

Individual Writing Assignment (IWA) Guidelines

I. What is an IWA?

An IWA is a short, to-the-point essay. You will write at least four of them throughout the course of the school year. Each IWA will cover a literary selection. The first IWA topic will come from our in-class reading. The others will come from your AR reading. In each case you must have read the selection *closely*. One cannot adequately compose an IWA based solely on in-class discussions and/or Sparknotes or Wikipedia. You will be required to include textual evidence in each IWA to support your thoughts and opinions.

II. Why are we writing IWAs?

The primary reason for writing IWAs is so that you become well practiced at revising your writing and reflecting on your thoughts. The more critical writing you do and the more care you put into revising, the easier the act of writing will become. The goal is for you to revise your writing *on your own* to an *acceptable* level (the meaning of “acceptable” will be cleared up later). We may not get there; we will make great progress.

III. How will IWAs be turned in?

You will have a special folder for IWAs provided to you. In the *right pocket*, you will place the IWA to be graded. If you have turned in versions of the IWA previously, you will put them behind the one to be graded. Once an IWA is “accepted” or at the end of the IWA window, you will place all versions of the IWA on the *left* side of your folder.

IV. How will IWAs be graded?

There are three grades possible on an IWA: rewrite, revise, and accepted.

Rewrite – The essay does not properly address the question *or* contains so many grammar errors that the writing becomes incoherent. The essay cannot be corrected by making a few changes or shifting things around. Rewrite grades are worth 77%.

Revise – This is the most common grade for IWAs. Revise means that the paper adequately addresses the question but can and should be made stronger by working on organization, style, grammar, and/or content. Spelling and punctuation errors also result in Revise grades. Revise grades are worth 88%.

Accepted – This is the grade to shoot for. Accepted does not necessarily mean that the writing is flawless. It means that the ideas and arguments developed have been presented clearly and coherently and are backup up with evidence. Accepted grades are worth 100%.

The Exception – From time to time, a student may attempt to simply turn in an IWA that does not contain a serious attempt at addressing the topic. These papers will not be graded and will receive no score.

V. What is the deadline for IWAs to be “accepted”?

As a rule, I require *two days* to grade an IWA, not counting weekends. Therefore, you should plan your writing time appropriately. IWAs have no fixed due dates, but they do have a window during which I will accept them. The date that the window for IWAs closes will be published in the classroom, on Sycamore, and on my Weebly site. **Per the SJS Late Homework policy letter, IWAs may not be turned in after the IWA window closes. Because students have weeks to attempt IWAs, there are no exceptions.**

VI. How will IWAs be formatted?

A template for IWAs will be posted in Google Classroom.