

Week 2 Notes
27 Sept 2017

Freewriting, 5 mins:

In your notes you should have copied down one sentence from the Solnit essay. Write it out again at the top of a blank page. Instead of thinking of it as a quote, treat it as the first line of something YOU are writing, and continue after it in your own words. Instead of “reacting” to the quote and giving your opinion about it as an analyst, try to write in the same style/mood/feeling as the quote. Don’t worry if you “get lost” (digress or go off topic)—just keep writing.

Long-term HW:

Keep a notebook or a section of a notebook (this could also be a Word doc) in which you copy down interesting quotes from the various texts you read this semester. Don’t organize them, just write them down in the order you find them, and keep them all together in one place. I will ask you to work with these quotes later.

HW for next week:

Writing:

Try this writing experiment: 1. At the top of a blank page, copy down a quote from a text you are currently reading. 2. At the bottom of the same page, copy down a quote from a different text (it’s more interesting if the two texts are not related). 3. Now, fill in the space BETWEEN the two quotes with your own writing. See if you can create a connection between the two. The connection does not have to be a logical argument; it’s okay if it doesn’t really make sense. But maybe it will! Try your best to create an interesting journey from one quote to the next. Get lost in the space in between and see what you find.

Reading:

I’ve posted 4 essays about writing and revising in English to the Week 2 materials folder. Please READ these three:

“The Importance of Writing Badly” by Bruce Ballenger

“Shitty First Drafts” by Anne Lamott

“Where’s the Action?” (Ch.1 of *Revising Prose*) by Richard Lanham

If you have time, you can also read “The Poison Fish” by Ken Macrorie. It’s pretty short, and I like it a lot.

In your notes, try to summarize in one or two sentences what you see as the main point of each of the 3 essays. In class, I will ask you these questions: Who do you think is the intended audience for each of these essays? (Who are they written for?), and Do you think the ideas in them are helpful/useful for YOU, as English learners? Do they apply to your situation as a writer and student at MU? Why or why not?