

## LE 2 or 3 - Genres That Matter (Unit Two or Three)

Instructor name

120 section number

Writing strategies:

**Rhetorical awareness:** analyzing audience expectations, making conscious decisions about form and content of your writing. **Critical thinking, reading, and writing:** reflecting on kinds and uses of writing in your life and the lives of others, using evidence from reading and experience to support analysis. **Analysis and use of conventions:** analyzing and employing genre conventions, using MLA citations, editing.

Possible readings for this assignment:

Andrea Fishman, “Becoming Literate: A Lesson From the Amish”

Malcolm X, “Saved”

Vine DeLoria, “The Native American Way of Knowing and Understanding”

Martin Luther King, “Letter from a Birmingham Jail”

Billy Collins, “Commencement Address”

Amy Tan, “Mother Tongue”

Kate Daniels, “Self Portrait with Politics”

Gloria Anzaldua, “How to Tame a Wild Tongue”

In this unit, we will investigate the kinds of writing you do that are valuable to you. We’re going to work hard to uncover a genre—as we define it together in class—that expresses you, the one genre that you could not possibly live without. Then, we’ll consider what kinds of writing from within this genre you find most important and/or valuable. Next, we’ll look at genres/kinds of writing other writers have valued and investigate why and how they value them. In the first part of this paper, you’ll describe the genre that you couldn’t live without; you’ll also need to include an example of the kind of writing from within this genre that you find valuable to ground your analysis. Then, you’ll identify one genre from one of the readings that you think one (or more) characters in the readings couldn’t live without and use evidence from the reading to support this analysis. What are these genres? Why are they relevant – to you and/or to the characters in the readings whom you’ve chosen to focus on? Throughout these investigations, we’ll work together to uncover how writing functions in a wide variety of settings.

After this exploration, you’ll choose one genre that you’ve written about in the first part of this essay that you’d like to work with in greater detail. In this part of the essay, your mission is to explain the importance of that genre to an audience not familiar with it – a real audience, actually in this class – and explain to them how *they* might write something in this genre and why they might want to do it. You’ll need to focus here both on how to write it, and what the relevance of the genre is – whether it means extending to other audiences, working in new communities, or something else.

Exploration One:

Using an example from your own writing that you might want to include in the LE, focus on the genre you couldn't live without as a writer. What is it? How did you learn it? Why is it so important to you? What role has it played in your life? What *specific* instances can you point to that demonstrate its value to you? What kind of people use it? What's it for? How might you teach it to someone else?

Exploration Two:

In this exploration, you'll work with at least one of the readings and put that writer's ideas and/or experiences *in conversation* with your own. Whichever you text you choose, consider the following questions: what genre is invaluable to the character(s) you've chosen as a focus here? Why was it invaluable? What did it do for the character/context? What values does it reflect? When you write about this question, be sure to use as much evidence from the piece as possible (and be sure to put in page numbers!).

Possible activities with this assignment:

Observing (Tony) observe everything you see—happening in season, writing down everything—walk to more than one place. Purpose: how to notice details, analyze text, analyze writing

Description and Interpretation—discuss differences and why? Why are there differences in what each person sees?

Learning how to be Curious—look at a painting, write, why you think you're seeing what you're seeing—inferences about what's going on—choices that are being made about something.

Look at something that deconstructs a genre, like Homestar Runner.