‘Writing as Social Action’ Project

ENGLISH 12

We have already written personal essays and a number of literary analysis pieces. We have yet to tackle the non-fiction elements, This project is to reflect a variety of skills from the three marking components. For each step I will give you examples and lessons.

Step One: Discuss the various purposes of both reading and writing non-fiction pieces. Just what is counted as non-fiction? What about journalistic pieces?

Step Two: Choose a social issue for this project. You may choose the same topic as another student, but THIS IS NOT A PARTNER ASSIGNMENT. Therefore, you will need to use different materials and your project must be solely your own.

Step Three: All good projects begin with a thesis but you will need to do some research and background investigation on the subject. Keep a works cited page (EasyBib is a great app for this) and for each work cited you will need a short synopsis of the main ideas of the piece.

1. What do you need to know? Come up with a number of questions you need to have answered or information you need to gather to make an informed thesis.
2. Begin researching. Your research/information gathering should aim to show a variety of sources of opinion and information from a variety of media (articles, videos/newscasts, books, blog, documentaries, interviews…)
3. Choose 3 of these sources and write a personal response to each. See handout on “Writing a Personal Response”.
4. Collect your synopses of each piece and your works cited. You will hand them in at the end of the project as you may want them

This step is included in both the B Reading and Viewing Component as well as the C Writing and Representing Component.

Step Four: Form a thesis. What do you believe about this issue? What are some solutions to this issue?

Step Five: Decide what your oral component will look like. Your goal is to provide evidence of your skills in discussing an issue using your presentation skills such as eye contact, volume, rhetorical skills, ability to explain or instruct. Choices depend entirely on how you best feel comfortable. If you thrive in a debate situation, set us up for debate. If you feel more comfortable with recording your voice and my having access to your skills this way, by all means, go for it. The criteria/rubrics for each activity chosen will be created by the students . At this point we will also have a lesson on rhetorical strategies used in speaking and writing.

This obviously is the A Oral Language Component.

Step Six – Plan how you plan to use your persuasive techniques/rhetorical strategies. Will this be part of Step Five? Will you write to showcase these skills? You will get a handout of the variety of possibilities.

Step Seven Decide on a form of expository writing for your project. Essay? Other possibilities? Research report?

Step Eight Your Social Action campaign. We will be looking at other successful social action plans. What makes up a social action plan? What elements of persuasion or rhetoric are involved? How can we measure the success of your social action plan?

MORE DETAILS TO FOLLOW.

MAJOR COMPONENTS OF THIS PROJECT

A Oral Language

You must create an oral component of your project. This could include:

A podcast

A mini-lesson

Host a class discussion.

Host a panel discussion.

Make a speech (video or live)

CONSIDER YOUR STRENGTHS AND TECHNICAL SKILLS IN THIS AREA. CHOOSE WISELY.

B Viewing and Reading

Must Collect a Variety of Information including articles, video/news casts, letters to the editor, research, political cartoons and anything else you can scare up to show your knowledge or connections to your topic. These must be collated into a collection to hand in including bibliography.

C Writing and Representing

1. Personal responses: For at least 3 pieces from your viewing and reading, you must a personal response for each.
2. You must provide proof of your use of persuasive writing techniques.
3. You must provide an example of expository writing with a clear thesis which relates to your social awareness topic: For example, should the residents of Atiwapaskat be required to move? Or Should the government intervene within the reserve with solutions to this perceived Native problem?
4. Come up with a campaign of social action to promote your views. This could include a television commercial, a letter to a politician, a website which promotes your solutions/views… GO BIG.

These campaigns of social action are expected to be acted upon. Send that letter. Create that club or online group. Create that blog. GO FOR IT!

Whatever you choose must not include hate speech.