

# Writing in ENG101

W-1 WRITING CONTEXTS

W-2 ACADEMIC CONTEXTS

## Elements of Writing Contexts

*(The Little Seagull W-1):* Refer to your notes.

- Purpose: what are some possible purposes for a piece of writing?
- Audience: who is your audience in Eng101?
- Genre: define the word *genre*.
- Topic: if your topic is assigned, what could the verbs in the assignment ask you to do?
- Stance and tone: define the word *stance*.
- Media/Design: what font should you use in Eng101? What size margins?

# Genres

There are many writing contexts, which determine the **genre** we use:

## CONTEXT

Writing to friends

Workplace

Biology class

Creative writing class

Newspaper

Eng101

## GENRE

Letter, text, email

Performance evaluation

Lab log

Poem, short story, novel

Article, editorial

Expository essay

# Process and Product in Academic Writing

The Academic Writing **Process**: Read the assigned text(s) → Understand the text(s) → Analyze the text(s) → Write an essay about the text(s)

The **product** is a particular type of **essay**: an EXPOSITORY ESSAY

# Expository Essays in ENG 101

According to the Purdue Owl website: “The expository essay is a genre of essay that requires the student to **investigate an idea, evaluate evidence, expound on the idea, and set forth an argument** concerning that idea in a clear and concise manner. This can be accomplished through **comparison and contrast, definition, example, the analysis of cause and effect, etc.**”

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/685/02/>

# Elements of Academic Contexts

1. Evidence that you've carefully considered the subject.
2. **A clear, appropriately qualified thesis**
3. **A response to what others have said**
4. **Good reasons supported by evidence**
5. **Acknowledgement of multiple perspectives**
6. Carefully documented sources
7. A confident, authoritative stance
8. An indication of why your topic matters
9. Careful attention to correctness

## *2. A clear, appropriately qualified thesis*

- In academic writing, you state your central idea as clearly as possible in a **THESIS STATEMENT**.
- The thesis statement is usually at the end of the **INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH**.
- **QUALIFY** your thesis statement: this means that you show there could be more than one perspective (opinion) on an issue.

# Write a specific thesis.

- State your central idea “in a nutshell”:  
“Gasoline prices fluctuate for several reasons.”
- Make your thesis more *specific* by asking questions.

Why do they fluctuate? What are the reasons?

“Gasoline prices fluctuate because of production processes, consumer demand, international politics, and companies policies.”



# Write a qualified thesis.

- Unqualified thesis: “Gasoline prices fluctuate because of production processes, consumer demand, international politics, and companies policies.”
- Qualified thesis: “Gasoline prices **very likely** fluctuate because of production processes, consumer demand, international politics, and companies policies.”

## Why is the second thesis more qualified?

- Unqualified thesis: “Giving school age children computers hurts their academic performance.”
- Qualified thesis: “Although many educational experts support giving children access to computers in schools, there is increasing evidence that this could be hurting their academic performance.”

### *3. A response to what others have said*

... the underlying structure of effective academic writing -- **and of responsible public discourse** -- resides not just in stating our own ideas, but in listening closely to others around us, summarizing their views in a way that they will recognize, and responding with our own ideas in kind. (Graff and Birkenstein 3)\*\*

\*\* *They Say, I Say* by Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein

## Respond to the articles you read

- In ENG101, your essays will be a response to what other people have written in an article or essay.
- You will QUOTE, PARAPHRASE, AND SUMMARIZE their ideas.
- You will respond to their ideas by AGREEING, DISAGREEING, OR BOTH.

## 4. *Good reasons supported by evidence*

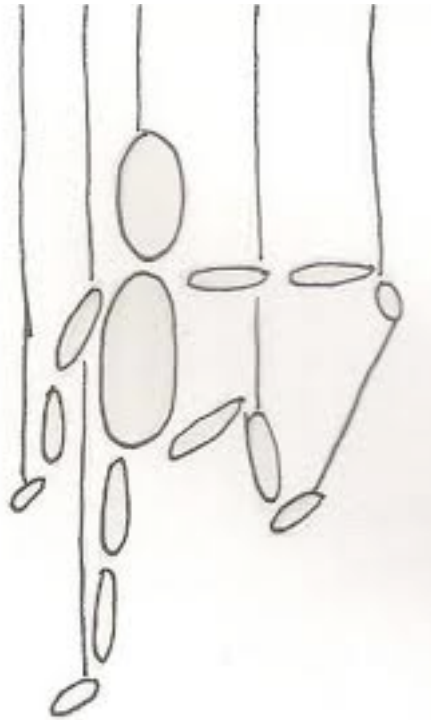
- In your **ESSAY**, you take a position in response to another writer's ideas.
- You state your position in your **THESIS (INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH)**.
- You support your thesis with **REASONS** and **EVIDENCE** in the **BODY PARAGRAPHS**.
- *Imagine that you are a lawyer defending a client in a courtroom. You must convince the judge and jury to agree with your position.*

## *5. Acknowledgement of multiple perspectives*

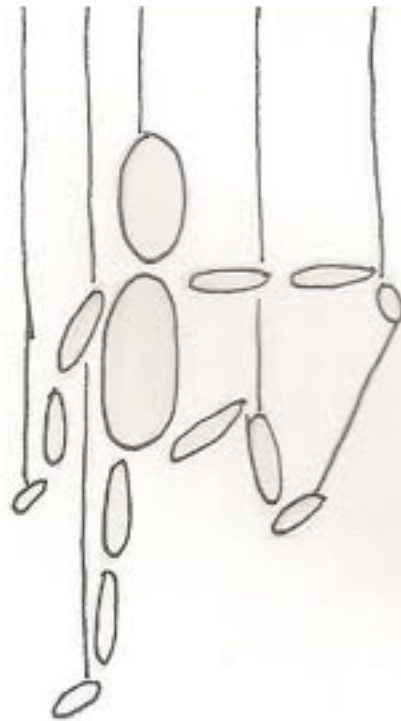
- All of your essays will discuss the perspectives of several authors: these are your **SOURCES**.
- You will have at least two perspectives to discuss, and usually three.
- In Essay One, for example, you will discuss Daniel Gilbert's perspective on happiness.
- You will also present **YOUR** perspective in response to Gilbert.

In other words, you, the essay writer,  
stage a **conversation** in your essay.

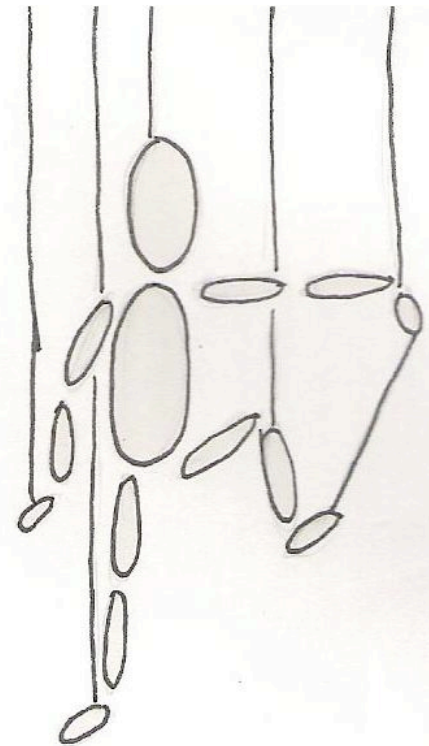
One author's perspective



Another author's perspective



Your perspective



# The other elements of academic writing

- Evidence that you've carefully considered the subject.
- Carefully documented sources: quotation marks, author names, page numbers. Use MLA style.
- A confident, authoritative stance: write with confidence about your position.
- An indication of why your topic matters: we often explain this in the introductory paragraph.
- Careful attention to correctness: go the Learning Center or eTutoring for help.