

Short Writing Assignment
Due: 3/22/06 to the Stellar Site

Throughout the course, we have examined views of texts and their use. From Plato to Ong; Buckingham to Brandt; Jenkins to Gee; we have explored different approaches to media and literacy that help us understand how various authors define and attempt to redefine what we think of when we think of literacy.

In an essay of no more than 2000 words, I would like you to discuss one or two views of literacy that particularly resonated with you. Whether you agree or disagree with these views, please explain why, citing from the texts you choose. You may use more than two sources, but the goal of this assignment is to explore thoughts deeply rather than broadly.

I expect you'll want to choose various media examples to help explain your agreement or disagreement with the authors. Please cite those texts as well using MLA format.

- For questions on how to create parenthetical citations and an MLA Works Cited page, see <http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/DocMLA.html> or visit the MIT Writing and Communication Center.

This is meant to be a somewhat informal writing assignment in terms of its voice and point of view. You should consider it an academic thought piece that reflects on what you've learned thus far, what you've drawn from the readings and class discussions, and how you are making sense of the course content. You do not need to make a central argument, and I don't expect you to align yourself with my views. It is important, however, to spend some time digging deep into one or two essays we've read for class and show some careful consideration of them, their context, and our class discussion.

Essays will not be graded formally at this time. However, I will consider them as part of your final project/portfolio for the course. If your essay is particularly good or particularly weak, that will affect your final project grade. You should see this exercise as an opportunity to think on paper. Getting these thoughts down now will provide us with a framework for thinking about your final project for the course.

I will schedule one-on-one meetings with each of you for the week after spring break. At that time, I will provide you with feedback on your writing and thinking and use this essay as a springboard toward your final project, which we will also discuss at that meeting.

Please feel free to work with one another on this exercise! Collaboration and discussion are encouraged; I hope you will talk with me or Neal about what you're working on as well.