Spring 2008: WRTG 3020
Technology in American Culture
T/R, 3:30-4:45 (090), MUEN 114
T/R, 5:00-6:15 (092), HLMS 104
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Important note: No unsolicited attachments (copy and paste texts; use double spacing between single-spaced paragraphs)

Foreword

Let us begin with the latest department discussion about the 3020 curriculum:

Open to Juniors and Seniors in the College of Arts and Sciences, WRTG-3020 (Topics in Writing) sharpens critical thinking and critical writing skills. The course focuses on rhetorical forms students will use in academia, in the workplace, and in the civic domain, across a full spectrum of persuasive strategies, including analysis and argument. This course reinforces skills taught in first-year writing classes and builds on them, with a greater emphasis on the situational quality of writing or upon rhetorical context: the relationship between writer, reader, subject, and purpose in the formation of a text.

Topics in Writing courses focus upon specific subjects, but these courses are not intended to supplement one's knowledge in a major. Rather, the topic serves as a means to an end—to create a knowledgeable audience and a context for discussion and writing: a discourse community. In a workshop setting, students engage in a dialogue with their audience, working out meaningful theses, testing rhetorical strategies, responding to objections and potential objections, and revising (and revising, and revising!) to meet the needs of their readers. Instructors of 3020 courses demand a high level of student participation and emphasize each student's role as both writer and as audience: observant, inquisitive readers of the writings of others. Students should leave a 3020 class as more sophisticated writers who understand that the rhetorical situation--rather than a rule book--will invite unique responses based upon their particular goals. This experience should help them recognize writing as a form of personal engagement, demanding an awareness of the inherent power of language and its ability to bring about change.

To that end, WRTG 3020 has established goals within four key areas: Critical Thinking and its Written Application; The Writing Process; Rhetorical Situation; and Mechanics and Style.

Critical Thinking and Its Written Application

* See writing as a form of personal engagement, demanding an awareness of the inherent power of language and its ability to bring about change.
* Pose and shape a question at issue.
* Locate and use resources when necessary to exploring a line of inquiry.
* Evaluate information sources for credibility, validity, timeliness, and relevance.
* Draw inferences from a body of evidence.
* Distinguish description from analysis and argument.
* Distinguish flawed from sound reasoning, and be able to respond to and challenge claims.
* Recognize a thesis, and understand the organic relationship between thesis and support in an essay.
* As writers, structure and develop points of argument in a coherent order to build a case; as readers, recognize this structure and development within texts.
* Critique one's own works in progress and those of others.
* Recognize that academic and public writing is dialogic, addresses an audience, and anticipates the thinking, the questions, and the possible objections of readers.

The Writing Process

* Understand writing as an ongoing process that requires multiple drafts and various strategies for developing, revising and editing texts.
* Understand that revision is informed by critical dialogue.
* See the critical analysis of others' work as relevant to one's own writing.

Rhetorical Situation
Exercise rhetorical skills: frame issues, define and defend theses, invent and arrange appeals, answer counterarguments, and contextualize conclusion.

Value writing as a collaborative dialogue between authors and audiences, critics, and colleagues.

Make decisions about form, argumentation, and style from the expectations of different audiences.

Recognize that a voice or style appropriate to one discipline or rhetorical context might be less appropriate for another.

Develop "topic"-specific language that is appropriate for the defined audience while also intelligible to a non-expert audience.

Mechanics and Style

Convey meaning through concise, precise, highly readable language.

Apply the basics of grammar, sentence-structure, and other mechanics integral to analytical and persuasive writing.

Develop skills in proofreading.

Use voice, style and diction appropriate to the discipline or rhetorical context.

Use paragraph structure and transitional devices to aid the reader in following even a complex train of thought.

Now to the specifics of this course. This section of WRTG 3020 will trace the historical shift over the last two centuries in how Americans perceive technology. This shift has been nothing short of radical, and we will look to the social, political, theoretical, and literary dimensions at issue in America's transformation from a largely craft culture to our current Information Age. We will write a series of short exercises followed by three longer essays (4-6 pages). These longer essays will emphasize deductive reasoning, the sum moving us toward true argumentation. The first will center on categorical polemics, the second on causal analysis, and the third on thematic response. Regardless of specifics, the course’s overall purpose is that students leave the semester better able to articulate, distribute, and substantiate opinions.

In keeping with the course's role in CU's curriculum, our topic will provide only the occasion for students to continue developing their writing skills; assignments will include succinct essays and three sustained arguments. In the process, the engine running this course is defined in the Liberal Arts core tradition of critical thinking and literacy. Through hearing, speaking, reading, and writing, students will have the opportunity to develop these two facilities that define, I would argue, nothing less than one’s personal and cultural identities. In all, students should heed the words of Alexander Pope, whose words are the truest ever inked on education:

A little learning is a dangerous thing;
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring.
There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,
And drinking largely sobers us again.

In the spirit of Pope, I demand only three overriding, sequential qualities in students whenever they enter my classroom: curiosity, hard work, and honesty. Only through these qualities, I believe, might one ever achieve true enthusiasm.

Required Texts

Smith and Clancey, Major Problems in the History of American Technology
ISBN-10: 0-669-35472-4

A dictionary of your choice

A handbook of your choice. Special note: my experience is that many students will reason that, because we do not use a handbook in class, they can "get away with it" in not obtaining one and thereby benefit financially at the cost of whatever education. Then again, perhaps such students are a self-selected group and, so, would not use such a book, regardless of owning one. Indeed, as you will see repeatedly in this course, "competence is of a piece."

Supplies

Fine-point pens (blue ink)

A folder with two horizontal pockets (i.e., not a manilla folder, three-ring binder, etc.)

Notebook paper

RULES, PRINCIPLES, AND PROCEDURES: "Competence is of a piece"
1) Attendance. Attendance is presumed and may affect your overall grade. I do not distinguish between "excused" and "unexcused" absences. For this twice-weekly course, here's a breakdown of the barren policy. However, note that to be absent means you cannot participate (see grading breakdown).

1-4 absences (2 weeks): no change in overall grade
5 absences: no grade higher than a 3.0
6 absences: no grade higher than a 2.0
7 absences: automatic failure in course

Notes:
(1) Prearranged, university-recognized absences count toward your overall allotment of absences, but I shall not deduct should that total reach the point of lowering your grade. One proviso: in such cases, I will allow one "grace" absence beyond prearranged, university-recognized absence total.
(2) Two late entries to class equal one absence. If your absence total is thereby accounted between increments, your total will be rounded up (for instance, from 2.5 to 3 absences).
(3) An entry to class more than 10 minutes late will be counted as a full absence; likewise, leaving class early will be counted as a full absence (in that case, please advise me before class).
(4) Regardless of your attendance, you are responsible for all material covered in class. Practice the "buddy system"! Make sure to maintain a roster of at least three class contacts.
(5) Unless arranged prior to class, no make-up work will be allowed.
(6) Plan to get sick; do not "skip" arbitrarily. Overall, plan your absences and be on time. Should a situation beyond your control compromise your attendance, you might consider other grading options (that is, an Incomplete).
(7) The upshot? Believe nothing else, but believe this universal, absolute truth: "Nullum Gratuitum Prandium."

2) Complaints. Before you do anything, please consult with me should you have a question, comment, or other consideration about the class content or my conduct/teaching. If we can reach no amicable solution, then I shall work for you in discussing the matter with the appropriate authorities.

3) Plagiarism. Consult with me or the appropriate bibliographic guides should you have any questions about the procedures of documentation or the penalties for infractions of academic dishonesty. Any infractions will result in sanctions that include (but are not limited to) peremptory failure for the course. See, as well, honor code information at http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/.

4) Institutional.

* A writing class offers a special opportunity to discuss work in progress in a supportive yet critically demanding "workshop" environment. As you develop drafts, you should bear in mind that you are "going public" with your work. This act carries with it an obligation for civil discussion and for understanding the concerns of your audience and their interests in your point of view.

* Unless you prefer otherwise, I might use your writing for classroom discussion.

* Do not neglect the Information Literacy and Writing Center (Library E303) for extra help with writing skills.

* Last day to drop. Should the occasion arise, students are responsible for dropping themselves from the course and verifying the process.

* I may not report or discuss grades by phone or e-mail. Should, at any time during the semester, you want to know how you are doing in the course, please see me during office hours.

* EMAIL. This class will use e-mail communication for messages from me, for general discussion, and at times for the circulation of drafts. Please check your university e-mail account (Colorado.edu) each day. If you use a non-university e-mail account (e.g., hotmail, msn, et al.), be sure to link it to the university e-mail account. Access to on-line library materials requires that you be identified as a university user. For assistance on technical computing matters, contact 735-HELP for the Information Technology Help Line.

* DISABILITIES. If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities (303-492-8671, Willard 322, www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices).
* ENGLISH AS FOREIGN LANGUAGE. If you speak English as a second language, then you need to contact me before the third class meeting so that I can better assist you in the course, advise you about special ESL courses, and/or refer you to appropriate services on campus.

* RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES. Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. See me in advance of such observances. Also, see full details at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html

* BEHAVIOR. Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Students who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Faculty have the professional responsibility to treat all students with understanding, dignity and respect, to guide classroom discussion and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which they and their students express opinions. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student’s legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. See polices at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html and at http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code

* HONOR CODE. All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-725-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html and at http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/

* DISCRIMINATION AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT. The University of Colorado at Boulder policy on Discrimination and Harassment (http://www.colorado.edu/policies/discrimination.html), the University of Colorado policy on Sexual Harassment and the University of Colorado policy on Amorous Relationships applies to all students, staff and faculty. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been the subject of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at http://www.colorado.edu/odh

(5) Preparation and Participation.

* Turn off and stow all cellular phones and laptop computers. Yes, I’m "old school" all the way.

* Driven by the method of Sir Francis Bacon, who wrote that "Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, writing an exact man,” you should prepare to discuss, extemporaneously, the who, what, where, and when of any assigned text (the full measure of the how and why are the job of the class). Be certain to look up any word that you do not know. As a result, writing in the margins ("glossing") of your texts is a skill that will truly distinguish you in the classroom--and beyond.

Beyond glossing the readings, be prepared to answer the following questions for each assigned text:
(1) Why does/does not the text "fit" the syllabus?
(2) What is the author's implicit or explicit thesis?
(3) What is the author's organizational strategy?
(4) How does the author's style complement substance?

For each class session, your preparation and voluntary, informed participation include having your own copy of any texts (no sharing) and the entire reading assignment prepared (not almost all of it). Be ready with notebook paper and pen, and be attentive. Remember: Proper Preparation Prevents Poor Performance (PPPPP). Put another way, "When you fail to plan, you should plan to fail."
(6) Grading. Grades are more and less complicated than they might seem. Should you have any questions—at any time—please consult with me in my office (you might ask, “Should the course end today, what would be my grade?”).

On a philosophical basis, I evaluate (both for exercises and overall grades) in the spirit of William F. Irmscher's *Teaching Expository Writing*, here adapted:

Demonstrates unusual competence--A
Suggests unusual competence--B
Demonstrates competence--C
Suggests unusual incompetence--D
Demonstrates unusual incompetence--F

Overall, your grade in the course will be a semester grade, not a direct response to any given assignment. Regardless, here is a rough breakdown:

* "Academic Citizenship": attendance; preparation; language skills qu-est; informed and voluntary in-class participation: 10% or more—a very important factor.
  * Unit 1: 0%
  * Unit 2: 30%
  * Unit 3: 30%
  * Unit 4: 30%

Important Note: To qualify for an overall grade higher than a 0.0, you must complete all assignments to within one letter grade of achievement to your final grade. For instance, you may leave "un-revisi defamation" (more on that procedure in class) a C on the categorical polemics exercise, but you cannot earn better than a B for the course. For all grades (including longer exercise grades and overall grades in the course), here is a breakdown on a scale of 100:

4.0 (A): 95
3.7: 90
3.3: 85
3.0 (B): 80
2.7: 75
2.3: 70
2.0 (C): 65
1.7: 60
1.3: 55
1.0 (D): 50
0.7: 45
0.0 (F): 40 and below

(8) A Tentative Schedule
* Subject to change—especially the assignment prompts—so watch for announcements.
* For all workshops, bring a printed copy of draft/requested materials to class.
* Assignment Prompt = AP
* MP = Major Problems
* Note that an absence at a workshop will count against you in the larger assignment's final grade.

UNIT #1: LANGUAGE AND RHETORIC
WEEK ONE
January 15
* Course introduction
* Occasion: academic, professional, and civic writing
  * Ideology
  * Literacy versus fluency
  * Competence
* “Just Between You and I” (handout)
January 17
* Rules and principles
* Denotation and connotation
WEEK TWO
January 22
* Paragraphing ("claim-data-warrant" / introduction-evidence-commentary: the "paragraph template")
* Ethos, Logos, and Pathos:
  * "The Rhetorical Triangle" (author, subject, and audience surrounding text)
* Sentence patterns (simple; complex--periodic, loose; compound; etc.)
* Sentence linking ("monkeys in a barrel")
* Jack London, "To Build a Fire" (print it from the web: http://london.sonoma.edu/Writings/LostFace/fire.html)

January 24
* MLA form and philosophy
* "Incorporation" versus documentation
* Logical distribution ("distribution of ideas")
* "The Big Five Questions" for successful response to assignments
* Exercise 1B due

UNIT #2: GENRE (CATEGORY)
WEEK THREE
January 29
* Unit introduction
* Deduction and induction in categorical logic
* Syllogisms / enthymemes

January 31
* TBA

WEEK FOUR
February 5
* Basic structure, emphasizing exordium and peroration
* Topic Sentences
* Grading criteria: "Grading Rubric," a.k.a "Exercise Covenant"
* Strategies/rationales for arrangement (organizational strategies: "patterns of development"): spacial, creative, importance, process, topical (tied to the "text" at issue), chronological, et al.
* MP: Marx, "The Invention of 'Technology'" (2-7)
* Logical fallacies (including the so-called intentional and affective fallacies)

February 7
* MP, Chapter 6 ("Steam, Space, and a New World Order"), all primary documents (192-202)
* "Pieces of Evidence" (handout)

WEEK FIVE
February 12
* Read introductions aloud

February 14
* Workshop
* "Pieces of Evidence" due

WEEK SIX
February 19
* Workshop
* "The War Against Grammar" (handout)

February 21
* Exercise #2 due
* Language Skills Qu-est

WEEK SEVEN
February 26
* Revisiting explained
February 28
* Office Hour Festival

UNIT #3: CONTEXT
WEEK EIGHT
March 4
* Unit introduction
March 6
* MP: Winner, "Do Artifacts Have Politics?" (7-13)
* MP, MacKenzie, "The Social Shaping of Technology" (13-15)

WEEK NINE
March 11
* MP, Chapter 7 ("Telephony"), all primary documents (234-46)
March 13
* MP, "Watson, I Need You" (247-55)

WEEK TEN
March 18
* Read introductions aloud
* "Pieces of Evidence" due
March 20
* Workshop

WEEK ELEVEN
MARCH 24-28: SPRING BREAK

WEEK TWELVE
April 1
* Workshop

UNIT #4: THEME
April 3
* Exercise # 3 due
* Unit introduction

WEEK THIRTEEN
April 8
* MP, Pursell, "Masculinity and Technology" (17-21)
April 10
* MP, Latour, "The Proliferation of Hybrids" (21-25)

WEEK FOURTEEN
April 15
* MP, Chapter 8 ("Inventing Efficiency"), all primary documents (269-89)
April 17
* MP, Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto" (496-502)
* MP, "Computer Lib" (43-86)

WEEK FIFTEEN
April 22
* Read introductions aloud
* "Pieces of Evidence" due
April 24
* Workshop

WEEK SIXTEEN
April 29
* Workshop
May 1
* "Workshop on workshops"
* Exercise #4 due
ASSIGNMENT PROMPTS: MORE DETAILS TBA
"A man may write at any time if he will set himself doggedly to it."
- Thomas Boswell, Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides

UNIT #1: LANGUAGE AND RHETORIC

Exercise #1A: one paragraph (no more than seven sentences).
In one paragraph, explain what you hope to achieve in this course. Consider, if you wish, content from the syllabus, identifying whether any aspect(s) of it might be of special concern. For this and all assignments, use Courier 12 font and overall MLA format (header, etc.).

Exercise #1B: one paragraph (no more than seven sentences).
Identify a word from the realm of science and technology. Consider its (1) etymology and then (2) denotation. Use the Oxford English Dictionary for help. After an introductory sentence ("Scientists use the word XX to describe the process of yyy"), use the "paragraph template": topic sentence, introduction of first piece of evidence, first piece of evidence, commentary, transition/introduction of second piece of evidence, second piece of evidence, commentary.

Notes and Tips:
* Words cited as words (as well as foreign words and phrases) are underlined (no italics in MLA).
* Insert bracketed identification of rhetorical elements (more details TBA).

UNIT #2: GENRE (CATEGORY)
"You can't wait for inspiration. You have to go after it with a club."
- Jack London

Exercise #2. 4-5 pages (no fewer than 4 body paragraphs). At least 4 sources. Compare across a literary category (i.e., genre) polemical approaches to the same rhetorical occasion. Distribute aspects of the genre through your line of thought, and use topic-by-topic arrangement (not side-after-side). In identifying your topics, ask yourself, "Does the aspect of the genre necessarily distinguish between the sides (i.e., delimiting terms)?" In your conclusion, you might consider the range within the genre because, after all, a range should indeed be at issue.

Example
Thesis: In the genre of Volkswagen repair manuals, John Muir's How to Keep Your Volkswagen Alive: A Manual of Step by Step Procedures for the Compleat Idiot (sic) and Robert Bentley Official Service Manuals [the exemplifying cases] represent the range from Aristotelian to the Platonic [the delimiting terms].
Distributive question for topics that compose the line of thought: What elements are essential to the genre of (Volkswagen) repair manuals?
Distributed topics (not in order):
(1) physical presentation
(2) language
(3) visual elements
(4) philosophy

Notes and Tips

Introduction/Formulation
* In your introduction/thesis, do not list the topics from your line of thought.
* Beware the "either/or" fallacy (i.e., false polemic).
* Use adjectives (not nouns) for delimiting terms. Steer clear of adjectives that have chronological implications (e.g., "old school" versus "new school"). As well, note that delimiting terms should not be substantively connected to either your category or your exemplary cases.

Line of Thought
* The "gut check" question for a topic: Does the topic necessarily separate the two sides of a category?
* Keep topics (which you should be able to identify in a word or phrase) focused solely on distributing the category, so do not mention delimiting terms or exemplary cases in topic sentences.
* Topic sentences should not have a sense of issue. Remember: you job is to distribute the category.
UNIT #3: CONTEXT

“The time to begin writing an article is when you have finished it to your satisfaction. By that time you begin to clearly & logically perceive what it is that you really want to say.”
- Mark Twain

Exercise #3. 4-5 pages (no fewer than 4 body paragraphs). Audience: academic. At least 4 sources. The best responses (A- and B-level) will mix on-line and print publications, primary and secondary sources. Consider the popular response in history to an item of technology that changed the way people perceived their world. At issue, then, will be the culture and/or market contemporary to the item--and why or how a given technology answered those terms. The result will be moments of our being "amazed--also not surprised."

Example

Thesis: The opening of the Brooklyn Bridge in 1883 involved a panic that the structure was falling, and twelve people were killed while another forty were injured in the rush to leave the structure. This response was not surprising, though, given the popular understanding of bridge-building technology at the time.

Distributive question for topics that compose the line of thought: What were the essential elements constituting bridge-building technology at the time?

Distributed topics (not in order):
(1) solidity
(2) questions about steel
(3) questions about verticality
(4) tendency toward mysticism
Notes and Tips (plus those applicable from previous exercises)

* A possible start of contemporary history is to Google "timeline of American history" (or such). Here is one example: http://www.wsu.edu/~campbeld/amlit/timefram.html.
* No repeat "texts" within classes.
* In your introduction/thesis, do not list the topics from your line of thought.
* In your line of thought, distribute the context into topics ("points").
* Body paragraphs should have an even, nice balance between how the "text" (event) fits the context. As such, do not mention the "text" in the first half of each body paragraph (that is the time to explore some distributed point of the context). Only in the second half of each paragraph, move to the question of relevance to the "text."
* Use one piece of evidence for the contextual and one for the textual.
* Do not arrange your points (topics) in chronological order--a sure sign of plot summary.
* Remember: keep all paragraphs about 2/3 to 3/4 of a page in length. Punctuality is the key!

UNIT #4: THEME

"Three minutes thought would suffice to find this out, but thought is irksome and three minutes is a long time."
- A. E. Houseman, Preface, Juvenalis Sature

Exercise #4. 4-5 pages (no fewer than 4 body paragraphs). Audience: academic. At least 4 sources. The best responses (A- and B-level) will mix on-line and print publications as well as primary and secondary sources.

Discuss a practice/item in American science or technology (the "text") that represents a larger cultural value (e.g., efficiency, thrift, moderation, and so forth). Not only should you identify the practice and subject, but you should evaluate the coupling of the two through theme. Distribute your value across your line of thought. Use secondary evidence to substantiate the distributed "points" (topics) of the value and thematic interpretation in marshaling applicable evidence from "text."

Example

Thesis: The practice of throwing away razor blades, begun in 1901, is resonant of the American theme that disposableness [the subject or value] equals affluence [the thematic interpretation].

Question that generates theme: What does one learn about American culture given the disposableness of razor blades?

Distributive question for topics that compose the line of thought: What constitutes the value of "disposableness"?

Distributed topics (not in order):
(1) Money
(2) Action
(3) Space
(4) Time

Required thesis words and phrases: "the theme"

Although the concept of theme might be only a part of your job here, allow me to define: a theme is a critical response to a text--i.e., it is neither a subject (e.g., "women") nor an antithesis (e.g., man versus man, man versus nature, or man versus God). Rather, a theme takes a position on a subject or antithesis. Stated in a nutshell, a theme answers the question, "What do you wish to teach your reader about the subject?" To articulate a theme, consider the following criteria:

(1) it is rendered in general terms
(2) it encompasses the given text
(3) it has an opinion (i.e., is arguable)

Possible synonyms for theme are meaning, moral, upshot, lesson, or message. A theme, to explain the concept in colloquial terms, is not what a narrative or other type text is about--that's its story or sequence of actions--but what it's A-B-O-U-T. For example, should we be considering the MGM musical The Wizard of Oz, a theme might be, "There's no place like home." Note that Dorothy does not click her heels together and identify the subject of "House," much less "Auntie Elm's House." Rather, she articulates a theme: "There's no place[...]."

To recap, the general machinery to this multi-faceted argument comprises the following steps:

(1) Consider a "text" and a larger value.
(2) Distribute the larger value into "points" that will compose your line of thought's topics.
(3) Take a position (articulate a theme) on the "text" by asking, "What does one learn about the larger given the
"text"? Use that theme in your thesis statement.
(4) Within the body paragraphs, use secondary evidence to substantiate your topics and thematic interpretation to marshal evidence about the "text."

Notes and Tips (plus those applicable from previous exercises)

* No repeat "texts."
* In your introduction/thesis, do not list your "points."
* Body paragraphs should have an overall even, nice balance between secondary and primary information. Feel free to consider whichever in whatever order!
* Because the "text" is given, your research should center on substantiating the generic. Do not merely cite another example of the genre as your generic information—such lends to hit-or-miss, "straw man" illogic. Comparison is not the point—and, at any rate, it adds up to little of substance. Rather, appeal to authority/scholarship.
* The following is an example of a (fabricated) body paragraph:

At issue to disposableness is the question of time [topic sentence]. Joe Smith, writing for Technology and History, argues that saving time is what gives all disposable items their cache in American life: "Not to chuck it," he notes, "is to be constrained by it temporally" (42) [(fabricated) piece of researched evidence]. This very quality was very much a part of the rise of disposable razors [commentary and transition]. When Gillette introduced his new line in 1908, he remarked, "Now men will have more time for their hobbies" (14) [(fabricated) piece of primary evidence]. Gillette's thinking was precisely on target with the his market, and he quickly became a millionaire—an affirmation that time equals money in the American psyche [connection back to theme].