

Essay One: Encomium / Vituperation / Apologia

- **Due date #1: Jan 28:** Draft Workshop on Jan 28
 - Bring 2 copies. Must be a finished draft!
 - *Skipping the draft workshop = a lowered grade on revised draft.*
- **Due date #2: Feb 4:** Revised draft, to be graded
- **Length:** 750-1,000 words
- **Value:** 10% of final grade
- **Format:** MLA Style

Details

For this assignment, you will praise (in an **encomium**) or condemn (in a **vituperation**) someone or something. Whatever your subject, your purpose will be to persuade other people that it (or he or she) is worthy of praise or condemnation. Your paper should not merely list in a general way your subject's acts, achievements, or positive attributes. Remember, you are arguing: **details and evidence will be most persuasive**. Gather details and develop your evidence, which you will organize into paragraph supporting particular assertions.

Many people, actions, ideas, and creations are worthy of praise or condemnation. However, in order to persuade your audience, **you must show that your subject is truly exceptional, not just good or bad**. Your argument need not be unqualified, however. Consider objections your audience might raise: your paper may be more persuasive if you include a concession about a failure or weakness of your subject (if you are praising) or a success or strength (if you are condemning). Then you need to demonstrate that the positives far outweigh the negatives (if praising), or that the negatives far outweigh the positives (if condemning). Too much praise or condemnation can make your subject unbelievable, and, as a result, you as the writer will seem untrustworthy.

As an alternative version of this assignment, you can try to rehabilitate the reputation of someone or something you think is inadequately appreciated or unfairly maligned. You will produce an **apologia** for your subject, refuting or explaining away the negatives and offering reasons for praise and perhaps qualified admiration instead. The audience for an apologia will necessarily be people inclined to disagree with you, but your goal for this paper is the same as an encomium: to garner praise for your subject.

MLA Format

Be sure to format your paper according to MLA guidelines: 1-inch margins, the font Times New Roman, 12-point type, double spaced text, indented first lines for every paragraph. In the upper lefthand corner of your first page, type your name, my name, the name of the course, and the date of the draft. In the header of each page, in the upper righthand corner, include your last name and the page number. If you cite any sources, be sure to use effective signal phrases and correct parenthetical citations. If necessary, include a correctly formatted Works Cited page.