Writing in ENG101

W-1 WRITING Contexts
W-2 Academic Contexts
Elements of Writing Contexts
(The Little Seagull W-1): Refer to your notes.

• **Purpose**: what are some possible purposes for a piece of writing?
• **Audience**: who is your audience in Eng101?
• **Genre**: define the word *genre*.
• **Topic**: if your topic is assigned, what could the verbs in the assignment ask you to do?
• **Stance and tone**: define the word *stance*.
• **Media/Design**: what font should you use in Eng101? What size margins?
Genres

There are many writing contexts, which determine the genre we use:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTEXT</th>
<th>GENRE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing to friends</td>
<td>Letter, text, email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace</td>
<td>Performance evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology class</td>
<td>Lab log</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative writing class</td>
<td>Poem, short story, novel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>Article, editorial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eng101</td>
<td>Expository essay</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Process and Product in Academic Writing

The Academic Writing Process: Read the assigned text(s) → Understand the text(s) → Analyze the text(s) → Write an essay about the text(s)

The product is a particular type of essay: an EXPOSITORY ESSAY
Expository Essays in ENG 101

According to the Purdue Owl website: “The expository essay is a genre of essay that requires the student to investigate an idea, evaluate evidence, expound on the idea, and set forth an argument concerning that idea in a clear and concise manner. This can be accomplished through comparison and contrast, definition, example, the analysis of cause and effect, etc.”

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/685/02/
Elements of
Academic Contexts

1. Evidence that you’ve carefully considered the subject.
2. A clear, appropriately qualified thesis
3. A response to what others have said
4. Good reasons supported by evidence
5. Acknowledgement of multiple perspectives
6. Carefully documented sources
7. A confidant, authoritative stance
8. An indication of why your topic matters
9. Careful attention to correctness
2. A clear, appropriately qualified thesis

- In academic writing, you state your central idea as clearly as possible in a THESIS STATEMENT.
- The thesis statement is usually at the end of the INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH.
- QUALIFY your thesis statement: this means that you show there could be more than one perspective (opinion) on an issue.
Write a specific thesis.

• State your **central idea** “in a nutshell”: 
  “Gasoline prices fluctuate for several reasons.”

• Make your thesis more *specific* by asking questions.

  Why do they fluctuate? What are the reasons?

  “Gasoline prices fluctuate because of production processes, consumer demand, international politics, and companies policies.”
Write a qualified thesis.

• **Unqualified thesis:** “Gasoline prices fluctuate because of production processes, consumer demand, international politics, and companies policies.”

• **Qualified thesis:** “Gasoline prices **very likely** fluctuate because of production processes, consumer demand, international politics, and companies policies.”
Why is the second thesis more qualified?

- **Unqualified thesis:** “Giving school age children computers hurts their academic performance.”

- **Qualified thesis:** “Although many educational experts support giving children access to computers in schools, there is increasing evidence that this could be hurting their academic performance.”
3. A response to what others have said

... the underlying structure of effective academic writing -- and of responsible public discourse -- resides not just in stating our own ideas, but in listening closely to others around us, summarizing their views in a way that they will recognize, and responding with our own ideas in kind. (Graff and Birkenstein 3)**

** They Say, I Say by Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein
Respond to the articles you read

• In ENG101, your essays will be a response to what other people have written in an article or essay.

• You will QUOTE, PARAPHRASE, AND SUMMARIZE their ideas.

• You will respond to their ideas by AGREEING, DISAGREEING, OR BOTH.
4. Good reasons supported by evidence

- In your ESSAY, you take a position in response to another writer’s ideas.
- You state your position in your THESIS (INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH).
- You support your thesis with REASONS and EVIDENCE in the BODY PARAGRAPHS.
- Imagine that you are a lawyer defending a client in a courtroom. You must convince the judge and jury to agree with your position.
5. Acknowledgement of multiple perspectives

• All of your essays will discuss the perspectives of several authors: these are your SOURCES.
• You will have at least two perspectives to discuss, and usually three.
• In Essay One, for example, you will discuss Daniel Gilbert’s perspective on happiness.
• You will also present YOUR perspective in response to Gilbert.
In other words, you, the essay writer, stage a conversation in your essay.

One author’s perspective       Another author’s perspective       Your perspective
The other elements of academic writing

• Evidence that you’ve carefully considered the subject.
• Carefully documented sources: quotation marks, author names, page numbers. Use MLA style.
• A confidant, authoritative stance: write with confidence about your position.
• An indication of why your topic matters: we often explain this in the introductory paragraph.
• Careful attention to correctness: go the Learning Center or eTutoring for help.