# PERSONAL LITERACY STATEMENT

**Weight: 5%**

**Due: January 16th**

**Word Count:** approximately 300-500 words

### **Why Am I Doing This?**

This narrative is your chance to let me know who you are as a writer, reader, and communicator. To help you start practicing connecting your ideas to what other thinkers have said – a way of engaging with evidence that is common across many types of academic writing – you will paraphrase and/or directly quote from [Anne Lamott’s famous essay “Shitty First Drafts”](https://wrd.as.uky.edu/sites/default/files/1-Shitty%20First%20Drafts.pdf) as you communicate what you want to say about writing.

Now, let’s be clear, for some of us, writing has been a traumatic experience. After all, literacy in English has been a tool for colonization. Therefore, please do not feel obligated to share experiences that may have caused you pain. That said, if you want to be honest and detailed, to the extent that you can be, please do so. The goal of this first assignment is to share information you think might be helpful to me as your instructor. What do you think I need to know about you so I can support your academic goals?

### **What Do I Do?**

You have some choices to make about how you want to approach this assignment. You can write a letter to writing (e.g. “Dear Writing: we haven’t always been friends…”). You can respond to Lamott either in agreement or disagreement (or somewhere in-between). You can discuss how you approach writing or describe your experience while including Lamott as support or as a contrast for these experiences (e.g. “I have to agree with Lamott that writing is mentally hard work. I remember when….”).

Here are a few prompts to help you get the ball rolling or to get you started writing your narrative:

* What do I need to learn about you and your writing so I can support you?
* What are your thoughts on writing? Is there writing you enjoy?
* What are your thoughts about reading?
* How do you take notes and learn from what you are reading?

You can talk about a significant reading, writing, or language learning event or track several. You might consider writing a letter to writing (“Dear Writing…”). You can also discuss teachers, family members, or friends who have influenced on your literacy. Maybe a video game or film or television show changed your view of reading and writing? Maybe you want to discuss something else altogether about your reading and writing - the choice is yours.

Regardless of the approach you choose to complete this assignment, the following elements need to be included to attain a B level grade:

* You need to make a claim about yourself as a writer, about writing in general, or about [Lamott’s essay.](https://wrd.as.uky.edu/sites/default/files/1-Shitty%20First%20Drafts.pdf)
* You need to reference [Lamott’s essay](https://wrd.as.uky.edu/sites/default/files/1-Shitty%20First%20Drafts.pdf) at least once (either a paraphrase or a direct quotation).
* You need to cite [Lamott’s essay](https://wrd.as.uky.edu/sites/default/files/1-Shitty%20First%20Drafts.pdf) (and any other sources you use) with in-text citations and include a bibliography. You can use any standard documentation style, such as MLA, APA, or Chicago. Guidelines can be found on the library’s [Citation Help page](https://www.uvic.ca/library/help/citation/index.php).
* You need to support claims you make with evidence.
* I need to be able to easily understand your writing.
* You need to format your paper in 12-point font and double-space your text.

Do more than expected and your grade will be higher; do less and it will be lower. Please see the table below for more detail.

One more note: **You may not under any circumstances use Generative AI (GenAI) to complete this assignment**. There is no competent GenAI application (including ChatGPT) that can write complex documents (like any academic assignment) for you.

### How Will You Be Graded?

Your grade will likely be spread across more than one criterion, which will determine where you land on the percentage scale. For example, if I highlight most of the criteria in the B-level grade and one A-level criterion, then you will receive a B+.

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| **Criteria** | **A level** | **B level** | **C level** | **D or F level** |
| **Citational Practice** | Paraphrase/direct quotation included and follows standard academic practice. | Paraphrase/direct quotation included and nears standard academic practice. (May contain incorrect use of punctuation with a direct quotation; paraphrase may be a little inaccurate.) | Paraphrase/direct quotation included, but there may be difficulties with paraphrasing effectively or the quote might be “dumped” in (without introduction). | Either paraphrase or direct quotation is missing or is not identifiable. Both missing means you can’t pass this criterion. Not to worry – if you are struggling, we will chat about options. |
| **Claim/Purpose** | The claim is not only clear but is well-explained and specific. Enough context is provided for the reader to follow along easily (“easily” meaning the reader can read with ease). | The claim is clear and has enough explanation and context that the reader understands what you want to say. The claim might be broad (e.g. “writing is hard”), but there is enough explanation to make the claim relevant to your purpose. | The claim can be identified with effort. (Maybe there isn’t enough explanation or context for the reader to follow along. Perhaps there is too much context and explanation.) The claim might be so broad that there is no proving the point (e.g. “writing is hard and everyone knows it”). | The claim is not identifiable. |
| **Evidence-Based Reasoning** | Almost all (if not all) assertions are supported by evidence. Citations are included, and the source is easily found in the bibliography. The student has control over sources. | Most assertions are supported. There may be one or two instances where you needed to offer additional evidence or use a source in a different way. You might not have complete control over the source (e.g. one instance of an unnecessary direct quotation). | You seem to have trouble presenting evidence and especially with controlling material from sources. Lack of control can manifest as not knowing when a source is needed or how to use it effectively. For example, sometimes an anecdote works well; sometimes a scholarly work is needed for support. | You are struggling to control evidence or sources. There is either a lack of sources or too many. Perhaps the sources aren’t relevant, or I can’t find the sources.  If there is persistent source misuse, you will need to meet with me so I can provide options and support. |
| **Writing** | There are few, if any, errors in syntax and grammar that impede reading. (Note: perfection is not expected or necessary.) | There are a few errors that make reading harder than it needs to be, but not enough to make a reader wonder what you mean. | The meaning is not clear in a few sentences. At times, the reader has to work hard to figure out what is being communicated. | The meaning is not clear in the majority of sentences.  The severity of the situation may lead me to reach out to you to offer options for support. |