**English 111: Composition I**

**ASSIGNMENT 1**

**Self-Awareness as a Writer (Cover Sheet)**

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WRITING CENTER STAFF SIGNATURE

Name one thing the English Department could change to improve this assignment:

*(Use the back of this sheet if you need more room.)*

**English 111: Composition I**

**ASSIGNMENT 1**

**Self-Awareness as a Writer (Checklist)**

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WRITING CENTER STAFF SIGNATURE

***(Checklist to be filled out by Writing Center staff)***

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 1. The student has responded to 1 of the questions with 3 paragraphs.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 2. Each paragraph contains 6–8 sentences.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 3. The student has written a sentence that sums up the main idea of the 3 paragraphs.

**English 111: Composition I**

**ASSIGNMENT 1**

**Self-Awareness as a Writer**

***Purpose: This assignment is intended to encourage you to become more self-aware as a writer. It asks you to write about your own writing history.***

**Research Tells Us This:**

* Virtually all high-level technical and professional jobs involve lots of writing.
* Technical employers, when asked about needed workforce skills, invariably mention written communication.
* Most professional writing is done by people who don’t consider themselves writers.
* High-level workers report that writing comprises at least two-thirds of their workload.

We will be encouraging you to practice writing, but we also want you to become conscious of your own capabilities as a writer so you can watch your own growth. This exercise is a starting point for your exploration.

**ASSIGNMENT**

HERE IS WHAT WE WOULD LIKE YOU TO DO:

1. Write a 3-paragraph response to **1** of the following 4 questions: A, B, C, or D. Make sure that each paragraph has 6-8 sentences.
2. After your 3 paragraphs, write a 1-sentence statement that sums up the main idea of what you have written. This sentence will be similar to a ***thesis statement***, an important element of writing that this book will address in fuller detail later.
3. Share your finished work with a Writing Center staff member. Take time to ask any questions you might have.
4. Save what you have written. You will use it again in Assignment 2.

**Questions**

1. Describe your academic background in writing, being as specific as you can about types of assignments, expectations, and basis for teachers’ grading.
2. Describe any writing you do or have done that is not a school assignment. Do you ever write for pleasure? Tell us about any writing your friends and family members do.
3. Describe yourself as a writer, including likes and dislikes, limitations and strengths, and anything that’s part of your writing routine.
4. What brings you to writing classes at WCC? If it’s transfer credit, where do you hope to transfer, and what field will you be studying? If it’s preparation for better employment opportunities, what field would you like to be in?

**English 111: Composition I**

**ASSIGNMENT 2**

**Punctuation Review (Cover Sheet)**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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WRITING CENTER STAFF SIGNATURE

Name one thing the English Department could change to improve this assignment:

*(Use the back of this sheet if you need more room.)*

**English 111: Composition I**

**ASSIGNMENT 2**

**Punctuation Review (Checklist)**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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WRITING CENTER STAFF SIGNATURE

***(Checklist to be filled out by Writing Center staff)***

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 1. The student has completed Exercise 1: Commas with at least 80% accuracy.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 2. The student has completed Exercise 2: Commas, Semicolons, and Colons with at least 80%

accuracy.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 3. The student has completed Exercise 3: Apostrophes with at least 80% accuracy.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 4. In all three exercises, the student has named the rule that determines the punctuation choice.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 5. The student has brought Assignment 1 with all the punctuation marks circled or underlined and has

discussed punctuation choices with a Writing Center staff member.

**English 111: Composition I**

**ASSIGNMENT 2**

**Punctuation Review**

***Purpose: In this unit, you will review four major punctuation marks: the comma, the semicolon, the colon, and the apostrophe. (If you need more information than we provide here, consult a recent grammar book.)***

Increased knowledge of the uses of these punctuation marks will provide you with two immediate benefits:

1. Your writing will be clearer and easier to read.
2. Your academic and professional credibility will be enhanced because an educated reader will see that you have taken the time to master some of the conventions of Standard English.

This unit will begin with a brief overview of basic rules, then ask you to do some exercisesusing these rules, and then ask you to revisit your Assignment 1.

**RULES**

**Part 1: Major Uses of the Comma**

1. Use commas between a series of three or more items.

The basket held apples, oranges, and bananas.

A financial advisor will compute your taxes, manage your portfolio, and notarize your living will.

1. Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction (*for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so*) that joins two independent clauses (word groups that can stand alone as sentences).

The chef peeled the potatoes, and the bartender polished the glasses.

Happiness is everyone’s goal, but no one really knows how to achieve it.

1. Use a comma after a word group that introduces an independent clause (word group that can stand alone as a sentence).

After a long rain delay, we set up the volleyball net.

Whenever life seems to be moving too fast, she likes to curl up with a good book.

1. Use a comma between coordinate adjectives (adjectives that can take the word *and* between them).

Women were attracted to Stan because he was the strong, silent type.

*Ulysses* is a long, difficult book.

1. Use commas to set off transitions.

Nevertheless, we will continue to work hard.

Miriam’s husband, on the other hand, loves red meat.

1. Use commas to set off nonrestrictive elements in sentences. (Nonrestrictive elements are nonessential information. If you remove them, the meaning of the sentence doesn’t change.)

Mary Shelley’s first novel, *Frankenstein*, remains a classic.

He lives in North Dakota, which receives the fewest tourists of any state in the nation.

1. Use commas to set off contrasted elements.

The true genius in the Mendelssohn family was Fanny, not Felix.

Mario, unlike his father, is a real sports fan.

1. Use commas to set off dialogue or interrogative tags.

“Your first essay is due in two weeks,” said the professor.

The work week seems to last forever, doesn’t it?

**ASSIGNMENT: Exercise 1**

On this sheet or on your own paper, rewrite the following sentences with **commas** placed where needed.

After each sentence, name the rule that determines your choice. Use words, not rule numbers.

1. Even after her leg was amputated Sarah Bernhardt toured Europe and the United States.
2. The professor’s warm gentle voice soothed the weary frustrated students.
3. The Maya are famous for their calendar and the Aztecs are notorious for their human sacrifices.
4. Shakespeare’s first tragedy *Titus Andronicus* was a big hit; today however it is not regarded highly.
5. The tsunami ravaged Sri Lanka where hundreds of people lost their lives.

**Part 2: Major Uses of the Semicolon**

1. Use a semicolon between two closely related independent clauses (word groups that can stand alone as sentences).

Ingrid believes in ghosts; Lars thinks they are figments of her imagination.

Some of the students rolled their eyes; others simply yawned.

1. Use a semicolon between independent clauses that are linked by a transition.

Elisa brought noodles, sauce, and cheese; however, she forgot the sausage.

Lin likes Shakespeare’s comedies; Connor, on the other hand, prefers the tragedies.

1. Use semicolons between items in a series that contain internal commas.

Thierry has lived in Ankara, Turkey; Frankfurt, Germany; and Naples, Italy.

Tomoyo’s CD shelf is crammed with American classics: *Highway 61 Revisited*, *Blonde on Blonde*, and *Blood on the Tracks*, by Bob Dylan; *Car Wheels on a Gravel Road*, *Essence*, and *World without Tears*, by Lucinda Williams; and *Mingus Ah Um*, *Pithecanthropus Erectus*, and *New Tijuana Moods*, by Charles Mingus.

**Part 3: Major Uses of the Colon**

1. Use a colon after an independent clause (word group that can stand alone as a sentence) that introduces a list.

The anthology contains her favorite poets: Maya Angelou, Nikki Giovanni, and Rita Dove.

His supervisor gave him three pieces of advice: comb your hair, polish your shoes, and come to work on time.

1. Use a colon after an independent clause that introduces a quotation.

Their father’s words still rang in their ears: “Always buy the best thing you can afford.”

Hamlet says it best: “To be, or not to be—that is the question.”

3. Use a colon between two independent clauses if the second clause summarizes or explains the first.

There is one good reason for her excellence: she works hard.

The philosophers are right: evil is banal.

**ASSIGNMENT: Exercise 2**

On your own paper, rewrite the following sentences with either **colons** or **semicolons** filled correctly in the blanks. After each sentence, name the rule that determines yourchoice. Use words, not rule numbers.

1. William Shakespeare and his wife, Anne, had three children \_\_\_\_\_ Susanna, Hamnet, and Judith.
2. Greeks invented drama \_\_\_\_\_ Americans invented rock ’n’ roll.
3. Heraclitus gives the best advice about the phenomenological world \_\_\_\_\_ “You cannot step into the same river twice.”
4. He wants to move to a Midwestern college town \_\_\_\_\_ Madison, home of the University of Wisconsin \_\_\_\_\_ Iowa City, home of the University of Iowa \_\_\_\_\_ or Ann Arbor, home of the University of Michigan.
5. Leticia loves the Oxford comma \_\_\_\_\_ Dolores, however, does not.

**Part 4: Major Uses of the Apostrophe**

1. Add ’s to make the possessive form of the following: singular nouns, plural nouns that do not end in –s, and indefinite pronouns.

Chris’s car has become the children’s bus.

Those records are nobody’s business but mine.

1. Add only an apostrophe to make the possessive form of plural nouns that end in –s.

Their grandparents’ cottage was nestled in the woods.

Ten years’ accumulation of dust coated the boxes in the attic.

1. Use an apostrophe to replace omitted letters or numerals in contractions.

Busby Berkeley’s musicals from the ’30s and ’40s continue to thrill viewers.

We’re sure that he’s the best person to run the company.

1. Do *not* use apostrophes with possessive pronouns: *his, hers, yours, its, ours, theirs*.

The dog chased its own tail.

Yours is much better than theirs.

**ASSIGNMENT: Exercise 3**

On your own paper, rewrite the following sentences with correct use of **apostrophes**. After each sentence, name the rule that determines your choice. Use words, not rule numbers.

1. Some scholars believe that Queen Elizabeths England was the Western worlds first modern police state.
2. Its easy to poke fun at the clothing styles of the 70s and 80s.
3. Conservation of our planets natural resources is everyones concern.
4. Toni Morrisons novels arent difficult for readers familiar with William Faulkners work.
5. He rebuilt his parents house after its destruction by fire in 1991.

**ASSIGNMENT: Exercise 4**

Look again at the paragraphs you wrote for Assignment 1. Underline or circle all the punctuation marks. Correct any punctuation errors you made. Bring your Assignment 1 with you and be prepared to explain your punctuation choices.

**English 111: Composition I**

**ASSIGNMENT 3**

**Sentence Styles (Cover Sheet)**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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WRITING CENTER STAFF SIGNATURE

Name one thing the English Department could change to improve this assignment:

*(Use the back of this sheet if you need more room.)*

**English 111: Composition I**

**ASSIGNMENT 3**

**Sentence Styles (Checklist)**

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WRITING CENTER STAFF SIGNATURE

***(Checklist to be filled out by Writing Center staff)***

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 1. The student has successfully completed all of the exercises in Part 1 of this assignment, rewriting

the given sentences and writing two sentences of his/her own in each style.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 2. The student has written 1 or 2 paragraphs that correctly employ 7 of the 9 sentence styles

discussed in this assignment.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 3. The student has labeled the sentences with appropriate sentence-style numbers.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 4. The student has typed and double-spaced the paragraph(s).

**English 111: Composition I**

**ASSIGNMENT 3**

**Sentence Styles**

***Purpose: This assignment will give you practice with two important skills: combining sentences and punctuating them according to the rules of standard academic English. These skills provide finishing touches to effective college-level essays and reports.***

**ASSIGNMENT**

This assignment has two parts.

**Part 1**

• Complete the exercises for each of the 9 sentence styles that follow.

Style 1: Coordination with “and”

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Use the coordinating conjunction *and* to combine short, choppy sentences—especially those that have the same subject.

*EXAMPLES*

1. She flung down her purse. She grabbed him by the neck.

She flung down her purse and grabbed him by the neck.

2. Gently, Herschel took Ann in his arms. He softly stroked her hair.

Gently, Herschel took Ann in his arms and softly stroked her hair.

3. Robin ran onto the basketball court. She quickly scored a basket.

Robin ran onto the basketball court and quickly scored a basket.

*NOTE: The examples of this style do not have a comma before the* and *because what comes after the* and *is not an independent clause (word group that can stand alone as a sentence). If the* and *does connect two independent clauses, place a comma before the* and*. (Ex.: Henry sliced the carrots for the soup, and Luella changed the oil in the Mercedes.)*

**EXERCISE 1**

**ON YOUR OWN PAPER, USE STYLE 1 TO COMBINE THE SENTENCES BELOW. THEN WRITE TWO STYLE 1 SENTENCES OF YOUR OWN (YOU WILL HAVE A TOTAL OF THREE SENTENCES):**

Pitt kept England in the war with dogged persistence. He worked himself to death in the process.

Style 2: Semicolon

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Use the semicolon to combine two sentences that are very closely related. In your essays and other writing, be careful not to overuse the semicolon.

*EXAMPLES*

1. Love implies hate; hate implies love.

2. Chrystal will write the group’s report; Iain will edit the slides.

3. We had doubts about her qualifications; nevertheless, she got the job.

*NOTE: In each of these examples, a period could be used in place of the semicolon. Notice also that an adverb or a transition may introduce the second clause, as in sentence 3.*

**EXERCISE 2**

**ON YOUR OWN PAPER, USE STYLE 2 TO COMBINE THE SENTENCES BELOW. THEN WRITE TWO STYLE 2 SENTENCES OF YOUR OWN (YOU WILL HAVE A TOTAL OF THREE SENTENCES):**

Williams exposed the heartbeat of history. McCarthy revealed the material flowing in history’s veins.

Style 3: List of Actions

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Use commas along with *and* to combine short, choppy sentences that have the same subject into a one-sentence list of actions.

*EXAMPLES*

1. She walked in. She removed her coat. She sat down.

She walked in, removed her coat, and sat down.

2. She volleyed the ball. She moved in close. She smashed it for a winner.

She volleyed the ball, moved in close, and smashed it for a winner.

3. He will make the forms. He will brace them up. He will pour the concrete.

He will make the forms, brace them up, and pour the concrete.

*NOTE: Placing a comma before the* and *in a list is the preferred style in American academic English.*

**EXERCISE 3**

**ON YOUR OWN PAPER, USE STYLE 3 TO COMBINE THE SENTENCES BELOW. THEN WRITE TWO STYLE 3 SENTENCES OF YOUR OWN (YOU WILL HAVE A TOTAL OF THREE SENTENCES):**

Susan burst into the kitchen. She overturned the table. She chased Harry out the back door.

Style 4: Colon and List

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Use a colon after an independent clause (word group that can stand alone as a sentence) to introduce a list.

*EXAMPLES*

1. The U.S. government is composed of three branches: executive, legislative, and judicial.

2. Love may be separated into two components: friendship and passion.

3. There are many good reasons to attend college: to get an education, to increase self-esteem, to create greater

earning power, and to avoid the draft during wartime.

*NOTE: If what precedes a list is not an independent clause, do not use a colon.(Ex.: The sauce consists of olive oil, grated cheese, crushed garlic, and cracked black pepper.)*

**EXERCISE 4**

ON YOUR OWN PAPER, USE STYLE 4 TO COMBINE THE SENTENCES BELOW. THEN WRITE TWO STYLE 4 SENTENCES OF YOUR OWN (YOU WILL HAVE A TOTAL OF THREE SENTENCES):

A column has three major parts. One part is called a base. Another part is the shaft. The third part is called a capital.

Style 5: Subordination

Because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Use a subordinating conjunction (Ex.: *because, since, until, while, after*) to combine two sentences.

*EXAMPLES*

1. They are powerful. I cannot stop them.

Because they are powerful, I cannot stop them.

I cannot stop them because they are powerful.

2. The weather clears. We will have the auction.

When the weather clears, we will have the auction.

We will have the auction when the weather clears.

3. Juan doesn’t hire more employees. His business will fail.

If Juan doesn’t hire more employees, his business will fail.

Juan’s business will fail if he doesn’t hire more employees.

*NOTE: Use a comma between the clauses if the subordinate clause comes first. See examples above.*

**EXERCISE 5**

**ON YOUR OWN PAPER, USE STYLE 5 TO COMBINE THE SENTENCES BELOW. THEN WRITE TWO STYLE 5 SENTENCES OF YOUR OWN (YOU WILL HAVE A TOTAL OF THREE SENTENCES):**

Katreena graduated from college. She had many job offers.

Style 6: Reduced Clause: -ed

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ -ed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Combine two sentences that have the same subject by reducing one of the clauses.

*EXAMPLES*

1. The soldiers were encouraged by their victory. They advanced on Washington.

Encouraged by their victory, the soldiers advanced on Washington.

2. She was consumed by her love for Arthur. She fought to stay in Paris.

Consumed by her love for Arthur, she fought to stay in Paris.

3. Clarence Darrow was convinced of his clients’ innocence. He took the case “without fee.”

Convinced of his clients’ innocence, Clarence Darrow took the case “without fee.”

**EXERCISE 6**

**ON YOUR OWN PAPER, USE STYLE 6 TO COMBINE THE SENTENCES BELOW. THEN WRITE TWO STYLE 6**

**SENTENCES OF YOUR OWN (YOU WILL HAVE A TOTAL OF THREE SENTENCES):**

He was determined to win at any cost. He began to cheat.

Style 7: Reduced Clause: -ing

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_-ing \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Combine two sentences that have the same subject by reducing one of the clauses.

*EXAMPLES*

1. Sumiyo smiled radiantly. She swept through the doorway.

Smiling radiantly, Sumiyo swept through the doorway.

2. They wanted eternal prosperity. They could not live with the prospect of death.

Wanting eternal prosperity, they could not live with the prospect of death.

3. Siegfried hoped to find his true love. He entered the magic circle.

Hoping to find his true love, Siegfried entered the magic circle.

**EXERCISE 7**

**ON YOUR OWN PAPER, USE STYLE 7 TO COMBINE THE SENTENCES BELOW. THEN WRITE TWO STYLE 7 SENTENCES OF YOUR OWN (YOU WILL HAVE A TOTAL OF THREE SENTENCES):**

The banks expected continued inflation. They bought gold.

Style 8: Dash

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_—\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Use a dash to indicate a dramatic shift between two sentences or to add an explanatory note after a sentence. In your essays and other writing, be careful not to overuse the dash.

*EXAMPLES*

1. He turned to his mother. She was the only person he trusted.

He turned toward his mother—the only person he trusted.

2. She tasted success. That success had eluded her for ten years.

She tasted success—the success that had eluded her for 10 years.

3. Gasoline costs more than people can afford. It costs five dollars a gallon.

Gasoline costs more than people can afford—five dollars a gallon.

*NOTE: When you’re at a keyboard, hit the hyphen key twice—with no space before, in between, or after—to make a dash.*

**EXERCISE 8**

**ON YOUR OWN PAPER, USE STYLE 8 TO COMBINE THE SENTENCES BELOW. THEN WRITE TWO STYLE 8 SENTENCES OF YOUR OWN (YOU WILL HAVE A TOTAL OF THREE SENTENCES):**

Jonah suffered from depression. It was a disease cloaked in ignorance and fear.

Style 9: Parenthetical

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Combine two sentences by inserting one of the sentences into the other as a parenthetical phrase. Use commas to set off the parenthetical phrase.

*EXAMPLES*

1. This type of sentence should be used sparingly. I must caution you about this.

This type of sentence, I must caution, should be used sparingly.

2. Uncle Dave fired up the barbecue despite the threatening skies. He was always an optimist.

Uncle Dave, always an optimist, fired up the barbecue despite the threatening skies.

3. My mother is a liberal. She is like your mother.

My mother, like yours, is a liberal.

**EXERCISE 9**

**ON YOUR OWN PAPER, USE STYLE 9 TO COMBINE THE SENTENCES BELOW. THEN WRITE TWO STYLE 9 SENTENCES OF YOUR OWN (YOU WILL HAVE A TOTAL OF THREE SENTENCES):**

Molina understood politics. He was unlike his predecessor.

**ASSIGNMENT Part 2**

• **Type 1 or 2 paragraphs about your experience in English 111 and/or the Writing Center so far. In the paragraphs, use at least 7 of the 9 sentence styles that this unit explains, and indicate the style number after the sentences.**

**English 111: Composition I**

**ASSIGNMENT 4**

**Mechanics (Cover Sheet)**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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WRITING CENTER STAFF SIGNATURE

Name one thing the English Department could change to improve this assignment:

*(Use the back of this sheet if you need more room.)*

**English 111: Composition I**

**ASSIGNMENT 4**

**Mechanics (Checklist)**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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WRITING CENTER STAFF SIGNATURE

***(Checklist to be filled out by Writing Center staff)***

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 1. The student has completed Exercise 1: Capitalization in Titles of Works.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 2. The student has completed Exercise 2: Italics, Underlining, or Quotation Marks in Titles of Works.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 3. The student has completed Exercise 3: Numbers

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 4. The student has completed Exercise 4: The Hyphen.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 5. The student has completed the exercises with at least 80% accuracy.

**English 111: Composition I**

**ASSIGNMENT 4**

**Mechanics**

***Purpose: In this assignment, you will review four elements of mechanics that are important in essay writing: capitalization in titles of works; italics, underlining, and quotation marks in titles of works; numbers; and using the hyphen. If you need more information than we provide here, consult a recent grammar book or visit the Purdue OWL (Online Writing Center) on the***

***Web.***

Increased knowledge of these elements of mechanics will provide you with two immediate benefits:

1. Your writing will be clearer and easier to read.

2. Your academic and professional credibility will be enhanced because an educated reader will see that you have taken the time to master some of the conventions of academic English.

This unit will begin with a brief overview of basic rules and then ask you to do some exercises using these rules.

**RULES**

**Part 1: Capitalization in Titles of Works**

Rules for capitalization in titles of works vary among publication styles, but here are some general guidelines. The key is to be consistent within your paper.

1. Capitalize the first letter of the first word, of the last word, and of every major word in the title of a work.

2. Major words include everything except articles (*a, an, the*); prepositions (Ex.: *at, by, for, from, in, on, to, with*);

and conjunctions (Ex.: *and, but, or*).

Note: Some publication styles recommend capitalizing any word that is 5 letters or more, even prepositions (Ex: against, between, within). Again, consistency is the key.

EXAMPLES:

• *Go Tell It on the Mountain*

• “My One and Only Love”

• *Dancing with the Stars*

• “The Story of an Hour”

• *In the Heat of the Night*

**ASSIGNMENT**

**Exercise 1: Capitalization in Titles of Works**

Fix capitalization errors in the following sentences. You may do this in the book or on your own paper.

1. The reading list includes the following plays: *Who’s afraid of Virginia Woolf?, Long day’s journey into night*, and

*The lady from Dubuque*.

2. Her favorite novel is F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *Tender is the night*; his is Zora Neale Hurston’s *Their eyes were watching*

*God*.

3. My friend likes to search *YouTube* for live performances of old folk and blues songs: “Man of constant sorrow,”

“House of the rising sun,” “See that my grave is kept clean,” and “Baby please don’t go,” to name a few.

Part 2: Italics, Underlining, or Quotation Marks in Titles of Works

1. Italicize or underline the titles of books, book-length poems, plays, journals, magazines, newspapers, films, TV

programs, websites, long musical works, paintings, and sculptures. (Note: Italicizing and underlining mean the

same thing. Use one or the other—not both.)

EXAMPLES

* *A Writer’s Reference* (book)
* *Beowulf* (book-length poem)
* *The Huron River Review* (journal)
* *The New York Times* (newspaper) [Note: Some style guides recommend not capitalizing or italicizing “the” in newspaper titles. Usage varies, however. The key is to be consistent.]
* *The Wizard of Oz* (film)
* *Leave It to Beaver* (TV program)
* *Wikipedia* (website)
* *Blood on the Tracks* (album-length musical recording)

2. Use quotation marks for the titles of short stories, poems, songs, newspaper/magazine/ journal articles, and

essays (but not an essay you have written to submit to an instructor).

EXAMPLES

* “A Rose for Emily” (short story)
* “The Road Not Taken” (poem)
* “Chain of Fools” (song)
* “Working Anything but 9 to 5” (newspaper article)
* “A White Woman of Color” (essay)

It might be helpful to imagine titles of large works being italicized and titles of small works being placed in quotation marks.

**ASSIGNMENT**

**Exercise 2: Italics, Underlining, or Quotation Marks in Titles of Works**

Add underlining (means the same as italics) or quotation marks where needed in the following sentences. You may do this in the book or on your own paper.

1. Michael Jackson’s album Thriller featured the songs Beat It and Billie Jean as well as five other hits.
2. The April 1966 issue of the magazine Esquire contained what some people believe to be the best magazine article ever: Frank Sinatra Has a Cold.
3. They started the evening by watching the TV series The Walking Dead; they ended it by watching Sam Raimi’s cult-classic film The Evil Dead.

**Part 3: Numbers**

Rules regarding whether to use words or numerals to indicate numbers in a piece of writing vary among publication styles, but here are some general guidelines:

WHEN TO USE WORDS

1. If a sentence begins with a number. (Ex.: Twenty-five students attended the lecture.)
2. For any number that can be written in one or two words. (Ex.: thirteen, seventy-six, three hundred)

[Note: APA style recommends using words for only the numbers one through nine—and numerals for everything else.]

WHEN TO USE NUMERALS

1. For dates. (Ex.: May 19, 2016)
2. For time of day. (Ex.: 2:15 p.m.)
3. For statistics and percentages. (Ex.: 4 out of 5 doctors, 70% of the population)
4. For scores. (Ex.: a 6-3 victory)
5. If your writing contains a lot of numerical data.

**ASSIGNMENT**

**Exercise 3: Numbers**

Change numerals to words or words to numerals where necessary in the following sentences.

1. 2 people volunteered to help out with voter registration, which began at six a.m.
2. Researchers found that eight-five percent of the respondents, who were aged fifteen to forty-six, had married by age forty-six and that nearly thirty percent had been married more than once. In addition, they found that college graduates were ten percent less likely to get divorced than were those without a college degree.
3. I went to my first Red Sox game in nineteen seventy. I was 10 years old.

**Part 4: The Hyphen**

(Note: Do not confuse the hyphen (-) with the dash (–). The hyphen is used to join words. The dash is used to separate parts of a sentence.)

**Use a hyphen (-) to join words that work together as one concept. For example:**

**Between two or more words functioning as one adjective before a noun.**

* She is a hard-working executive.
* Professor Langella has a three-year-old daughter.
* The lawyer’s in-your-face style angered the members of the jury.

Note: Such words are usually not hyphenated if they follow the noun. (Ex.: Her daughter is three years old.)

**With written forms of fractions and of the numbers 21 through 99.**

* Two-thirds of the students passed the test.
* Fifty-one percent of American marriages end in divorce.

**With prefixes such as “all-,” “ex-,” and “self-” and the suffix “-elect.”**

* Her ex-husband lives in Tuscaloosa now.
* He’s happy that he decided to become self-employed.
* The mayor-elect will be sworn in later this month.

**ASSIGNMENT**

**Exercise 4: The Hyphen**

Add hyphens where needed in the following sentences.

1. She was so self motivated that she was named to the all star team six times.
2. Twenty four tutors worked in the Writing Center; two thirds of them were women.
3. He grew up with the idea of a dog eat dog world and slowly developed an anything goes attitude toward life.