

TITLE OF LESSON

English 1 Unit 2 Lesson 33 – Evaluation Writing, Part 1

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TIME ESTIMATE FOR THIS LESSON

One class period

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ALIGNMENT WITH STANDARDS

California – Eng 9-10: R3.3-12, W1.0-2, W/O1.0-3

In Preparation for California – Eng 9-10: W2.2a-d, 2.3a-f

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MATERIALS

**Essay Graphic Organizer** – Student Page

**Essay Grading Procedure** – Student Page

**Evaluation Rubric** – Student Page

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LESSON OBJECTIVES

- To begin to establish criteria for evaluating a stance.
  - To begin to remove opinions from essay writing and replace their opinions with measuring of textual examples against criteria.
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EXPLANATION OF LESSON

Today you're going to introduce students to one of the required writing types for high school, evaluation writing. The evaluative piece is introduced in the freshman year, though it can be one of the more sophisticated forms of writing. On its simplest level, it asks the writer to judge, or evaluate, if something is good or bad. Rather than take it at that level, we're going to introduce it at a basic level, but one that will give students a solid foundation for serious evaluation as they mature intellectually.

As you have told them, the 2 journals they wrote about their reading of Books 3, 7, 17, 18, and 23 of *The Odyssey*, should help them as they begin this piece. For class, you'll need class copies of the **Evaluation Rubric** and the **Essay Graphic Organizer** (from the *Student Pages* section of the site), and you should have the following 3 questions on butcher paper or on a handout, so students don't have to take class time to write the questions down.

- 1) Often in literature, there is a connection between a character's physical journey and his psychological journey. From the Books of *The Odyssey* that you have read in the past week, and those you read last semester, if you'd like, consider Telemachus's physical journey and his psychological one. Is there a connection between his journey from Ithaca to Pylos and his journey toward kingship, as Odysseus's son? Support your claim with at least three examples from the text.
  - 2) The guest/host relationship in Odysseus's time was considered an obligation, both a mark of civility and a part of the socialization, or social training, of the youth. Using the criteria of this guest/host relationship from Odysseus's time, state whether you believe a guest/host relationship exists anywhere today. Applying at least three criteria from the *guest/host relationship as Homer presents it*, justify your answer with concrete examples from the US culture or from your own. Be sure to state clearly the culture and/or country of today you are discussing.
  - 3) Odysseus spends ten years fighting in Troy, then another ten years trying to return to his home. Based on what you know of Odysseus from his travels, does his role as beggar in his own palace, in the face of the suitors, reveal a man who has grown psychologically? Would the Odysseus of ten years earlier have acted and reacted in the same manner as the Odysseus who appears, finally at his palace door. Give at least three examples from the text to justify your answer.
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FOCUS AND MOTIVATE STUDENTS – WARM-UP ACTIVITY

- 1) Homework Check – Pass back graded assignments and have students place them in the appropriate section of their folders.
  - 2) [Agenda/Daily Log](#) – Have students copy the agenda you have written on the front board.
  - 3) Identify Thesis and Reasons – Have students take out their journal entries number 14 and 15 from Lessons 28 and 29. For each, they should circle their thesis and underline the 3 reasons they gave to support their thesis ([Journal 14](#)) and the 10 criteria ([Journal 15](#)). As they're doing this, walk around the room to make sure they have all completed the journals.
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ACTIVITIES – INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP

1. Brainstorm and Group Definition – Explain that today they're going to learn a new writing type—evaluation writing. Begin a [Brainstorm](#) of what it means to evaluate something. Take this through the [Group Definition](#) process until you have a posted class definition of evaluate.

Sample Definition:

*Evaluate – n. **examine and judge** to consider or examine something in order to judge its value, quality, importance, extent, or condition.*

2. Intro: Evaluation Writing – Now, they're going to be writing an essay in which they evaluate something. This type of writing is called evaluation writing. For this first time, you're giving them the question and they'll do the rest. As they become stronger writers, they'll have more responsibility. For now, though, you're going to walk through the process as a class and they'll begin their writing pieces. Tomorrow, in class, they'll write their first evaluative pieces, then the next two days they'll spend on revision and editing. The one major difference with this process, from how they have done it in the past, is that they'll do their editing in a word processor and learn some new tricks to make the word processor do some of their work for them.
3. Discuss – For today, as you walk through the steps, you're going to look at how one might evaluate something. You might evaluate to determine the worth or value of something—can anyone think of times they do that in life? You might also evaluate a situation to decide which of a number of actions would make the most sense. Any examples of this in real life? They might mention sports (pass or shoot?), shopping (cost, styles), public transportation routes, and so on. Any time you have a set of established points on which to base a judgment, and a set of options to choose from based upon those criteria, you're evaluating.
4. Essay Organizer – After this discussion, hand out the **Essay Graphic Organizer** to each student or put it on the board and have them copy it. Remind them that this is the overall structure that they use for writing formal essays and that they'll use it for this as well. Review the structure, with the thesis and three supporting arguments going in the top box, each of those arguments going into one of the three middle boxes and being followed by three supporting ideas or examples from the text, and the conclusion going into the bottom box. Answer any questions students have about this, but explain that it'll make much more sense once they have actual ideas to work with.
5. 3 Questions – Post the questions you wrote down before class (see *Explanation of Lesson*). Tell students you're going to go through all of these questions as a class, but that they'll each have to choose one to write their own evaluative piece. Go through the questions and cover all questions that students have.
6. Choose Question – Ask students to pick the question they'd like to answer. For this assignment, unless someone comes up with a really strong question on their own, don't let students make up their own questions.
7. Individual Brainstorm – Once they've chosen their questions, or think they have, ask what their first step is in writing a paper to evaluate the topic in the question. They may want to go right to the text and their journals and graphic organizers, but ask them first to do an individual [Brainstorm](#). They should take 5 minutes to write down what they remember from the works they've done and what they think their thesis will be. Normally, when you have to write about something you read, you read and take notes at the same time. That's one of the uses for the

graphic organizers they've been creating and for the group work and discussions they've been doing. This brainstorm will help them check what they remember.

8. Assign Groups – As they're doing their brainstorms, walk around and note who's doing which question, then divide them—on paper!—into groups based on common questions. Don't have more than 4 or 5 to a group, so if you have to, have two or more groups per question.
9. Group Definition: Criteria – After 5 minutes, tell them to stop. Now, ask if anyone remembers the word *criteria* from their homework journal. Do a [Group Definition](#) quickly and get their definition posted on the wall. As you talked about before, before they can evaluate something, they have to decide what their criteria will be for making their decision.
10. Group Break Out: Criteria – Now, ask them to separate into the groups you've created in order to establish sets of criteria. Assign or have them choose group roles using the group roles below. Each group has to work together to come up with a list of 3 criteria—three things that signify: For those doing question 1—a connection between a psychological journey and a physical one; For those doing question 2—the foundation/existence of a guest/host relationship; For those doing question 3—psychological or emotional growth. They should use their notes and journals for this. Give them 5 minutes to complete this. Keep them in their groups once they finish.
11. Create Thesis – After they have their criteria, their next step is to look back at the question. Do they already have a sense of what their answer would be? They should have some sense already, based on the work they've been doing in class. Working as a group, they should look back at their notes and journals and start to determine what their thesis statement will be. They do not all have to agree. It's fine to disagree, as long as they each have examples from the text to support their theses. Before they begin, talk with them about the fact that their thesis for a paper like this will be pretty simple. For question 1 above, they will either believe there is or is not a connection between Telemachus's physical journey and his psychological journey. For question 2, there either is or is not a guest/host relationship in \_\_\_\_\_ today. And for question 3, Odysseus has or has not grown psychologically in the 10 years since he left Troy (they may want to talk about the 20 years since he left home, but unless you, as a class, have covered *The Iliad* and the rest of the history surrounding the 'abduction' and the war, they don't have enough information). The thesis here is the easy part—it's the defense that's going to be tougher! They have 5 minutes to come up with a thesis statement—one per student.
12. Check In – After 5 minutes of brainstorming, tell them to stop. Ask how many have their thesis statements. They can work on rewriting the statements later; for now you just want to get the substance—substance, then form. As far as substance goes, they already have their thesis statements and their three criteria. They're most of the way there!
13. Fill In Organizer – Have them fill in their thesis statements and their three criteria on their 5-paragraph graphic organizers. Remind them—if they need it—that the thesis statement and all three criteria go in the top (Introduction) box, then one of the criteria goes into each of the middle boxes. What's the next step now?
14. Mini Lecture: Evidence – How and where will they find the ideas to support their theses? This part of the writing process may be new for many of them. As they've written papers through school, they were frequently encouraged to give their opinions and say what they felt. In an evaluation, you have to start by saying what you believe, but you base that on concrete (whenever possible) examples from whatever it is you are evaluating. Because they're talking about a specific text and specific characters, they *have* to get their support from the text. If they believe, for example, that Odysseus has grown psychologically, they have to show specific examples from *The Odyssey* that demonstrate that he has grown psychologically. To prove this, they must match his behavior with the criteria they established that represent psychological growth. They cannot just say they think he's grown psychologically because he seems to them to be older, or more mature, or anything else they *think* he *seems* to be. An example (taken from the text before he enters his palace, and therefore before the material they are supposed to use) would be, *One thing that demonstrates psychological growth is the development of a sense of humility. When Odysseus walks into his shepherd's hut and is willing to pretend that he is an old beggar, he puts aside the pride that has caused him so much trouble in his travels.* If you give them any examples, you have to include the criterion you are referencing so they see a very clear relationship. This is the portion of the writing into which the bulk of their effort will go. Before you get started on this, though, tell

them you want to go over the grading rubric now that they understand all the terms and the process. Have them go back to their seats.

15. Essay Scoring – Give each student an **Evaluation Rubric**. Moving from box to box, and around the room, have students read the rubric aloud. After a student has read a box, pause and check for understanding. If the explanation is clear enough to students, move on to the next box and the next student. Explain to students that this is the assessment of the quality of their work. Then post the **Essay Grading Procedure**. Explain that this is the assessment of the effort for each step of the drafting process. The only way they will have points taken off for their effort is if the step is incomplete or late. So they will have two grades for this assignment, one for quality and one for effort.
  16. Supporting Evidence – Use any remaining time to have students get started on their supporting examples from the text. They do not have to finish this today, since they'll finish up their essays in class tomorrow.
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HOMEWORK  
None

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GROUP ROLES

Facilitator – Responsible for keeping all students on track  
Recorder – In this case, responsible for making sure all students are writing down the ideas the group comes up with

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DOCUMENTATION FOR PORTFOLIO

**Unit 1**

Final Exam Unit 1  
Hero Myth  
Trickster Myth  
Monster Myth  
Creation Myth

**Unit 2**

Autobiographical Incident 1  
Autobiographical Incident 2  
Autobiographical Incident 3  
Autobiographical Incident 4