WR 121

Essay 1 Instructions

**Where You Live and What You Live For:**

**Writing the Lifeplace Personal Essay**

**Background**

Composition theorist Bruce Ballenger writes, “As a form, the personal essay places the writer at center stage. . .In this sense the personal essay is much like a photographic self-portrait.”

Robert Thayer discusses life place as “living in the world subjectively” and the “combined experience of inner and outer realities.”

For this assignment, you are going to expand the idea of the personal essay beyond the isolation of yourself as a subject and explore what it means to be *you* right now in this place.

**Assignment**

For this assignment you will choose a specific location and explore how that place relates to *what you believe about the world*. You will describe the place in rich, evocative detail and also show the importance of that place and describe what you believe about the world. You will practice inquiry through observation, exploration and reflection. This can be any place you choose, as long as it means something to you and connects to your larger ideas about life and what is important. No outside sources are required; however, it might be nice to incorporate a quote or make reference to another author who shares your viewpoints. Any source material should add, rather than detract from your narrative.

**Your essay should:**

* describe a place and its importance in depth
* relate the importance of place to a broader framework-how does this place reflect you beliefs?
* use sensory language (can your audience see, hear, smell, taste what you’re describing?)
* include a color picture(s) of the place

**Required Elements**

* MLA format
* Minimum of 4 pages (max 8), not including “works cited” page-if source material is included
* Rough draft due Monday, April 22
* Final draft due Wednesday, April 24

**Location Essay Multimodal Options**

**Option 1: Photo Sequence Narrative**

Images

* Use 8 – 10 images that tell the story of a place. Images should keep the narrative *in motion*-rather than static. The images should cover the scope of your story.

Significance (written or audio options)

* Use audio to “tell” your story, narrating each image, as well as explaining the significance of the location and the way it reflects some aspect of your personal belief system.
* For each image, write a paragraph of narrative-the goal being that your narrative moves in conjunction with your images. Again, the narrative needs to explain the significance of the location as well as how it reflect an aspect of your personal belief system.

**Option 2: Video Tour of a Location**

Video

Take 3-5 minutes of video footage of your location (possibly at different times, with different people, etc). Video can be a remix of existing video footage of a location. Video footage needs to be accompanied by voice-over narration (you or you plus others-family/friends) telling stories of that place. The narration also needs to cover the significance of the place and how it speaks to your personal belief system.

\*\*Both multimodal options will be submitted either in print or via email