A Writing Workshop
Introductory Handout

During the course of the semester, you will be required to turn in four separate, polished pieces that show your developing skills as a writer. Each piece must be thorough and complete. Having all four pieces completed at the end of the term is a requirement for passing this class.

| 1 multimedia literacy memoir (structured in class weeks 1-2) | Purpose: to reflect on your own experiences as a writer or reader and to share your insights with the reader in a creative manner |
| 1 piece of your choice (creative/persuasive/informative) (Weeks 3-4) | Purpose: any purpose to entertain the reader and/or help the reader think more complexly about the world or its people to examine a controversy and persuade the reader to think or act differently after reading the piece |
| 1 compare contrast essay (structured in class weeks 5-6) | Purpose: to compare/contrast the characters or themes a novel and to persuade the reader that your interpretation of the novel is correct |
| 1 researched piece with annotated bibliography (Structured in class weeks 7-8) | Purpose: to persuade the reader to think or act differently about a substantive topic |

See the attached page for explanations of these types of writing.

We will have approximately 30 minutes each day for our Writing Workshop in class. You must use this time to compose and improve your papers. Before the due date for each paper, we will spend one day in the computer lab. Please wisely plan to use this time either typing your work or researching the subject of your next piece. All other research and typing must be completed outside of class.

You will also be required to conference with Ms. Miller for each project. Please plan ahead to ensure that you are able to fit in your conference during class as you are drafting or revising your piece. Students who do not plan ahead may be required to conference outside of class at Ms. Miller’s convenience.
The Process: (Follow this guide when writing your workshop pieces).

1. Compose a rough draft (Minimum: 1 1/2 pages) that expresses your story/idea from beginning to end. A rough draft completely attempts to explore a topic or an idea.

2. Have an editor respond to your paper. Your editor needs to be someone willing to suggest improvements, not just someone who will tell you how wonderful your paper is. Your editor can be a member of this class or someone outside of class (parent, friend, coach, neighbor). I am always available to offer advice and suggestions in class or during my office hours. However, I will not count as your editor. In order to receive full credit for peer edits there must be abundant evidence that your editor edited your work—comments on the draft itself, comments, and written answers to paper response sheets. If your editor discusses comments with you, but does not write them down for whatever reason, you are responsible for writing out their suggestions. If someone does not give your helpful suggestions, seek out an additional editor.

3. Compose a second draft.

4. Set the second draft aside and write a brief reflection on the changes you decided to make to your original draft. Consider the comments of your editor, Ms. Miller, and your own reflections. What specific improvements have you made to your piece? Did you make any stylistic changes since the conception of your piece? Why did you make these changes? What effects do you hope they have on the readers? (Minimum 6 sentences)

5. Proofread your second draft to create your final draft. Make sure that you carefully read your work so it is as perfect as you can make it (Minimum 2 pages). This final draft must follow these criteria:
   a. Final drafts must be completed according to the Writing Workshop calendar. All late final drafts will only receive half credit. Don't put off all your final drafts until the night before they are due.
   b. Final drafts must be typed (double-spaced, standard-sized font) and stapled to the rubric.
   c. On the day the final draft is due, you must also turn in the first draft, your editor’s response, and a written reflection on the changes you have made. This work must be stapled to the process work rubric;

6. After you have seen your final draft grade, place all three drafts of each completed paper in your classroom portfolio and fill out your student portfolio goal tracking sheet. You will use this goal tracking sheet and these papers to help you write your final portfolio reflection at the end of the semester.

All submitted final drafts and process work must be submitted in this manner:
Rules for Writing Workshop:

1. **Your consistent effort in Writing Workshop is key to succeeding in Write It Right.** Be sure to keep yourself active in the process. If you are not reading someone else's work, you need to be writing a piece of your own or talking to your teacher about one.

2. **Respect the environment of our workshop.** Some students need quiet to work effectively. When conferencing with Ms. Miller or a peer, please whisper to avoid distracting your classmates. *If you would like to conference with the author about his or her work in the hallway, please ask Ms. Miller for permission.* If you work more effectively with music, you may use a personal music player during the workshop as long as the volume is down and you are visibly writing or editing.

3. **Choose your writing location wisely** so you are less likely to be distracted by neighbors. You may choose to sit in the desks or on the floor. Please do not sit behind my desk.

4. **Conference with Ms. Miller for writing project** during in class workshop time. Come to conferences with a question about your work or a passage with which you are having trouble, and Ms. Miller can help your work progress before you turn in your final. You may choose to have your conference at any point including partway through your rough draft. If most of the class postpones their conferences until the last day, not everyone will be able to conference in class; therefore, waiting until the last minute may result in no conference. Conference times outside of class may also be requested.

5. **Take the time to thoughtfully respond to your classmate’s work.** You may have someone outside of the class respond to your rough drafts, but they must do a quality job or you will have to find an additional responder. Ms. Miller does check to make sure you get and give quality responses!

6. **Final drafts** and process work must be submitted according to the guidelines described in our “Writing Workshop Introductory Handout” and the deadlines described on our “Writing Workshop Calendar.”

7. **In the lab** you must be working on a writing project of some sort. If Ms. Miller catches you playing games or perusing websites that are not related to your topic, you will lose your computer privileges for the rest of the day. You may at any time in the lab choose to write long-hand and forego the use of the computer.

8. **Be the most creative and reflective person you can** as you workshop your pieces. That is how you’ll earn your best grade on your portfolio.
Genres for papers

You may choose any of these paper genres to base your choice paper.

Some Creative Genres
A children’s book
A ghost story
A love story
An adventure story
A horror story
A mystery
A story with a flashback
A parody
A fake newspaper
An Old West story
A melodrama
A memoir
A magazine article
A comical piece of fiction
A comical true story
A science fiction story
A story about a bizarre person
A narrative about something that happened
A short play with several characters
A comic book
A love poem
A humorous poem
A poem that tells a story
A sensory description
A creative response to a poem
A creative response to a story
A creative response to a novel
Other (Ask your teacher, please)

Some Informative Genres
An interview
An expository essay on:
  a. a famous person/writer
  b. a historical event
  c. a current event
  d. a piece of literature
  e. a topic of interest to you
A book report
A movie report
Detailed instructions for doing something
A family history
A news story
A research paper
A brochure
An informative poster series
Business letters or e-mail exchanges
Other (Ask your teacher, please)

Some Persuasive Genres
A letter to the editor
A book review to persuade another's reading
A movie review to persuade another's viewing
A "what if" scenario that forces reader to think differently
A research paper that persuades immediate action
A paper that defends one side in a controversial issue
A paper that attacks one side in a controversial issue
An advertising campaign
Other (Ask your teacher, please)
As a requirement of this course, one of your pieces must be created for an audience other than your teacher. Some audiences may include: the Internet community (website, webpage, book report, blog, etc…), a company (letter), political representative (letter), newspaper (letter to the editor, editorial), writing contest (poetry, short stories), etc…. Note that this requirement does not mean that your work must be published; it must simply serve a purpose applicable to the world outside our classroom. In order to prove to me that you have fulfilled this requirement, you must submit to me either (1) the url address of your work published on the internet or (2) your work in a stamped, addressed, and unsealed envelope that I will mail after reviewing. For emails to a company, representative, or other audience, you also have the option of (3) carbon copying my email address on the email that you send (Please use my gmail email). For letters and emails do NOT send them until I have read and returned your final drafts so you have one last chance to perfect your work before sending it.