

# IN-CLASS ESSAYS

One of the goals of English 10 is to prepare students to write extemporaneously. In short, academia occasionally requires students to craft in one sitting a multi-paragraph essay that responds to an assigned prompt, supports a single main idea—a specific arguable thesis—with carefully developed evidence and reasoning, reveals control of sentence and paragraph structure, and employs an appropriate organizational scheme.

## Strategies for In-class Essay Writing

### Prewrite:

- I. Make sure you understand the question being asked!
- II. Collect evidence that might allow you to answer the question.
- III. Don't think: WRITE!

WEDGE for five minutes, or until you get to an answer to the question.

IV. Create a Working Thesis: it must be a specific arguable claim, usually in the form of a cause and effect statement.

N.B. If the question is big and general and open-ended, you must still craft a specific response! For example, if the question is “Explore the ways in which the story reveals character,” work to generate a focused working thesis similar to “Internal monologue, the opinions of other characters, his actions, and symbols associated with the character reveal Professor Schadenfreude as an evil antagonist.”

V. Outline: Keep in mind that analytical essays at this level should offer a minimum of three (3) body paragraphs.

VI. Draft Working Paragraph Topic Sentences

### Draft:

VII. Begin the first page by writing the working thesis. If you are handwriting, jot the thesis roughly 2/3 of the way down the page, leaving room to draft an introduction later.

VIII. Draft body paragraphs, including

- specific evidence
- specific reasoning
- specific supporting details.

IX. Draft introduction and conclusion and title. These will be much easier to write once you have drafted the body paragraphs

### Revise:

X. Revise paragraphs for completeness, unity (one idea = one ¶!) and clarity.

XI. Revise paragraph topic sentences (transitions + claims) to match ¶s.

XII. Revise your thesis to match the ¶TSs!

### Proofread:

XIII. Proofread vigorously and thoroughly. Make tidy revisions.