

Sample Assignment

Essay 3

Topic: Synthesis

Synthesis essays showcase an argument on a subject by combining ideas from multiple sources. In a synthesis essay, you've usually read 2-3 outside texts (articles, essays, books) to develop your **central thesis on a topic**, then use examples from each to overall prove your point. Your Essay 3 will focus on synthesis by combining your observations from the assorted assigned essays from this course with overall observations in *Know My Name*. Choose **one** of the following topics to respond to:

- Do all pieces of media have to be relatable to be meaningful? Do all pieces of media have to be comfortable to give us insights on our lives? What do we gain from texts that are uncomfortable or less relatable?
- How does trauma (physical, emotional, etc.) influence our beliefs and actions?
- What does morality have to do with the human body? How does conflating morality and bodily differences create complications for us?
- What are the causes and complexities in objectifying ourselves and others?
- To what extent are we in control of the consequences that happen to our bodies? What issues of morality arise in this?
- Does creating empathy in our readers make a better story? Do we need to empathize with an author's story to gain meaning or impact from it?
- What concepts are appropriate to categorize as public or private life? Do the graphic details of bodily harm or expression add to or take away from a narrative or story?
- When is vulnerability socially appropriate? When is it inappropriate? When is it necessary?
- How does socioeconomic status influence our minds' and bodies' limitations? What are the intergenerational consequences of financial and bodily concerns?

Prewrite

In class we will brainstorm on the above proposed topics to help you decide which one is most interesting to you. Keep your prewrite notes in your notebook for this class. This might be a good time to think of *why* you gravitate toward a topic and *which* essay(s) you think would be a good fit to incorporate into the paper.

Outline

Draft a plan for your essay including your thesis statement, ideas for subtopics in each paragraph, and elements of the texts to respond to or use as evidence for your argument. You may use generative AI to format your outline, but if you choose to do so, I will ask you to handwrite annotations onto the generated draft to show where your input and ideas are taking you.

In-class essay

During class, we will compose an essay draft responding to the prompt of your choice using the outline you've developed. You will have the entirety of the class session to complete this draft handwritten on paper. **No** use of phones or computers will be allowed during this session, but dictionaries and thesauruses will be available to help with diction choices. You **may** additionally use your outline, selected essay printouts, and book(s) for reference in your response.

Additional tips

1. Your paper must have an introduction that includes a clear thesis, stated early. Each body paragraph must have a topic sentence, and you must have a conclusion which wraps up your paper nicely.
2. Assume that your reader has at least some familiarity with either of your essays; therefore, do not spend too much time describing details related to the authors or their narratives.
3. Your paper must have an original and creative title that creates a preview for the reader to what themes, stances, and ideas you plan to discuss.
4. For this particular essay, practice using first person (I, me, my) **sparingly** if at all, and do not use second person (you, your) at all.
5. Take care to proofread as much as possible; reading your paper aloud to a friend may sound awkward or unnecessary, but you will catch typos and errors that would otherwise affect your grade.
6. Please use MLA format as described on the Purdue OWL site. If you are unsure of the origins of your essay, please contact me beforehand so I can provide the appropriate help!