**Project Two: Reading Spaces Photo Essay**

ENGL1105 | Fall 2024 | Dr. Greene

A room with vinyl records and books

Description automatically generated

Fig. 1: “a photograph in sepia tone of a room full of books, DVDs, records, and other media products” prompt. *Adobe Firefly*, 11 July 2024 version, Adobe, 2023, <https://firefly.adobe.com/public/t2i?id=urn%3Aaaid%3Asc%3AUS%3A2f71d26e-2f74-4504-9747-2af3b4ea9a0f&ff_channel=shared_link&ff_source=Text2Image>.

**Important Dates:**

**Fri., Oct. 18 by 11:59 pm:** 750-word and 3 photographs with captions draft for Dr. Greene’s comments due on Canvas.

**Mon., Oct. 21 by start of class:** 750-word and 3 photographs with captions Peer Review Draft due on Canvas.

**Fri., Nov. 8 by 11:59 pm:** 1500-2000-word and 6 photographs with captionsFinal Draft of photo essay

**Requirements:**

1. 1500-2000 words, not including photograph captions
2. At least 6 “quality” photographs with 1-3 sentence captions (no more than 10 images)
   1. At least 2 establishing shots to set up the space and objects within it
   2. At least 2 close up shots to provide detail
   3. At least 2 medium shots to provide context
   4. One image can be AI generated if you choose
3. Photo essay conventions
4. Engaging, creative title
5. Analytical thesis statement
6. Description and analysis of evidence
7. AI-acknowledgement statement (Available on Canvas)

**Invention Portfolio Checklist:**

(Note: Dates may change as we progress through the project.)

1. Week Six Invention Writing due by 11:59 pm on Wed., Oct. 2.
2. Week Seven Invention Writing due by 11:59 pm on Wed., Oct. 11.
3. Week Eight Invention Writing due by 11:59 pm on Fri., Oct. 18.
4. Week Nine Invention Writing due by 11:59 pm on Wed., Oct. 23.
5. Week Ten Invention Writing due by 11:59 pm on Wed., Oct. 30.

**Learning Objectives:**

* Understanding the ways environments, words, sounds, and images function rhetorically (rhetorical knowledge)
* Developing a stronger use of text, image, and other “writings” to generate ideas and compose texts (writing process)
* Understanding the Photo essay genre (genre conventions)
* Understanding the ways ideas and information is communicated in various manners (multimodal transformation)
* Understanding the ways writers can “transform” information into various modes (multimodal transformation)
* Assessing the processes and ideas of the project (reflective practice)

**Guidelines:**

The purpose and goal of the second project in ENGL1105 is to begin to understand how the world around us speaks and functions rhetorically. Basically, the project allows you to explore how your “reading” habits within a given space communicate meaning—about the space, about knowledge, about entertainment, about emotions, and, most importantly, about YOU. Like Project One, you will need to grapple with the definition of the concept “reading.” What constitutes “reading” to you, your society, your culture, etc.? Can reading be more than looking at words on a page? Can we “read” a movie, a video on TikTok, or a song on Spotify? Can we “read the room” and the people/things in it? This project will develop your skills in critical analysis of multimodal communications, and this project will allow you to use images and other modes of communication to extend the writing’s meanings. Each of these skills you already have from posting on social media and other online platforms; hopefully this will be a fun project to compose.

The genre you will work within is the photo essay, and the purpose of the photo essay is to describe and analyze the “reading” that takes place within a chosen environment. You should choose a meaningful place on or off campus where you “read.” From your dorm room to the library to the drill field to the duck pond to a coffee shop to McAfee Knob, the spots for participating in the act of reading are endless, so choose a spot that is important to you.

In the first part of this project, you will explore that space by spending time there, gathering visual evidence, and describing it fully. After “reading” the environment and annotating it, you should gather things you “read” in that space. If you can, try to find as many physical objects as possible, but digital objects will work too. Once you have gathered all your reading materials, take photographs of them within the space and write a 1-3 sentence captions that describes each image and its role in your “reading space.” Finally, you will compile your evidence into a photo essay that supports a thesis about the meaning of “reading” and the importance of your “space” to “reading” well for an audience of peers. You must determine how the essay will present the ideas clearly and effectively to this audience. Will it be structured “traditionally” with an introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion? Will it take a more “creative” form, but still allow the reader to easily understand the ideas and the evidence’s relevance to them? This is a chance for you to play and have fun will fostering a deeper understanding of not only the core learning outcomes for our class but also useful skills in 21st century communication.

We will use generative AI—Microsoft Copilot—to assist in the invention, revision, and editing stages of the writing process. You can choose to engage with the technology as much or as little as you’d like, and you will not receive lower grades if you choose not to use generative AI in any parts of the essay. Regardless, I want to make clear that the goals of the project are to develop YOUR writing and thinking skills, not AI’s. The section below provides clear guidelines for the assessment of this project, including criteria for the use/misuse of generative AI.

**Assessment Criteria:[[1]](#footnote-1)**

* **Weekly Draft Materials (40%):** Part of the learning process is your ability to develop and refine your ideas over time. If the drafts are solely AI-generated without further development, it shows a lack of engagement in the writing process.
* **Description and Analysis of Evidence (20%):** The focus on developing stronger critical reading skills is a hallmark of this project, revealing the need to deeply engage with the topic on an individual level. While generative-AI can produce useful “readings,” it lacks the sophistication necessary to understand many of the nuances withing texts. Thus, generative-AI can be a starting point for gathering a baseline understanding, but moving beyond the surface-level ideas of AI-generated text is necessary to achieve deeper-levels of critical thinking and analytical insight.
* **Thesis Sophistication (10%):** Developing and supporting a thesis statement, whether explicit or implied, is a main learning goal, and it should be the backbone for your analysis. Generative-AI can assist you in refining the main claim of your analysis; however, relying on solely its output as the controlling idea of your analysis shows a lack of critical thinking.
* **Organization and Development (5%):** The organization and development of the essay should reflect your ability to structure your thoughts and arguments. If there is no development beyond what AI provides, it indicates a lack of critical thinking and personal input.
* **Language Sophistication (5%):** While AI can produce grammatically correct text, you are expected to understand and apply these rules yourself. Over-reliance on AI suggests you have not mastered these skills.
* **Originality and Personal Contributions (20%):** This criterion ensures that you are actively engaging with the material and contributing your own voice and perspective, which is essential for a photo essay.

The emphasis on “Weekly Draft Materials,” “Description and Analysis of Evidence,” “Originality and Personal Contributions,” and “Thesis Sophistication” in the rubric underscores the importance of the writing process and personal engagement with the topic. Essays that rely heavily on AI-generated text without further development by you would not demonstrate the required level of critical reading and thinking or skill development, which are key objectives of the assignment. Therefore, such essays would receive a failing score. The rubric encourages you to use AI as a tool for assistance, not as a replacement for your own work.

| **Criteria** | **Points** | **Excellent** | **Good** | **AI-level** | **Below AI-level** | **No Content** |
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| **Weekly Draft Materials** | 4 | All drafts are complete, thoughtful, and show significant progress and refinement over time. Generative AI is used during invention stages and expanded on significantly, making the drafts highly reflective of student thinking. | Most drafts are complete and show some progress and refinement. Generative AI is used during invention stages and expanded on appropriately, but student could make drafts more their own. | Drafts are complete but show minimal progress and refinement. Reflects the level of a generative AI. | Few drafts are complete and show little to no progress or refinement. Worse than a generative AI. | No drafts submitted. |
| **Description and Analysis of Evidence** | 2 | Provides a detailed and insightful description and analysis of the space and the reading done in that space. Generative AI is used during invention stages and expanded on significantly, making the drafts highly reflective of student thinking. | Provides a clear description and analysis of the space and the reading done in that space but may lack some detail or insight. Generative AI is used during invention stages and expanded on appropriately, but student could make drafts more their own. | Provides a basic description and analysis of the space and the reading done in that space but lacks detail and insight. Reflects the level of a generative AI. | Provides a vague or incomplete description and analysis of the space and the reading done in that space. Worse than a generative AI. | No description or analysis provided. |
| **Thesis Sophistication** | 1 | Thesis is clear, sophisticated, and presents an original argument. Generative AI is used during invention stages and expanded on significantly, making the drafts highly reflective of student thinking. | Thesis is clear and presents an argument but lacks sophistication or originality. Generative AI is used during invention stages and expanded on appropriately, but student could make drafts more their own. | Thesis is present but may be unclear or present a weak argument. Reflects the level of a generative AI. | Thesis is unclear or presents a weak or no argument. Worse than a generative AI. | No thesis provided. |
| **Organization and Development** | .5 | Essay is well-organized and ideas are fully developed and supported. Generative AI is used during invention stages and expanded on significantly, making the drafts highly reflective of student thinking. | Essay is mostly organized, and most ideas are developed and supported. Generative AI is used during invention stages and expanded on appropriately, but student could make drafts more their own. | Essay is disorganized or ideas are underdeveloped. Reflects the level of a generative AI. | Essay is disorganized and ideas are underdeveloped. Worse than a generative AI. | No organization or development. |
| **Language Sophistication** | .5 | Language is sophisticated and appropriate for a college-level audience. Generative AI is used during invention stages and expanded on significantly, making the drafts highly reflective of student thinking. | Language is mostly appropriate for a college-level audience but may lack sophistication. Generative AI is used during invention stages and expanded on appropriately, but student could make drafts more their own. | Language is simplistic or inappropriate. Reflects the level of a generative AI. | Language is simplistic and inappropriate. Worse than a generative AI. | Inappropriate language or no content. |
| **Originality and Personal Contributions** | 2 | Essay is highly original and includes personal insights. Generative AI is used during invention stages and expanded on significantly, making the drafts highly reflective of student thinking. | Essay is somewhat original and includes some personal insights. Generative AI is used during invention stages and expanded on appropriately, but student could make drafts more their own. | Essay lacks originality or personal insights. Reflects the level of a generative AI. | Essay lacks originality and personal insights. Worse than a generative AI. | No originality or personal insights. |

1. ##### Microsoft Copilot was used to assist in generating this section. The following prompt was used to develop the rubric: Design a rubric for a photo essay in a freshman composition college writing course. Students need to describe and analyze a space and the reading they do in that space. The assignment is worth 10 points. The top row of the rubric should have the following criteria: Criteria, Weight, Excellent, Good, AI-level, Below AI-level, No Content. The scoring criteria should be as follows and have the following weight: Weekly Draft Materials (most weight), Description and Analysis of Evidence (second most weight), Thesis Sophistication (third most weight), Organization and Development (fourth most weight), Language Sophistication (fourth most weight), Originality and Personal Contributions (fourth most weight). Describe each grading criteria and the threshold for achieving each score. In those descriptions account for the use of generative-AI in the invention stage of the assignment.

   [↑](#footnote-ref-1)