



**Gifted LearningLinks Program
Course Syllabus**

**Instructor name: Amanda Yskamp
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Course Title:

Effective Essay Writing for Test Preparation, College Application and Beyond

Session Date: 2011-2012

Course Description:

Often assigned in class and required in applications, essays demand planning, preparation and practice. Students learn the structure and purpose of essays through reading and analyzing a variety of well-constructed essays as well as writing and critiquing their own. Participants improve their writing skills while learning to write essays for a specific purpose using clear, graceful, and efficient techniques. Strategies for standardized tests will be addressed and reviewed.

Plagiarism is using someone else's words or ideas and presenting them as your own. Acts of plagiarism in any capacity will result in a failing grade for that particular writing assignment. Excessive editing by a parent or peer will result in a failing grade as well. Writing is a process and I am grading your assignments based on your personal ability to create, compose and express yourself using the written word. Students should be aware that I will use mydropbox.com if I feel the integrity of your piece has been compromised.

Outcomes: Upon successful completion of this course, you will:

- *Have experience creating timed, written pieces for standardized tests,*
- *Develop writing skills that allow you to write for a variety of audiences,*
- *Edit your writing by reflection, review, and revision,*
- *Create written pieces that are within the format required on many university applications,*
- *Appreciate that writing is not a subject but a process.*

Resources and Materials:

- 50 Essays, A Portable Anthology
Bedford/St. Martin's; 1st or 2nd edition (November 6, 2006)
ISBN-10: 0312446985*
- Selected essays, articles, short stories (TBD)*
- Various websites*

Disclaimer: The content of websites on the Internet is constantly changing. Although every effort has been made to assure that the websites we direct students to have appropriate level and content, please use discretion and parental oversight with Internet materials.

Schedule:

Topic / Focus	Topic / Focus	Activities & Reading Assignments What do I need to post to the Discussion Board?	What do I need to post to the Discussion Board and/or Email?
Week 1	Orientation to Online Learning	Continue orientation Online Journal Entry "Why have you chosen this course?"	Online Journal Due
Week 2	How Not To Write	How to Write Badly Well Write Most Boring Essay Ever	
Week 3	Narrative Essay	Read Narrative Essays Pick 2 to outline	Outlines
Week 4	Narrative Essay	Outline/Rough Draft Narrative Essay	Essay
Week 5	Definition Essay	Read Selection Write Outlines	Outlines
Week 6	Definition Essay	Draft Essay	Essay
Week 6	Definition Essay	Turn in Final Descriptive/Begin Narrative Essay 500 words	Final Descriptive Essay

Week 7	Revise/Edit	Peer Review	Peer Review
Week 8	Revise/Edit	Continued	Revision / Edit Collaborative Review
Week 9	Argument	Read Selection, Write Outlines, Quizzes	Quiz results
Week 10	Argument	Write Essay	Essay
Week 11	Time/Testing	Let's Time It!! An introduction to taking a timed Writing Test - Timed assignments to follow	
Week 12	Taking a Timed Writing Exam	Let's Time It!! Time yourself for 30 minutes following the prompt provided in the handout.	Writing sample from first 30 minute practice test
Week 13	Review Practice Exam Technique Prepare to do 2 more prompts - both are timed	2 Practice Exams (to be done on separate days, if possible) Time yourself for 30 minutes per essay	Writing samples from both timed tests
Week 14	The College Essay: Writing the Successful Application Essay	Let's look at real questions from real schools!	
Week 15	The College Essay - Continued!		Essay

Week 16	Question #2	Following guidelines we established for our first essay. Continue independently with question #2.	Submit Final Draft of question #1. Show me rough draft of question #2.
Week 17	Review #2 together; choose last question	Make revisions and corrections to Essay #2.	Be prepared to hand in Essay #2
Week 18	The Final Frontier: Your rough draft and final copy of #3.	Edit your own work, show me the revisions and complete 3rd piece.	Hand in Final Essay #3! Congrats!!

Student Evaluation and Grading Policies for Credit Courses Only:

a. CTD Grading scale

A+ 97-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F Below 60
A 93-96	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
A- 90-92	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

NOTE ABOUT LATE WORK:

For work that is later than one month, I will grade it and credit you, but I will not be able to offer an extensive written critique.

Instructor Biography: With a B.A. from University of California/Berkeley and a M.A. from New York University, Amanda Yskamp has been teaching more than 15 years, with 4 years at Learninglinks. She is an award-winning author of fiction, poetry, memoir, personal essays, and newspaper articles

Contact Information:

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*Phone Conferences available upon request
xxx-xxx-xxxx 9AM-5PM Pacific Standard Time*