

The Rhetoric of Childhood
Cover Letter

Dear incoming GAs,

Lisa asked me to design a course in my discipline, children's literature, because she was hoping for a course that would privilege visual texts. The course you find below came from that request. While I would love to talk about children's literature all day, every day, you will notice that this course allows students (and yourself) to engage with texts in many different areas of study. In fact, many of these prompts emphasize that students should look for their texts in unexpected places, often outside of children's literature (in teaching this course, I've had papers on everything from children's literature to designer babies, helicopter parents to *The Room*). Moreover, if you want a class focused on the visual but do not want to talk about children for fourteen weeks, this class is broad enough to switch to another topic—the rhetoric of gender or race or class or age or sexuality or disability, whatever you want to teach. The biggest change, then, would be the readings, but even that would be a small change since there are only three articles related to children. In other words, think of this course as based on the visual but focused on children.

Even with the focus on children, you'll notice that the prompts are intentionally broad and ask students to find their own inquiry. I have found that students who are not interested in what they are writing about struggle more and are less engaged with learning about the writing process. ENGL 1010 and 1011 are some of the few courses in which students have the freedom to choose what they want to work on, so I designed my course to give them the freedom to choose something that interests them. Because I want students to be interested in what they write about, you will notice that I have very few readings and each prompt allows the students to choose their own text. Few readings mean that students spend less time on the ideas of others and more time exploring their own ideas and their own interests around a more-or-less related topic. Thus, this course relies on reading about writing and students have more time to choose and focus on their own texts. By having students choose their own texts for every assignment, students practice how to find and refine topics and take more authority with their projects. In essence, students practice being authors of their own ideas.

In order to help students learn how to be authors, I have included much of Lisa Ede's *The Academic Writer*. In fact, you may notice that *AW* is the primary text of the course, being read much more often than the texts on childhood. This class is a writing class about how arguments work: students will examine how arguments are made, both visually and textually (rhetoric is in the title, after all). Because the practice of the class is so focused on making arguments, *AW* becomes our lens for exploring writing, the students' and others. As with all things in this syllabus, feel free to take some of what I use from *AW* out and/or add more in. I would suggest, however, using the questions that are occasionally provided in the book (e.g., *AW* 54-5) as I have done; there is no sense in reinventing the wheel, and many of their questions seem like they will help students work through their own ideas.

Using *AW* and FYW's new major moves, I have built this course so that each unit builds skills from the unit before. We begin with **collecting and curating** objects of childhood to **theorize** childhood in the first unit. The second unit requires students to **engage and enter a**

conversation about childhood agency, **theorizing** about agency in a primary text of their choosing (remember here to emphasize that children exist in none-child texts).

The third unit then asks the students not only to **engage and enter a conversation** but to **contextualize** either their argument or another primary text of their choosing to **theorize** about pretty much anything child related. As one final way to help students understand their own writing, this course ends with students redesigning an earlier essay into a video essay in order to **circulate** it. This project asks students to revisit their work, demonstrating that revision is never truly over but simply paused. It also asks them to rethink how their argument is constructed and how arguments might need to be reconstructed in another format and/or for another audience. In other words, they end the semester by deconstructing and then reconstructing their own argument, thus giving them one last chance to understand how arguments are put together. I have arranged the assignment prompts below in the order in which I would hand them out, so sometimes the order may seem odd (e.g., 1a, 1, 1b). I find that students can do certain feeder assignments (such as reflecting on a reading) without knowing the larger assignment they are working towards while others (specifically proposals) make more sense after the students know what project they are completing. Thus, you'll find that some feeder assignments refer back to information on the large assignment prompts while large assignment prompts may also refer back to certain feeder prompts. If you decide to change the order, you'll just need to make sure that the students have the information that they need when they need it, which may require moving some things around.

Perhaps the most important thing about this baseline syllabus is that this is *my* syllabus, a syllabus that I have taught for a year (with minor upgrades), taken from previous courses I have taught with completely different topics, and workshopped with the other wonderful instructors building baseline syllabi. As you use them, make them *your* documents: play with them, change them, discard one assignment and write your own or bring in another assignment from another baseline syllabus; change the language so it sounds like you; use the general idea of the assignments but bring in another topic that you know more about. This is a starting point, a guide to get you going. Do not feel constrained by what follows but rather imagine the possibilities for your own class. Make this class your own.

If you choose to use this baseline, I would love to hear how your class turns out, what worked, what didn't, what tweaks you made. Whether or not you choose this baseline, I am more than happy to answer any questions you have or at least to direct you to the person who will be able to answer them.

Best wishes and good luck,
Becca Rowe
Rebecca.rowe@uconn.edu

English 1010: Seminar in Academic Writing

The Rhetoric of Childhood

Instructor:

Pronouns:

Classroom/Hours:

Office:

Office Hours:

Email:

Course Description

The University of Connecticut's [First-Year Writing](#) (FYW) seminars are characterized by collaborative, student-driven inquiry. As a [general education](#) course, FYW prepares students for future academic work by asking them to use writing to enter into and contribute to active academic conversations. The instructor in an FYW seminar provides a site and offers contexts with readings, central questions, and directed discussion for the development of this ongoing work. Through cycles of writing, feedback, and reflection, students pursue writing projects in which they select and define places where they might advance the class conversation. Writing projects in this course will be grounded in a semester-long inquiry of a fairly specific topic.

Course Inquiry

This course explores how written, visual, and oral arguments engage with childhood as a rhetorical tool. We begin by collecting visual representations of our own childhoods to explore similarities and differences. Can we find one image of childhood or is there a multiplicity of images? How does race, class, gender, nationality, or rhetorical situation affect how children are portrayed? We then consider childhood agency, examining moments in texts produced for children when agency was curbed and/or encouraged because of characters' youth and the assumptions behind both of those moves. What does it mean to assume a child's youth equals incapability? Can children have too much agency? Finally, we research diverse topics surrounding childhood, such as helicopter parenting, video games, and youth sports, to examine how people talk about children. In considering these topics and others, we will deconstruct arguments made around childhood to examine how arguments in general are made.

Learning Objectives

Approach Composition as a Complex Process

- Practice composing and writing as creative acts of inquiry and discovery through written, aural, visual, video, gestural, and spatial texts
- Consider projects and problems from multiple ways of knowing
- Develop new methods for all forms (including digital) of textual analysis, synthesis, and representation
- Formulate strategies for the conceptual, investigative, practical, and reflective work of writing

Identify Yourself as a Writer

- Contribute to others' knowledge and understanding through your research and compositions
- Practice ethical scholarship and develop a strong identity as a responsible maker of meaning

Engage with a Conversation

- Discover, analyze, and engage with others' ideas in productive ways through complex texts
- Approach and use texts as ways to analyze, interpret, and reconsider ideas
- Extend your ideas to new ground in the context of others' work

Critically Examine Different Ways of Knowing

- Identify and analyze conventions of disciplines
- Interrogate genre expectations, including how knowledge is created and how evidence is used to forward work in academic disciplines
- Evaluate the functional components of format, organization, document design, and citation

Use Technology Rhetorically

- Recognize that technologies are not neutral tools for making meaning
- Assess the context and mode of technology you are using to compose
- Respond to situations with productive choices to deliver meaningful texts
- Employ the principles of universal design to make your work accessible and legible to the widest possible audience

Texts

- Ede, Lisa. *The Academic Writer*, 4th edition, Bedford/St. Martin's, 2017.
- Various articles and book chapters

Helpful websites:

- [UConn's First Year Writing Program homepage](#)
- [UConn library homepage](#)
- [Purdue OWL for MLA citation](#)

Integrity and Respect

In this class, you may come into contact, and perhaps conflict, with communities whose ideals and perspectives may differ radically from your own. This will be a topic of discussion and interest, but it may also be uncomfortable, and we will seek to find meaning in those uncomfortable moments. As a class, we will maintain a sympathetic and compassionate outlook and keep an open mind throughout the course. [I will post trigger warnings about any upcoming texts, but if at any time you feel triggered by course content or discussion, please alert me and we will work out an alternative.]

Additionally, in accordance with UConn policies and Title IX, this course will be a designated safe space for all students, regardless of background, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, socioeconomic status, race, or ethnicity. If you feel you have experienced discrimination

or harassment at UConn, you can find support and resources at the Office of Institutional Equity. You may also contact Health Services, Counseling & Mental Health Services, and/or the Women's Center. Please note that I am a mandatory reporter to the Office of Institutional Equity if I become aware of issues that may pose a danger to a student's health or safety.

Academic Integrity

While studying and making use of the ideas and texts of others is central to the writing we will be doing in this course, this must be done in an ethical and appropriate way. Please review and abide by the University's code on academic misconduct (plagiarism and misuse of sources), which will be distributed in class and can also be found on [the UConn Community Standards website](#); you will be held responsible for understanding these materials. Plagiarizing the work of others—passing off someone else's work as your own—is a very serious offense, and anyone found plagiarizing will fail the essay or the course. Please let me know if you have questions about what constitutes appropriate use and citation of other people's work.

The Writing Center

The Writing Center employs tutors who work with students on their papers at any stage of the writing process—from brainstorming to reviewing final drafts to helping with specific difficulties you may have. This service is free and highly recommended for all students. You can sign up for an appointment on the [Writing Center website](#).

Multilingual Scholarship

This classroom is a multilingual and translingual space, and we speak and write across languages. I encourage you to speak to me about any concerns you have with language use (reading, speaking, and/or writing) in this course, and I encourage you to be respectful of your colleagues in this multilingual space.

Disability and Accessibility

The First-Year Writing program is committed to making educational opportunities available to all students. If you have a physical, psychological, medical or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact the Center for Students with Disabilities (Wilbur Cross 204, 860-486-2020). They will work with you to accommodate your needs and provide me with a letter describing those accommodations. All information and documentation is confidential. Please contact me as soon as possible in the semester so that I can also make the necessary arrangements for your comfort in our classroom.

Course Components

Participation

This is a seminar rather than a lecture course. Most of the learning in a seminar comes from the experience of making and doing rather than from “lessons provided by an expert.” Thoughtful discourse is an essential part of this class, and you will frequently work in groups of various sizes, which means you will need to be considerate of and attentive to others. It is your responsibility to keep up with the reading, to contribute to class conversation in the form of analytical comments or questions, and to attend class regularly and on time. See attendance policy below.

Reading

Although ENGL 1010 is described as a writing course, the writing you do here has a very close relationship to reading. Lisa Ede says that like writing, reading “is an act of *composing*, of constructing meaning through language and images” (16). The process of writing begins with careful reading of a situation, written text, or various media. You will be reading to find ways into the conversation in which an author or text is participating. Many of these texts are multi-layered and complex, and you should expect to read most texts more than once.

Writing

You will compose four major projects totaling the equivalent of 30 pages of revised, polished prose in this course. In order to accomplish this, you will be doing ample writing along the way, including in-class writing, homework assignments, and drafts of these major projects.

Revision

Each major writing project will go through a drafting process in which you shape your ideas and experiment with ways to best communicate this work. You should expect to put significant time and effort into the revision process and for projects to shift, change, and develop as you revise. Only the final projects will be assigned a grade, but all of your work may contribute to your final grade in the course.

Conferences and Peer Review

Conferences and peer review are integral to the goals of this course. Through the drafting process of each major essay, we will use small group or individual conferences during, in addition to, or in place of regular class meetings. The quality of your involvement in these processes is a crucial factor in your participation grade in this course.

Information Literacy

ENGL 1010 provides the first stage of the University’s [Information Literacy competency](#), including attention to university research and digital literacy. You should expect to use outside sources and scholarly research to inform your work throughout the semester. While all assignments will provide opportunities for developing Information Literacy skills, we will have at least one assignment that will be built with this specific purpose in mind.

Reflective Component

The reflective portion of the course includes any time spent on characterizing, reconsidering, or qualifying one’s work. Reflection happens throughout the semester, usually in ways that complement writing projects by providing opportunities for a writer to imagine alternatives or trace lines of thought or activity.

Grading and Evaluation

Your final grade will depend on two things: your successful completion of the day-to-day work of the course (including drafts of all major assignments) and the quality of your work. **If you submit passing-level and on-time work throughout the semester, you will receive at least a B for the course.** If there is missing or insufficient work, your grade may fall below a B. Substantial amounts of missing work—or simply a failure to turn in all major essays—will result in a failure of the course.

Every major assignment will be given a grade, though later assignments will have a greater influence on your grade for the semester. Each assignment prompt will clarify priorities for high-quality work, but generally an A project will

- respond energetically and creatively to the readings and the assignment;
- engage meaningfully with texts in a sustained manner;
- form a cohesive final project;
- contribute new formulations that successfully enter into conversation with others' work; and
- demonstrate rhetorical awareness, including knowledge of and facility with genre conventions.

In short, while your consistent and successful completion of the day-to-day work of the course will suffice for a B, it is through the quality of your writing projects that you will be able to raise your grade above the B level. Each of your projects will weigh more on your grade than the last so that your final grade will reflect the writer you are at the end of the semester, not at the beginning. If at any point you have questions or concerns about how you're doing in the course, please don't hesitate to ask.

Course Concerns

If you have any questions about the course or your final course grade, please see your instructor as soon as possible. If that conversation is not productive, please see or contact an Assistant Director of First-Year Writing to further discuss the issues at firstyearwriting@uconn.edu or 860-486-2859.

ENGL 1010: Rhetoric of Childhood

Course Policies

Attendance

Class attendance is important and can affect your participation grade. You are responsible for work missed as a result of an absence. Allowances will be made for religious observances, medical or family emergencies, and mandatory athletic commitments with advanced notice.

Snow Days

Because UConn is in Connecticut, there may be days when class is cancelled due to snow emergencies. When this happens, I will email you with information for what we will do that day. Most likely, we will use Google Classroom: I will give you a short lecture then we will work together on the material for the day so we do not fall behind. If you do not check in and contribute to the day's work, it will count as an absence.

Google Classroom

For this course, we will use Google Classroom as our online platform for communication and the distribution of class materials. This class will use Google Classroom for sharing all types of

writing and collaborating with each other. It is your responsibility to be familiar with Google Classroom, though we will spend some time in class learning basic navigation.

Submission of Work

All assignments will be submitted to our Google Classroom unless otherwise noted. Please ensure that all submitted documents are labeled as follows, Last Name, First Name – Assignment.

- E.g., Rowe, Rebecca – Rough Draft of Assignment 1.docx.

Rough Drafts

A rough draft must be turned in for all major assignments, no matter how little or rough it is. No revised draft will be graded without an original rough draft. All rough drafts must contain a short reflection note detailing three things the writer would like help on in this draft and one thing they are proud of.

Late Projects

It is crucial that you turn assignments in on time. Failing to do so will affect your grade and limit your ability to participate in class. All formal and informal assignments must be ready to turn in at the beginning of the class they are due and/or uploaded to Google Classroom no later than the stated deadline. If you have a serious need for an extension, you must contact me and receive approval at least 48 hours before the due date. There are no retroactive extensions. In the event of a crisis, contact me as soon as possible, and we will work out a solution. Late rough drafts will receive minimal to no comments, depending on how late the draft is. Late revised drafts will lose a partial grade (e.g., a B to a B-) each calendar day it is late.

Project Length

Each of the assigned projects has been designed to fit a certain length, the word requirement given on the assignment prompt. Any project not meeting the word length will lose points in the following manner: the grade will start at the percentage of the project completed. So, for example, if the prompt is 1250-1700 words and your project is 1000 words, the most that project can receive is an 80 because you completed 80% of the prompt.

Digital Copies

You are expected to back up your digital documents. Google Drive, Dropbox, Microsoft OneDrive, or an external hard drive are all excellent options for saving your work. If you encounter technical difficulties in the writing process, or if you would like to take advantage of some of the complementary software provided by the university, please visit the Information Technology Department online.

Phones, Tablets, and Other Electronics

Please do not use electronic devices in class unless they are in the service of your note taking, in-class writing, or group work. If I think that your electronic device is distracting you from the here and now, you will lose electronic privileges for the day. If this loss happens often, you will lose electronic privileges for the remainder of the course. That being said, we will often electronically write and compose in class, so you may want to bring a computer or tablet regularly in order to facilitate long writing periods and group composing sessions.

Communication

Please feel free to contact me at any time by email or come to my office hours. If for some reason you cannot make my office hours, contact me and we can set up another time. Also, if you want to talk about something in particular, please email me before meeting with me in person so that I have adequate time to prepare materials for our conversation.

However, I will not respond to emails that do not engage in proper email etiquette. What does this mean? First, always have something in the subject line – if you are sending an email to a potential job, graduate program etc., and you fail to add a subject for the email, chances are it is going right into the trash. Always write in a subject. Second, always address your email properly. This means, for example, “Dear Rebecca,” or “Hello Rebecca.” In all email exchanges with your university professors, instructors, and colleagues you should be courteous in your address and courteous in your sign-off, for example “Thanks, Student Name,” or “Best, Student Name.” Being courteous, considerate, and polite in emails ensures that the email is received and answered in a quick and positive manner. Lastly, avoid being too informal in your professional emails, for example, do not begin an email with “Hey!” or give a copious amount of personal information that the recipient does not necessarily need or want to read. Finally, I do not answer emails that are answerable on our syllabus – I am not Google.

Course Concerns

If you have any questions about the course or your final course grade, please see me as soon as possible. If that conversation is not productive, please see or contact an Assistant Director of First-Year Writing to further discuss the issues: fyw@uconn.edu.

ENGL 1010: Rhetoric of Childhood

Schedule

Key:

- All pages marked as *AW* come from *The Academic Writer*
- GC is short for Google Classroom
- Unless given a URL, you can find all readings on UConn's library web site by searching the title of the reading

Date	Due in Class	Doing in Class
8/27	None	Introductions Writing sample Intro to class
8/29	Read <i>AW</i> 16-40 (which can be found in the Semester Documents folder, in case you don't have your textbook yet) and "Let Black Kids Just Be Kids", Robin Bernstein (https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/26/opinion/black-kids-discrimination.html); complete the questions on <i>AW</i> 32 (before reading) and 36 (after reading) for Bernstein's piece	Discuss reading strategies Discuss Assignment 1a and start thinking about things you can bring in

9/3	Labor Day, no class	
9/5	Assignment 1a due in class , read <i>AW</i> 262-71	Move from description to analysis Introduce Assignment 1 and 1b Form groups Practice invention strategies Group time to work
9/10	Assignment 1b due to GC by classtime ; read <i>AW</i> 114-115, 144-6, 282-5, 319-329	Move from analysis to argument Learn 3-Ex paragraph structure Discuss design and Adobe Spark Page
9/12	Read <i>AW</i> 54-5, 274-6, 171; bring rough draft of at least one description per person	Paragraph workshop Discuss organization and how to bring the things together Draft and workshop outlines and curation ideas
9/17	In class, be prepared to share Adobe Spark Page with classmates , read <i>AW</i> 287-8, Assignment 1 rough draft due, 11:59 pm, email Adobe Spark Page link to instructor	Compare/contrast editing and revising Full-draft workshop Discuss formatting
9/19	Read <i>AW</i> 288-306	Group conferences with instructor in Austin ???, no class
9/24	Read "What Are We Talking about When We Talk about Agency?," Richard Flynn; Assignment 2a due in class	Chart Flynn's argument Introduce Assignment 2 Compile list of examples
9/26	Choose a text to work with, read <i>AW</i> 151-162, watch "what is a video essay?"	Discuss writerly moves

	(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TXKGNQg0M7c), watch "Video Essay" on <i>Multimodality, Film, and You</i> (https://beccarowe93.wixsite.com/website/video-essay), bring laptop	Practice analysis-- group work with example texts Move from analysis towards argument Discuss video editing
9/28	Assignment 1 revised draft (with revision letter) due, 11:59 pm to GC	
10/1	Read AW 135-6, 212-22, "Using Sources" on <i>Multimodality, Film and You</i> (https://beccarowe93.wixsite.com/website/using-sources-1) and UConn's FYW "Program Statement on Ethical Scholarship and Plagiarism" (http://fyw.uconn.edu/resources-for-students/ethical-scholarship-for-students-2/avoiding-academic-misconduct-sloppy-scholarship-and-plagiarism/); Assignment 2b due in class (GC)	Discuss the ethical use of research in academic writing Discuss finding sources Practice quoting, paraphrasing others' ideas in video format Discuss Synthesis
10/3	Bring in 1 outside source and answer questions about it on AW 39-40, 207-208	Work on applying different theories to their chosen example Move towards an argument about their chosen example Discuss and practice script writing
10/8	Bring rough draft of 2 body paragraphs from script , bring video of those paragraphs	Paragraph workshop Practice video editing Discuss creating intros and conclusions
10/10	In class, bring draft of script for workshop, Assignment 2 rough draft due, 11:59 pm, to GC , bring laptop	Full workshop Discuss uploading videos and captioning
10/13	Group comments due by 11:59 pm	
10/15	Read your groupmates' comments on your script; be prepared to share one thing you think each of your groupmates did really	Group conferences, no class

	well and one thing they should work on; have two questions ready for the group about your own work	
10/17	Read “Childhood as Spectacle: Relays of Anxiety and the Reconfiguration of the Child,” Cindi Katz, and AW 6-12, 51-4	Discuss rhetorical situation Introduce Assignment 3
10/22	Read AW 183-196; be prepared to discuss 2 research topics you are interested in writing about	Narrow and choose topic Discuss different types of sources Prepare for library trip
10/24	Read AW 196-205; Assignment 3a due due to GC by 8am; meet in library	Narrow topics to specific queries Library scavenger hunt
10/26	Assignment 2 revised draft due, 11:59 pm to GC	
10/29	Assignment 3b due; read AW 205-219; answer questions on 207-8 for three different sources	Integrating sources Discuss different ways to use sources and practice using sources to support your argument
10/31	Be prepared to discuss five secondary sources; read AW 158-161	Craft scholarly conversation Organize and synthesize ideas
11/5	For class, read AW 223-232; Bring rough draft of 2 body paragraphs	Paragraph workshop
11/7	For class, bring draft for workshop, Assignment 3 rough draft due, 11:59 pm, to GC group folder	Full draft workshop
11/10	Group comments due by 11:59pm	
11/12	Bring most revised draft of project 3	Introduce Assignment 4 Discuss multimodal projects and what they reveal Discuss how to move from paper to script Discuss different kinds of videos
11/14	Assignment 4a due; bring your laptop	In groups, practice making script

		arguments for different kinds of videos Discuss more complex video editing
11/18-11/24	Thanksgiving Break	No class
11/24	Assignment 3 revised draft due, 11:59 pm to GC	
11/26	Bring at least half of your script	Design workshop Practice design
11/28	Bring a rough draft of your script and whatever you have of your video	Video workshop Discuss process note element
12/3	Bring 2 paragraphs of your process note	Workshop of reflection sections SET Surveys Review of semester
12/5	Full script and 2 minutes of video essay due in conference	Individual conference, no class
During finals	Assignment 4 Video Essay and Process Note due, 11:59 pm to GC	

Assignment 1a: Describing Childhood Things

Due Date: 9/5, in class

Length: 400-600 words

Format: Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, double-spaced, one-inch margins

Working Texts:

- 2 student-selected childhood things

Project Description

Choose two things that you think represent your childhood in a nutshell. These can be anything: toys, films, shows, people, colors, whatever. Just choose two things that you feel really encapsulate what your childhood was like.

For this feeder project, look at these things with adult eyes and describe them. What are these things? What are they like? Why did you choose these two things of everything you could have chosen? Write a paragraph or two on each thing, thinking about what the thing is and how it connects to your childhood. Provide full descriptions of both things so that someone who has never seen this thing would know what it is and why it encapsulates your childhood.

Evaluation

Successful projects will describe two things and explain how they relate to the author's childhood.

Assignment 1: Curating Childhood

Due Dates:

Version 1: 9/17, 11:59 pm, due by email (from one group member with other group members cc'd)

(rough draft of Adobe Spark Page with at least one description written per group member and the curation description and GROUP reflection note)

Version 2: 9/28, 11:59 pm, via Google Classroom

(Revised and completed Adobe Spark Page and INDIVIDUAL process note)

Components:

A curated Adobe Spark Page (group)

A 1000-1250-word process note (individual)

Format: Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, double-spaced, one-inch margins

Working Texts:

- 2 student-selected things from childhood
- *The Academic Writer*, Lisa Ede
- "Let Black Kids Just Be Kids," Robin Bernstein

Project Description

In Robin Bernstein's "Let Black Kids Just Be Kids", she introduces the idea that childhood can look different for different people and that childhood can be withheld from certain children. For this project, you will compare your different childhoods by working in groups to **curate** a collection of childhood "things" in order to **theorize** some representation of childhood. I use the term "things" broadly; you can include anything from toys to films to images to colors to abstract representations of emotions. Each member of your group is responsible for picking two things they think represent their own childhood. Then, as a group, you will create an Adobe Spark Page where you present your things in a way that could be **circulated** to people outside this classroom space. As a group, you must decide how to bring these things together. Think of it as a museum gallery: how do you bring these different pieces together in a way that makes sense, beyond simply saying that they relate to childhood? You'll need to think not only of a rationale but also simple things like organization.

You need to curate the collection as a group, but then each person is responsible for explaining each of their two things separately. You must explain 1) how that thing represents your own childhood and 2) how it connects to your group's overall curation. You can do this through video, images, podcast, written word, etc. You do not all have to use the same format, but can use whatever you're comfortable using.

On your Spark Page, you must include:

- a title for your curation that reflects the curation you've created, and each of your names

- a theorization of how your curation fits together as a whole (approximately 500 words, written together as a group)
- a description of each thing in the curation, written by the member who proposed it (approximately 500 words each)

You each will then write a process note. In doing so, you may want to think about: How did you choose your things? Did your group affect what you chose? How did you bring such different things together into something cohesive? How did your group use Spark Page to make meaning? How might you imagine this curation working differently?

Evaluation

Successful projects will respond energetically and creatively to the readings and the assignment; engage meaningfully with texts in a sustained manner; form a cohesive final project; contribute new ideas or formulations that successfully enter into conversation with others' work; demonstrate rhetorical awareness, including knowledge of and facility with genre conventions; and correctly handle citations.

Specifically for this assignment, successful projects will bring together different things related to childhood to give a certain view of childhood. Projects will be cohesive, even if that cohesion is portraying difference. Explanations will vividly explain the thing and make it clear how it fits into the overall curation. Reflections will be thoughtful and explicitly explain the writer's process. Your grade will rest on your individual work and how well you can bring that individual work into conversation with the group, not the success of the group project. In other words, you will be graded individually *not* as a group.

Assignment 1b: Proposing Things of Childhood

Due Date: 9/10, in class, via Google Classroom

Length: 1000-1250 words

Format: Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, double-spaced, one-inch margins

Working Texts:

- 2 student-selected things per group member

Project Description

Now that we have discussed different things, you have practiced describing some of them, and you have formed groups, it is time to choose your things for your curation. You can choose any 2 things per student which do not have to include your things from assignment 1a. For this feeder assignment, your group will propose the things that you want to use and how you will bring them together into a curated collection. What will be your central theme or idea? How will these things fit that? What are you going to theorize about childhood through this curation? How will you each discuss your things (video essay, written words, etc.)? Finally, explain any problems you think you may have in working with these particular objects.

Each group will turn in one proposal, but each member should be responsible for writing the portion proposing your own things. This can be fairly informal (including the use of bullet points), but remember that some of this writing will help you as you start making your site.

Evaluation

Successful projects will clearly articulate why the group chose those things and start outlining what the group wants to do with those things in the larger project.

Assignment 2a: Coming to Terms with Flynn

Due Date: 9/24, in class

Length: 500-750 words

Format: Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, double-spaced, one-inch margins

Working Texts:

- “What Are We Talking about When We Talk about Agency?,” Richard Flynn

Project Description

Flynn’s piece attempts to represent what childhood agency is...without really giving a decisive definition. For this feeder assignment, you will give a brief summary of how Flynn understands childhood agency, writing one to two paragraphs explaining the issue. I do not expect this summary to be perfect--we’ll be talking in class about what he says. I just want you to have some sense of his argument before you get to class.

However, I recognize that this piece can be a bit difficult. So, along with a brief summary, also include at least three questions you have about this text and a list of words you think are important to understanding this text along with what you think the words mean.

Evaluation

Successful projects will clearly and fairly summarize the scholars’ argument and bring in productive questions..

Assignment 2: Complicate Childhood Agency

Due Dates:

Version 1: 10/10, 11:59 pm, via Google Classroom
(1000-1500-word script with reflection note)

Version 2: 10/26, 11:59 pm, via Google Classroom
(1000-1500-word **captioned** video essay with 750-1000-word process note)

Components:

Video Essay
MLA Works Cited Page
Process Note

Format: Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, double-spaced, one-inch margins

Working Texts:

- “What Are We Talking about When We Talk about Agency?,” Richard Flynn
- “what is a video essay?,” Lisa Bickmore
- *Multimodality, Film, and You: Choosing a Multimodal Format to Discuss Film*, Rebecca Rowe
- Student-selected primary text
- Student-selected secondary text

Project Description

Flynn’s goal in this piece is to introduce a highly-contested conversation about childhood agency. For this assignment, you will **engage and enter the conversation** Flynn introduces. Choose a text (a film, TV show, commercial, law, building, anything that pertains to children) in which you see a child’s agency being encouraged and/or curbed. Then, explore how your text fits into Flynn’s argument in a video essay. Your video essay should **theorize** a definition of childhood agency using specific examples from your text and **one other outside secondary text**. As you work with all of your texts, you should keep in mind fair use guidelines, ensuring that you critically engage any text you include AND/OR choose texts that exist in the Creative Commons. Beyond showing how your text engages with childhood agency, make a claim about how your text complicates, compliments, and/or confuses the conversation about childhood agency Flynn represents. Your goal is not to valorize one scholar and demonize another but rather explore how your text complicates, compliments, and/or confuses the conversation as a whole.

As you’re working on your video essay, you need to think about what you’re creating: how is a video essay different from a traditional written essay, or is it? Using “what is a video essay?” and “Multimodality, Film, and You,” you will also write a process note about creating your own video essay that explores how making this essay into a video compares to writing a traditional

essay. What did you have to do differently? What stayed the same? Did this project affect the way you think of essay writing?

Evaluation

Successful projects will respond energetically and creatively to the readings and the assignment; engage meaningfully with texts in a sustained manner; form a cohesive final project; contribute new ideas or formulations that successfully enter into conversation with others' work; demonstrate rhetorical awareness, including knowledge of and facility with genre conventions; and correctly handle citations.

Specifically for this assignment, successful projects will not simply affirm one scholar in order to challenge the other but rather make a nuanced argument about how the chosen primary text can help us move forward past the current conversation about childhood agency. The most successful projects will not necessarily be those that have the coolest video techniques but those that use those techniques most effectively to get their point across. Successful process notes will also critically explore the process of creating this essay compared to traditional essays, basing their ideas firmly in the writer's own process in creating this project.

Assignment 2b: Text Proposal

Due Date: 10/1, in class, via Google Classroom

Length: 500-750 words

Format: Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, double-spaced, one-inch margins

Working Texts:

- “What Are We Talking about When We Talk about Agency?,” Richard Flynn
- Student-selected primary text

Project Description

Now that you are familiar with Flynn, it is time to choose a primary text for your large assignment. Choose a text that demonstrates a child’s agency being encouraged and/or curbed. In this feeder assignment, propose what text you have chosen and why. What drew you to this text? What aspects of this text do you want to explore in your larger project? Where do you see agency being encouraged and/or curbed? What are your preliminary thoughts on why childhood agency is being treated this way? Finally, explain any challenges you think you may have in working with this particular text.

Evaluation

Successful projects will clearly articulate what text the author wants to use and why as well as an outline of what they want to do with this text.

Assignment 3: Deploying Concepts of Childhood

Due Dates:

Version 1: 11/7, 11:59 pm, via Google Classroom
(1500-2100-word rough draft with reflection note)

Version 2: 11/24, 11:59 pm, via Google Classroom
(2000-2750-word revised draft with revision note)

Components:

Academic Essay
MLA Works Cited Page
Reflection notes

Format: Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, double-spaced, one-inch margins

Working Texts:

- “Childhood as Spectacle: Relays of Anxiety and the Reconfiguration of the Child,” Cindi Katz
- 5 additional secondary sources, three of which must be scholarly

Project Description

Cindi Katz traces three ways people talk, think, and write about children as spectacle to conceal political, social, and economic anxieties. Using research from fields like economics, biology, history, political science, and anthropology, she analyzes the rhetoric that surrounds the image of the child, engaging in work much like our earlier analyses while also using research from many different disciplines to support her argument. This assignment asks you to engage in similar work (though you do **not** have to use Katz’s text):

Construct an argument about a topic dealing with childhood using research to support your argument. In making your argument, choose one of the following options:

- **Engage and enter a current conversation** surrounding childhood (helicopter parents, media influence, youth sports, testing, etc.). Then, using this research, **contextualize** a primary text (or more than one primary text if the texts are small, i.e., opinion pieces). This option would look much like your last project: find a primary text that complicates the conversation people are already having about a given topic and **theorize** how your text adds to that conversation.
- **Theorize** an aspect of childhood by **engaging and entering a current conversation** about it. After doing research to **contextualize** yourself in the current conversation, synthesize your research into a new idea, using their ideas to make your own argument. Be careful here: you should not make value judgments; base your argument on the research, not how you feel about it.

In order to make either of these arguments, you must find and use research about your subject matter (much like Katz utilizes research on our society's anxieties), ultimately using **at least 5 secondary sources, three of which must be scholarly.**

Evaluation

Successful projects will respond energetically and creatively to the readings and the assignment; engage meaningfully with texts in a sustained manner; form a cohesive final project; contribute new ideas or formulations that successfully enter into conversation with others' work; demonstrate rhetorical awareness, including knowledge of and facility with genre conventions; and correctly handle citations. Specifically for this assignment, successful projects will synthesize a conversation and utilize research to support their argument.

Assignment 3a: Preparing for Research

Due Date: 10/24, in class, via Google Classroom

Length: 500-750 words

Format: Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, double-spaced, one-inch margins

Working Text

- Student-chosen research topic

Project Description

As you prepare to research your project in the library, there are a few things you need to have solidified:

- Identify your chosen research topic which is somehow about childhood.
- Explain what you already know about this topic and why you want to work with it. If you know nothing or very little about this topic at the moment, that's fine; that just means you have more room to learn.
- Develop three strong questions you want to research about this topic using the activity we did on Tuesday.
- From these questions, create a list of possible search terms to begin your research.

Evaluation

Successful projects will clearly identify one topic to research and will include strong research questions that are both open enough to explore and specific enough to focus the research.

Assignment 3b: Charting Your Conversation

Fill in all of the following boxes. While you may not use all of these ideas and quotes in your final project, this will help you get started thinking about how you can bring these different authors together.

Author/Article	Author's idea (a quote or paraphrase from the text)	How this idea corresponds to your own ideas or the ideas of the other authors

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Submission Information

- Assignment 3b: completed worksheet due **3/29 in class**

Assignment 4: Circulating Your Ideas

Due Dates:

Version 1: due approximately 12/5 in individual conference
(written script and at least 2 minutes of video)

Version 2: during finals via Google Classroom
(finished video essay with 1500-2000-word process note)

Components:

Captioned Video

MLA Works Cited Page

Process Note

Format: Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, double-spaced, one-inch margins

Working Texts:

- Student's research project

Project Description

So far this semester, you have created a web page, a video essay, and a traditional academic essay. For this final assignment, you will think about how to move between an academic essay and something more multimodal. Redesign your research project into a video to be **circulated** beyond this class (you do not actually have to share it, but the assignment is to make it into something you could share). As you redesign your project, you'll want to think about both your argument and your audience. What kind of video (a video essay, a commercial, a PSA, a trailer, a vlog, etc.) would highlight your argument and be good for your audience? Who would want to know about what you're talking about? In making a video for this audience, how formal or informal should you be? How should you talk to this audience? As you begin to shift from academic essay to video, you may find that you have to make major changes to your project, including what kind of research and support you use, depending on what kind of audience you choose. You'll want to think about what evidence you'll need for your audience and medium. In other words, this assignment asks you to shift who your audience is and how they will experience it, and, in doing so, to think about what has to change in your project to make the change work.

Unlike your other projects, this project does not have a length requirement because a trailer might be shorter than a vlog. You are not constrained by time, but you do have to adhere to the format of your chosen video type, and you do have to give a cohesive argument. Making a commercial that is ten minutes long will not earn you brownie points because it does not fit the format; likewise, making a two-minute vlog that doesn't quite explain your argument will not work either. As you choose your format, you need to think about how you can best get across a

cohesive argument, even if the argument has to change slightly from paper to video. You will be graded on how well you use the format you have chosen, so choose wisely.

Along with your video essay, you will turn in a process note about your redesign process. In this process note, you must explain who you imagine your audience is and what kind of video you are attempting to make; after all, a PSA written for athletes would be different than a PSA written for coaches, and it will help me understand your project better if I know who it is intended for. In your reflection, you may want to consider some of the following questions: Why did you choose this audience to work with? How did you shift your material to better suit your new audience? Why did you choose this format to work with? How did you conform to your chosen format? How did your new format improve or hinder your argument? How did you move from one medium(an academic essay) to another (video)? What changed? What stayed the same? How did the four elements of rhetorical situation affect your project? If you had another chance to revise, what would you change? If your project did not turn out the way you planned, what did you learn about moving from one medium to another from the elements you struggled with? This process note is a place for you to reflect on how your redesign process went and learn about multimodal design in the process.

Evaluation

Successful projects will respond energetically and creatively to the readings and the assignment; engage meaningfully with texts in a sustained manner; form a cohesive final project; contribute new ideas or formulations that successfully enter into conversation with others' work; demonstrate rhetorical awareness, including knowledge of and facility with genre conventions; and correctly handle citations.

Specifically for this assignment, successful projects will successfully redesign one of their projects into a video. That being said, this project is primarily about understanding how to design a project in a particular format for a particular audience; the most successful projects will not necessarily be the ones with the most bells and whistles but the ones that show thoughtful consideration of their audience, argument, and format and that clearly explain how the author moved from a traditional written essay to a video essay with these elements in mind.

Assignment 4a: Proposing Your Redesign

Due Date: 11/14, in class, via Google Classroom

Length: 500-750 words

Format: Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, double-spaced, one-inch margins

Working Texts:

- *The Academic Writer*, chapter 11, Lisa Ede

Project Description

For this feeder assignment, you will begin exploring through writing how you will redesign your research project, what kind of video you will make, and what audience you want to gear this project towards. Draft a plan for redesign. What do you need to do to prepare your project for this kind of video and for your new audience? Propose a redesign plan and explain why you think you need to take these steps.

Evaluation

Successful projects will clearly identify what kind of video they will be making and the audience they will be working with. They will also have a clear and fairly detailed plan for redesign, showing the many steps needed for a project like this.

Course Works Cited

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<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/26/opinion/black-kids-discrimination.html>. Accessed 6 June 2018.
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