Essay Guidelines

Writing process: Instead of throwing together an essay at the last minute, you should follow a gradual writing process of invention, drafting, revising, and editing as you learned in English 1013 or as explained in EL pages 37-48. If you’re using a computer, save your drafts separately. I will not grade an essay that does not show proof of process.

ALL final drafts of at-home essays must be submitted to MyDropBox for review before a grade will be assigned. Late submission to MyDropBox may be denied after deadline. If this happens, e-mail the paper to me so I can submit it.

Print out TWO hard copies. Staple the pages of each copy of your paper together, and submit them to me during class on the due date. Also include any peer review comments and copies of your various drafts (Proof of process).

E-mail the final draft of your paper to me on the due date if you must miss class. If you e-mail you paper, submit proof of process in my mailbox in BH1060 or bring to next class. If you paper is not finished, attend class anyway. In case of absence, submit your work ASAP.

If the essay is research-based, you must submit copies of each article from which you have taken ideas that appear in your paper. Please highlight those ideas directly on the article copy.

Peer Review: After you finish typing the rough draft for each paper, you need to e-mail it or send to My CompLab so at least three other students can review it. Similarly, you need to review the rough drafts of three other students. As you review each draft, use the review checklist provided at My Comp Lab or in class. Print the reviewers’ comments to hand in with your final draft. Send your comments back to each writer. Use this advice to revise and improve your essay. Read aloud to someone else, proofread and edit your last draft before you send or give it to me!

Comp II Essay Guidelines

1. All essays must be typed using a size 12-pt. font. (This is 12 pt.)
2. The font should be simple like this, Times Roman. No script or italics. No all caps or bold. Just plain text, please.
3. Double space the essay beginning with the first line after the title (see number 7 below). Double spacing your essay is crucial. NON-COMPLIANCE WILL RESULT IN MY LOWERING THE GRADE YOU EARN BY TEN POINTS.
4. Use 1” margins for the top and bottom of each page, 1.25” for the sides. (These are the default margins in Microsoft Word.) Indent the first line of each paragraph by one “Tab” keystroke (usually ½” or five spaces). Do not add an extra blank line between paragraphs. Do not right justify your essays.
5. Heading: Do not use the Header function! Instead, on the first line of the first page, type the following (single spaced) in the upper left hand corner:
   Your Name
   ENGL 1023
   Name of essay (change with each new essay)
   Due date of essay
Maggie, the Surprising Daughter in "Everyday Use"

The surprise about life for someone like Dee in Alice Walker's "Everyday Use" is that not everyone thinks like she does. While growing up, Dee resented her impoverished life with her mother and sister and wanted to get away from it as soon as possible, which she did. Now, in the time of the story, Dee has learned of her African heritage and sees her old life as quaint, as something she can display on a wall or capture in a Polaroid picture. Loudly colorful Dee (Wangero) grabs our attention, but it is her little sister Maggie who is the more mysterious and, ultimately, the more substantial of the two. Maggie's directed comments, quiet demeanor, and confidence in her place in her life reveal that she is more in tune with her true heritage than Dee can ever be and is the most interesting character in the story as a result.

At first, "Everyday Use" seems to be all about Dee, the flamboyant, worldly, bright daughter. She has overcome her childhood poverty and has become successful at college. In addition, the other three characters in the story are largely concerned with who Dee is and what she does. When Dee was still living at home, Mama put a great deal of effort into making sure that Dee got good clothes, a good education, and a good life. We learn from Mama that "Dee wanted nice things. A yellow organdy dress […] black pumps to match a green suit " (par. 12, 218) and that Dee got what she wanted. Maggie, the fire-scarred little sister, seems to look up to Dee, to see her as the ideal that she (Maggie) can never achieve. Mama tells us early in the story that Maggie will eye "her sister with a mixture of envy and awe" (par. 2, 217) when Dee arrives for the