

Reaction to Reading

We can learn to write by learning how other writers write. Keeping record of what we learn from other writers also aids learning. In this course, you will read sample essays written by professional as well as student writers. We will analyze the content of the essay and the way the writers present their ideas. The Reaction assignment is designed to assist us reflect on the content as well as the way writers write.

You will be assigned to read, analyze, and write a reaction to about seven (7) sample essays. In addition, you will also read, analyze and write reaction to the secondary sources you will gather for your Paper III. You will have to submit your typed reaction on the due date to get the points.

Format

We will record our reaction and analysis in our Reaction each of which will have a Heading and a Reflection sections.

Name: _____
 Date: _____
 Reaction #__

Author, Title. In the essay X argues that....

Her assertion that .. does not reflect the society I live in mainly because...

X uses descriptive words very effectively which brings..

Despite the disconnect between... I found this essay...

The Heading should include

- Your Name
- the Date you write the Reaction
- Reaction Number.

The Contents:

To develop a sense of organization in your writing, include

- Introduction:
 - o Provide a bibliographic reference of the essay (author, title, publication)
 - o Summarize the content of the essay
- Body:
 - o Analyze the essay according to the topics of Chapters from the textbook that we are reading for the week.
 - o Support your analysis with quote from the essay.
- Conclusion
 - o Connect the essay with real life situation or experience.
 - o End your Reaction with a concluding statement.

Rubric

You MUST TYPE your Reading Reaction, single spaced. You can download the Reading Reaction Blank from Course Document on Epsilon or Blackboard.

Components	Points	Remarks
Clear summary of the essay's main idea(s)	5	
Analysis of at least 2 issues/points discussed in the essay	5	Include quotes from the essay
Analysis of the writer's writing strategies according to the strategies we have read in our class materials	5	
Connect to real life situation, condition, or experience.	5	
Timeliness: reaction is submitted ON TIME	0	Will be deducted when submitted late
Total Points for each Reaction	20	

Example

Zazil Davis-Vazquez
February 7, 2012
RR #3

Mother Tongue by Amy Tan

In *Mother Tongue*, Amy Tan examines her use of language and the different “Englishes” that she is surrounded by. Tan explains in this essay that she had been paying more attention to her use of language, for example when and with whom she used these different forms of English. Tan says that as a young person, her mother required her, in formal situations, to translate between her mother’s “limited” English and an English that is widely recognized as being correct. Tan also explores the fact that Asian Americans are not as present in the fields of creative writing than they are in science and mathematics.

An issue that I find particularly intriguing comes up when Tan remembers when her mother was called to the hospital for an appointment regarding a brain tumor she had. The hospital staff lost the CAT scan that found the tumor, and told her that the appointment would not be able to proceed. Tan’s mother refused to leave until the doctor called Tan. As tan says, “when the doctor finally called her daughter, me, who spoke perfect English—lo and behold—we had assurances that the CAT scan would be found, promises that a conference call on Monday would be held, and apologies for any suffering my mother had gone through.”

When I first read this, the scene reminded me of several occasions when my Spanish-only speaking family were found in similar circumstances: having to speak to an English speaking person, not being able to express themselves, and being taken less seriously than a person who spoke English. I find this a type of racism or discrimination, and I am almost positive that when my family and I would go to the DMV or a clinic where no one spoke Spanish, many of the people who provided service to my family felt a sort of disdain for them. I find that the essential point of that scene is very true—perfect usage of the dominant language gives one higher status and importance.

Tan hypothesizes that perhaps one reason for many Asian American youths going into science and math instead of writing or English is because they also grew up in homes where the English they were surrounded by was not the English that is thought of as right outside their home. Tan even says that she had been encouraged to go into science and math and shy away from English, since she achieved higher grades and scores on tests dealing with the former, but because of her nature, she decided to go into English anyway. Perhaps other young people could have enjoyed a career in writing more than one in science or math but were told to go into those fields anyway because they were “better” in them.

Another interesting point that Tan makes is that when she first started writing, she “wrote using what [she] thought to be wittily crafted sentences, sentences that would finally prove I had a mastery over the English language.” This relates to William Zinsser’s *How to Write A Memoir*. He states, “be yourself and your readers will follow you anywhere” and “don’t try to be a ‘writer.’” Tan’s strategy to avoid trying too hard to be a writer was to “envision a reader for the stories [she] would write.” I also believe that it’s important to stay connected with the reader, and that is exactly what Tan did, because her main audience was her mother, and when she was finished her book, Tan’s mother was satisfied.