On-Demand Essay Directions

To Get Started

Read the provided articles carefully, using appropriate reading strategies. You may print a copy, make notes, or underline content in the articles. You may keep these notes and the articles with you during the writing task. You may not access the internet while writing your essays.

Directions

Write a 2-3 page exploratory essay in which you add your voice to the conversation that was started in the readings, noting where you agree or disagree with the opinions in the articles, making connections to how the readings and/or the larger theme relate to your life, and noting other questions you might have or want to explore.

• Do not worry about having a thesis. The purpose of this essay is to express your ideas about the readings/theme, make connections to your life, and “talk back” to the readings by noting where and why you agree and disagree with them. You shouldn’t have an overall argument at this stage of the process.

You can organize your essays in any way that makes sense, but here are some broad moves you might consider:

• Briefly summarize the articles you read.
• Respond to things you agree with or disagree with and explain why.
• How do these readings connect to the larger theme? For example, your class might have chosen the “Identity” theme or the “Gender” theme.
• How do the ideas within the readings (or within the larger theme) relate to your life?
• You’ll have narrow your topic quite a bit before your write your research paper, so what other issues within this theme interest you? What other questions might you have? What would you like to learn more about?

Why Are You Writing This?

Your on-demand essays will serve as the beginning of your research process for the Willamette Promise portfolio. From here, we will work on narrowing your topic and identifying a particular issue you want to research and explore. In short, this is a kind of prewriting. A first opportunity to get some ideas and thoughts on to the paper so that you have a place to begin. These essays aren’t graded for that very reason, so focus on your expressing yourself.