

English 229 Optional Reflective Letter

- 4 pts. Extra Credit
- Length: roughly 2-3 pages, typed and double-spaced.
- DEADLINE: no later than 11:59 pm, Mon. May 11th. Go to Bb/Chapbook & Reflective Letter Unit/Reflective Letter/Click Here to Post Finished Letter.

Late letters cannot be accepted except with documented evidence of serious hardship.

Content

The Reflective Letter is addressed to me, and is your chance to reflect on what you've learned this term and to talk with me about what you've learned. You may be general but please provide some very specific examples and details showing how you work evolved with class workshop, what specific info in the texts was applied to your work, and so on. Some items to consider:

1. Discussion of what is in your chapbook: were any of your projects changed to better suit the book? Which pieces are which projects? What do you still consider unfinished? What do you consider your strongest and weakest work? How did all or some of the pieces evolve?
2. What you learned about "reading as a writer," and anything you've gained from our various reading assignments. It would be good to have your thoughts about the textbooks (which I hope you will keep as life resources). I'm especially interested in what *specific* readings, passages, exercises, and tips worked best for you. This is not a review (evaluation) of the texts, so much as a chance to show me that you read carefully and made an effort to apply specific info to your writing.

Please be sure to comment on *Writing Down the Bones*, which is an excellent book to hold on to. Which chapters were most meaningful to you? Did you happen to read additional chapters on your own?

3. What you learned about any and all facets of creative writing. For example: how to jump-start your own imagination; journaling and the personal process; the shaping of the various products as you received workshop feedback; approaches to critiquing your own work; craft; nuts-and-bolts skills and techniques; etc. You may also comment on what you learned about the fine arts and different ways of thinking about art and literature generally.
4. A preview of where you think you might go with your writing. There's of course no required answer for this one; I'm just curious about whether you

might continue to pursue creative writing and/or how you might be able to integrate it into your career or life. I'd also like to know if you plan on printing up some copies of your chapbook.

5. Some self-examination: how much did you *put into* the class? Were you able to bring the necessary self-motivation that assured you would get as much *out of it* as possible? Discuss your work, your effort, and your contributions.

The letter is also a chance to explain anything about your chapbook (problems, glitches) which you think I need to know to best evaluate your work this semester.

Be sure to organize your letter for best effect and so that I can easily follow your thinking. Include an intro and conclusion, helpful transitions, and well-focused, well-developed paragraphs. It's important to provide some *specific* detail and examples for at least some of the items listed above. All writing should be edited for clarity and flow, and proofread for mechanical errors of any sort.

Format

You should regard this as a real letter to me, keeping in mind that it should be somewhat formal (this is, after all, a university course), but also free, up to a point, to be funny or otherwise interesting and creative based on your knowledge of your audience's interests and personal style. (Hint: she loves humor, creativity, engaging language, detail, and thoughtful reflection. And, yes, she likes flat-out wackiness.)

Use standard business letter format according to instructions at Owl at Purdue:
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/653/01/>

Purpose

To help you gain a comprehensive view of your learning in this course, to help you retain what you've learned, and to help you prove what you've learned to me.

To help me assess your learning and level of engagement for the term.

Audience

This is for yours truly, Cindy, and so you should consider her needs and expectations carefully. She like work carefully edited and proofread, and is not opposed to humor.

Grading

I first assign a letter grade to your letter, based on the criteria described above as well as the following:

A = outstanding. Meets all of the stated criteria and instructions exceptionally well. Excels in clarity, thoroughness, and energy, relative to work produced generally in 229. Well-edited and proofed.

B = very good. Meets all of the stated criteria and instructions, or meets several of them exceptionally well, despite a weak performance with others. May be especially striking in spots, despite noticeable flaws. Very competent, but may lack clarity or completeness, relative to work produced generally in 229. Good attention to style and mechanics. Clear attention to assignment.

C = fair. Meets some of the stated criteria, or meets all of them only partially. Uninspired but minimally competent; or very inspired but lacking competence in key areas.. May show some inattention to, or misunderstanding of, instructions. Weak proofreading and editing.

D = poor. Meets few of the criteria. May not not heed or understand instructions. May be sloppy, unproofed, unedited, and/or very perfunctory and uninspired. A barely acceptable letter.

F = unacceptable. Either fails to meet any of the stated criteria, or demonstrates severe oversights or weaknesses in significant areas.

I then award points for each grade:

A = 4

B = 3

C = 2

D = 1