Week 8 - Values Affirmation Connection Activity

Actions for Week 8 - Values Affirmation Connection Activity

This activity is designed to encourage you to think about, and connect what you've identified as your strongest personal value to your interests, your coursework, and particularly, the issue you've chosen to write about in your eloquent letter.

In week 2, you did a Values Affirmation activity where you brainstormed and listed values that are important to you. Using this list, you identified one or two values that you found particularly important to you and how you live your life, and wrote about them. Now, go back and take a look at what you wrote. Consider how the value you reflected on connects to your personal interests, your coursework, and your goals as a lifelong learner.

Specifically, how does your most important personal value connect to the topic you’ve chosen to write about for your Eloquent Letter? Write for ten minutes about how these two things connect.

After you have written for ten minutes, write a short summary in the Values Affirmation Connection discussion, focusing on how your most important personal value connects to your research topic for this course.

This will look very different for everyone, and there is no right answer. But, I want you to take some time to consider how your values appear in, and connect to, your chosen topic of interest for this course, and perhaps even consider why this topic is so important to you, especially in light of your personal values. My hope is that this will help strengthen your writing in your Eloquent Letter by giving you a chance to connect your research topic in your paper to your most important personal values. This will give your letter stronger context, and situate it more clearly in terms of your background and interests in the topic.

By THURSDAY Feb. 26: Post your initial reflection

By SUNDAY, March 1: Respond to at least two others' posts in your group.

Actions for Week 8 and 9 Workshop -- Peer Review

By Sunday, week 7 (Feb. 19)

Compose a comment in this discussion forum and attach a copy of your first draft.

By Thursday, week 8 (26)

Reply to two of your peer's posts to "tag" the essays you will write a Peer Review Letter for (make sure they haven't already gotten two tags. Everyone should write two letters and receive two letters).

By Sunday, week 8 (Feb. 1)

For each of your peers you've tagged, attach a copy of your peer review letter to the writer's original post in this discussion.

By Tuesday, week 9 (Mar. 3)

Follow up with your peer reviewers by posting questions, clarifications, and comments in response to their letters.

Workshop Objective: By the end of this workshop you should have some good ideas for revising your Mirror Essay with a reader's needs in mind.
Peer Review Letter Instructions

Write letters (at least 350 words each) to TWO of your workshop group members critiquing their essay drafts and offering suggestions. To see an annotated example of a great peer review letter, click here.

In your letters address at least four of the following:

- Summarize or identify the thesis. Does it meet the criteria for a good thesis (focus, assertion, complexity, tension). Offer suggestions or ask questions that might help the writer improve the thesis.
- Ask four questions about specific words, sentences, or points the writer has made and that will require the writer to clarify, elaborate, or give examples.
- Identify where the writer uses sources. Are both primary and secondary sources used? Identify the purpose you think the writer is using each source. Offer any advice about better integrating the sources with the writer’s ideas/sentences. Offer ideas about other sources they might use.
- Describe the structure of the essay. Were there places where you became confused? Explain where these were and why they were confusing.
- Are all the questions posed in the assignment (see Looking in the Pop Culture Mirror Assignment in Course Content) answered by the essay? If not, which ones still need addressing?
- Describe the overall tone of the essay. Is it consistent? For what type of audience does the tone, language, and reasoning of the writer's essay seem appropriate? Where might you envision the writer's essay being published (i.e. a textbook, a personal blog, a popular magazine, etc.).
- Identify and explain any potential fallacies in logic or loaded language.
- Does the writer address possible counterarguments or alternative viewpoints? If not, offer a counterargument or alternative reading of the evidence the writer presents, or point out where the writer's arguments/evidence might be unconvincing or oversimplified.
- What is missing? Or what did you want more of?
- Where is information unnecessarily repeated or awkwardly stated?
- If you noticed any grammatical, punctuation, or spelling errors, what were they?
- What are the main strengths of the draft?