For each other, this means allowing everyone an opportunity to speak his or her mind. It also means avoiding conversation that will exclude or silence others. For this reason, racist, sexist, homophobic, or otherwise discriminatory attitudes, speech, and writing will not be tolerated.

Arrive at class each day ready to write and to discuss as a class. I will make a note of your participation each day and will collect your in-class writing. In general, I will only allow you to leave the room in the case of emergency.

Please turn off all cell phones and other electronics before you come to class, and do not use the computers for anything but class-related activities. If I see you using any electronics or misusing the computer, I will acquire them until the end of class, and you will lose participation points for the day.

Workshops
In this class, you will work to develop your ability to critique your peers’ and your own writing. To that end, you will write a full draft of the 3 Short Texts and then you will attend a workshop during the next week where you will discuss each paper’s strengths and areas to improve. Because we will be Workshopping these assignments, you are expected to make significant changes for your final copy.

Plagiarism
Loosely speaking, plagiarism is the use of someone’s words or ideas without giving them the proper credit. This can mean (but is not limited to) copying off a neighbor, failing to cite your sources, or turning in an essay you didn’t write. If you’re ever in the position of thinking of plagiarizing, come talk to me, and we will work out something infinitely better than you receiving No Credit for the paper or the class, which is what will happen if you plagiarize. We are all here to improve as writers, so make an honest effort and you will do just fine.

Students with Disabilities
If you are in need of any academic accommodations and have a documented disability, please do let me know in advance as soon as you can. Also, please contact the Office of Disability Services at 217.581.6583, or visit the Office itself at Ninth Street Hall, room 2006.

Readings
All readings will be made available either through WebCT or through email, and they will all be in PDF format. You must complete readings before class on the day they appear on the course schedule. Please note also, that I expect you to do more than simply read. You are expected to take separate notes on the reading and turn them in on the day the reading appears on the class schedule.
Assignments

All readings and assignments are due electronically (kpwebb12@gmail.com) at the beginning of class the day they appear on the schedule. Please note that the schedule of readings and assignments may change at any time according to the needs and demands of the class.

Daily Writing Prompts and Participation
Each day, in the first five minutes of class, you will be given a prompt and you will begin writing about that prompt in any way you choose. I will collect this writing, and as long as you are putting some tangible effort forward, you will get full points for this assignment. I won’t grade your writing ability on these prompts, so I encourage you to experiment and have fun with them. Additionally, each day I will tell you how you can acquire your participation points for that day.

Annotated Writing Models
In preparation for each of the three Short Texts (see below), you will find a model on which you will base your own work and write a 1-2 page paper breaking down the components of the model. You will explain what works well within the model you chose, how its pieces fit together, what you will adapt from it, and what will you modify for your own writing.

Short Texts
Three times during the semester, you will write a short text. Here are the names and brief descriptions of these texts. As the assignments draw nearer, I’ll hand out a more detailed assignment sheet. These will be about 3-4 pages in length.
- **Product Review**—You will choose a product that is a part of a genre, describe the criteria by which you can judge such a product, and then write a review.
- **Game and Instructions**—As a group, you will create a game (it doesn’t have to be complex) and write up a short rulebook for the game.
- **Podcast**—You will record a broadcast on a topic and in a style of your choice.

Workshop Letters
To prepare for workshops, you are required to read all of your teammate’s papers and write a ½-1 page letter to each of your teammates, addressing the paper’s strengths and weaknesses. You should address your teammates directly, with politeness and professionalism, but without dodging the issues. **This is the only assignment that must be printed out and brought to class, and I require you to bring two copies of each letter** (one for me, one for the recipient). Although I do not grade you on your letters, you must complete them to earn full participation points for workshop days.

Individual Genre Study
Toward the middle of the semester, we will begin work on your final project: the Individual Genre Study. You can think of this assignment as an extended, more open-ended version of the Short Texts. You will identify a kind of text you would like to create, find a model to study, and create a text of your own. Here are a few examples of things you might create:

* A Cookbook • A Blog • A Job Application • A YouTube Video • A News Article
Grades and Grading

The Place Where Grades Are Born
1. Daily Writing Prompts/Class Participation......10%
2. Annotated Writing Models......10%
3. Short Text #1......18%
4. Short Text #2......18%
5. Short Text #3......19%
6. Individual Genre Study......25%

60-69% D • 70-71% C • 80-89% B • 90-100% A

Grading Policies
As far as grades go, you can earn an A, B, C, or D, or No Credit (NC) for the course, but I do give numerical grades on individual assignments. (For example, you can earn a 93% A- on an individual paper, but a 93% in the class will be counted as an A. I do this simply to give you a clearer idea of how you are developing as a writer.) In my class it will be hard to earn an A and very hard to earn No Credit, as long as you put forth the effort and do the work required of you. Assignments are due on the day they appear on the schedule at the beginning of class. I do not accept late assignments.

My Grading Philosophy
•What I Value in Writing
Above all, I value purpose in writing. I love a writer who knows what she wants to accomplish and sticks to that goal, even if that goal is to wander around aimlessly. I value creativity and originality; I like to be entertained. If you create something genuinely new and interesting, I will be totally on board.

•How I Grade Papers
I do NOT start you out with 100 points and take off whenever you “mess up.” Rather, just as you start out with a blank sheet of paper when you’re writing, you start out with zero points and you earn everything you get. Check out the attached rubric to see how your grade builds as you meet criteria.

•How I Comment on Papers
When you turn in the longer assignments, I will give you the chance to get the first word in about your text. You will tell me what your goal was in writing the text in addition to your most and least favorite parts about your text. Next, I will record my commentary to you as I read. I will then send you my commentary as an mp3 file which you can download and listen to. I do this so that you can hear the reactions of a reader in the reading process, and also so that we can have a more genuine conversation.

Syllabus Changes

All policies in this syllabus and the condensed version are subject to change at the instructor’s discretion and at any time for the benefit of the class.
English 1001—Webb
Condensed Syllabus

My Contact Information
Mr. Kenneth Webb • kpwebb12@gmail.com
@English1001 on Twitter
Office Hours: MWF after class until 11:00
and by appointment • Office in Coleman
2110

Attendance
Come to class every day on time, and come ready to write. There are zero free
absences in this course, shy of a medical emergency with proper documentation. For
every day you are absent, you will lose 1% of your final grade for the entire course.

Classroom Conduct
Treat each other and me with kindness and respect. Racist, sexist, homophobic, or
otherwise discriminatory attitudes and papers will not be tolerated. Arrive at class
each day ready to write and discuss. No cell phones, laptops, iPods, or any other
electronic devices are allowed in the class without express permission.

Plagiarism
Don’t do it. If you use someone else’s words or ideas, you must give them proper
credit. If you’re ever thinking of plagiarizing, come talk to me instead and we’ll work out something much better.

Students with Disabilities
Let me know as soon as you can if you have a documented disability, and be sure to
contact the Office of Disability Services at 217.581.6583, or visit the Office itself at
Ninth Street Hall, room 2006.

Twitter and Google Docs
You will need to make a Twitter account and a Google account for this class. For a
more thorough explanation of why and how to do this, see the Using the Web handout.

Grade Breakdown
1. Daily Writing Prompts/Class Participation...... 10%
2. Annotated Writing Models....... 10%
3. Short Text #1...... 18%
4. Short Text #2...... 18%
5. Short Text #3...... 19%
6. Individual Genre Study...... 25%

60-63% D • 70-71% C
80-89% B • 90-100% A

Grading Policies
In my class, it will be hard to earn an A and very hard to earn an F as long as you do
the work. All readings and assignments are due on the day they appear on the
schedule at the beginning of class. I do not accept late assignments.

My Grading Philosophy
I value a clear purpose in writing, as well as creativity and originality. When I grade
papers, I do NOT start you out with 100 points and take off whenever you “mess
up.” Rather, you start at zero and earn everything you get. When you turn in
longer assignments, you will tell me your goal in writing the text in addition to the
text’s strengths and weaknesses. From there we will start a conversation about how
you can go about improving your text and achieving your goals in writing. That’s what
we’re here to accomplish—YOUR GOALS. For the most part, I won’t make direct
requests for you to revise. Instead, I will offer possibilities for where you might take
your text from this point.
Class Schedule

[UNIT 0—BECOMING A COLLEGE STUDENT]
M 1/9: Intro to class • Using a syllabus
W 1/11: "How to Mark a Book"
F 1/13: "How to Do Things With Words,” Lecture I

M 1/16: No Class, M. L. King Jr.'s Birthday
W 1/18: "I, Robot No Deep Thinker"
F 1/20: Annotated Writing Model due

M 1/23: “Portal 2 Review”
W 1/25: "Inception (Review)"
F 1/27: DRAFT of Product Review due

M 1/30: Workshop Team A
W 2/1: Workshop Team B
F 2/3: Workshop Team C

M 2/6: "Dances With Aliens"
W 2/8: "The Racial Politics of Avatar"
F 2/10: FINAL Product Review due

M 2/13: "Player’s Handbook"
W 2/15: Annotated Writing Model due
F 2/17: No Class, Lincoln’s Birthday

M 2/20: “13 Dead End Drive”
W 2/22: “Monopoly Game Instructions”
F 2/24: DRAFT of Game and Instructions due

M 2/27: Workshop Team A
W 2/29: Workshop Team B
F 3/2: Workshop Team C

M 3/5: “Chess Instructions for Beginners”
F 3/9: FINAL Game and Instructions due

M 3/12: No Class, Spring Break
W 3/14: No Class, Spring Break
F 3/16: No Class, Spring Break

I am on Workshop Team ____________.
I have an individual conference with Mr. Webb in Coleman Hall 2110 on ____________ at ________.