

## Essay Cycle #3: They Say..., But My Experience Tells Me...

Overview			
Goals	Readings	Topic	Grammar
Essay Form Introductions Support with examples/ stories from a text and experience Using quotations for evidence  Trying Elbow's process of multiple drafting	<a href="#">"Struggling for Perfection"</a> <a href="#">"Just Walk on By: Black Men and Public Space"</a>  "The Process of Writing-- Growing" --Elbow <i>Writing Without Teachers</i> pp. 12-47	Write an essay based upon this kernel sentence construction:  They say..., but my experience tells me ... .  The essay will be based on your response to one of the two essays assigned.	Avoiding problems with pronoun and subject-verb agreement  Learning to use quotations effectively: --SFH chpt. 38 -- Irvin <a href="#">Guide on Using Quotations</a>  Continued work on punctuation and run-ons: <a href="#">Sentence Structure and Punctuation</a> .

### Due Dates for Work in Essay Cycle #3

Due date	Assignment	Due date	Assignment
9/24 **	Task 1: Reviewing the Writing Assignment	9/29	Task 5: Peer response Draft E3-2
9/25 **	Task 2: Reading the Essays	9/29	Task 6: Writing Review draft E3-1
9/25	Task 3: WK 5 GRE, S-V agreement	10/1**	Task 7: After Quick Write #2 Learning Activities
9/25-28	Task 4: Drafting the Essay	10/2	Tasks 8: WK6 GRE, Pronoun Agreement
9/26	Task 4A: Quick Write Draft 1 (E3-1)	10/3	Task 9: Composing the Final Draft E3-3
9/28	Task 4B: Quick Write Draft 2 (E3-2)	10/3	Task 10: Turning in the Final Draft

\*\* Tasks should be completed by this date. No work due.

### Task #1: Reviewing the Writing Assignment

Read through the entire Essay Cycle assignment sheet. Then read the following assignment topic description carefully. You might want to read it again a few times!

#### Topic Description

“They say \_\_\_\_\_ , but my experience tells me \_\_\_\_\_ .”

For our next essay, I am going to ask you to take your writing to the next notch up--from moving to "knowledge telling" to "knowledge transforming." Let me talk about the things you will be working on and doing in this essay that are the same:

#### Same qualities/strategies

- pulling from your own experience and thinking for the content of your paper ("knowledge telling")
- wrestling with appropriateness and specificity in the telling of your experience to get your point

across. By that, I mean you will continue to work on the important and difficult skill of elaborating and specifying your points (the idea of **SHOWING** and not just **TELLING**)  
--shaping and forming your overall utterance into an "essay" with a clear point and logical organization (and essay form in the sense of an introduction, body, and conclusion)

In this class, we could write more essays grounded only in personal experience, but a very important skill to work on for college writing is to also learn about and talk about the ideas of others--particularly, the written texts of others. Here's a description of what you will be doing that is different:

### **Different qualities/strategies**

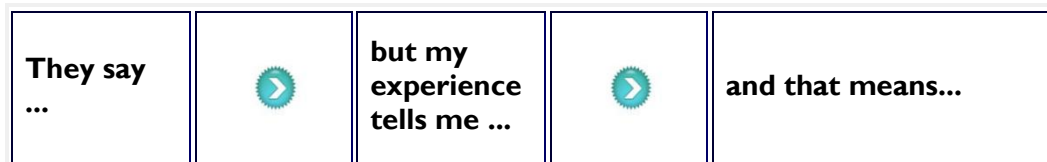
- pulling from the experience and thinking **of others** as expressed in a text . This means that reading becomes very very important because what you write becomes based upon your reading
- summarizing and assessing not just your own experience, but the experience and thinking of others as expressed in their writing
- using the words of others inside your own text (that is, using quoted language from a text to elaborate, support, summarize, or specify what you are talking about. I call this "using quotes for evidence and meaning"). You will be wrestling with appropriateness and specificity in selecting quotes to get your point across
- using quotes will call on you to learn the mechanics and conventions for properly handling and representing the words and thoughts of others in your writing

I urge you not to be intimidated by moving to this next level. You already are very practiced in incorporating what other people have said or written into your own thinking and writing, but this project may call on you to do it in a way than you have done before. Because your writing is based on reading and then using thoughts and ideas from that reading in your writing, you may find that you are using different "muscles" than you have before.

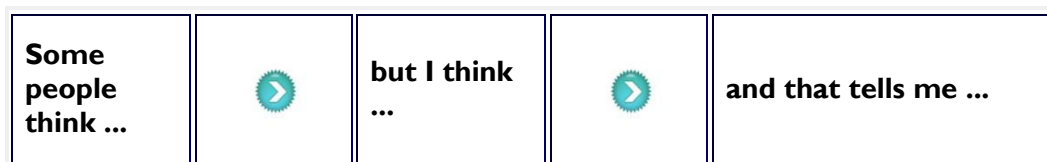
### **Essay Topic**

Read both of these essay: "Struggling for Perfection" and "Just Walk on By: Black Men and Public Space." One essay expresses ideas and opinions on sexism, and the other essay expresses ideas and opinions about racism. Pick one of these essays to write about. For this essay, you are going to put your ideas and experience in dialog or relation to these authors' ideas and experience. See Task #2 on page 4 for links to these readings.

Your essay will focus around another "kernel" sentence:



Alternatively, you could follow this structure:



Let's offer one more alternative



Let's focus this topic a bit more. The "they" for this essay will be the words and experience of either Beck or Staples.



## Two sides

### ***The "They Say" or "They Think" side (The "Staples says" or "Beck says" Side)***

For this essay, you will be reading your selected essay carefully to see what the author and the people they talk about have to say on the subject of the essay. You'll find that they have a lot to say on a number of topics or aspects of the subject. You'll need to read the essay carefully (and re-read it lots) and think about it to see what it is about the essay that most strikes you.

In this section, you will be representing their view point. You won't be analyzing, criticizing, or agreeing with it at this point; instead, you will be trying to "fairly summarize" and represent this author's thinking and experience. That's your goal. In the process, you will be using some of their words by including quotations of what they have said inside your essay. You will also at time paraphrase what they mean--summarizing what they mean in your own words. You will want to be carefully selective about what quotes you use.

If you look at paragraph #2 of Amy Beck's essay, you will see that she is doing a "They Say" paragraph to initiate her discussion!

### ***The "My Experience" or "I think" side***

Here you will be presenting your experience and view point on the subject. It is really important to *ground this part of your essay in your own direct, first-person experience* (or the first-person experience of people you know). Use specific examples to "show" what you mean and illustrate your experience and belief. (If you look at the Beck essay, you will see her doing this exact thing.) The key to this section is that you speak about the subject from your experience. Maybe the author has a point *from their experience*, but *your experience* may be different. For example, Beck definitely shows some pretty clear examples from her experience about the negative effects from how women are depicted in our society. But let's say you haven't see these same affects or seen the level of negative affect she presents. You wouldn't be saying she is definitely wrong or saying her experiences are invalid, but yours may just be different. Whether you oppose or confirm the "they say" side, the most important thing you will want to do in this side is bring in examples from your own experience.

Whatever you do, DO NOT DO RESEARCH FOR THIS ESSAY.

These two sides might be in opposition (as in the Beck essay) or you might write in agreement. You might basically agree, but your experience is a bit different. Your essay may be about clarifying a misconception or prejudice, or it may be about confirming from your own experience the views of someone else. Your kernels could be something like,

Beck/Staples says X, but my experience is Y. (clearing up a misconception/prejudice)

Beck/Staples says X, and my experience is X too. (confirming a view point)

Beck/Staples says X, and my experience is X is a bit different. (confirming but qualifying a view point).

### **The Conclusion: What that \_\_\_\_ means and tells me**

In your conclusion, I want you to step back and say what the overall meaning of your kernel statement means. What does it say from a larger perspective?

For example, if you use Beck's essay, you might write a thesis/kernel like this: "*Beck says all the sexually explicit material in our society has a harmful effect, and my experience tells me she is absolutely correct.*" Your "What does that mean" conclusion could talk about what you think ought to be done to counteract this negative trend in our society. Does it mean we haven't come as far with women's rights as we thought we had?

## **Task #2: Reading the Essays**

Read the essays by Amy Beck and Brent Staples:

["Struggling for Perfection"](#) by Amy Beck

["Just Walk on By: Black Men and Public Space"](#) by Brent Staples

Pick one of these essays to write about, and re-read it again carefully. Think about it. Talk to friends (but don't do research!) For the essay that you decide to write about, I strongly recommend outlining that essay. Write one (maybe two) sentences on each paragraph in the essay highlighting what the paragraph says and does.

## **Task #3: Grammar Review Exercise #5: Learn about Subject Verb Agreement**

Follow the instructions for doing this GRE found with in the GRE Assignment Sheet:

<http://www.lirvin.net/0301bbsite/GramReviewExercisesFI3.pdf>

## Task #4: Drafting (Cooking) the Essay

For this essay, we will be doing something different. I am going to ask you to try doing an experiment following what Peter Elbow calls the "developmental model" of the writing process. It will be strange and difficult and you may end up with something awful at the end, but I want you to try writing a paper in this way to see how it feels and comes out.

Before you begin drafting, you will need to have read Elbow's chapter on the writing process pp. 12-47. In particular, his section on "Starting Writing and Keep Writing" from pp. 25-37 discusses this method for working on an essay.

### Basic premises

- you don't have to have your idea for a paper all figured out BEFORE you write
- the best ideas need to "cook" through multiple drafts
- that your idea will grow and change as you write about it
- that doing multiple drafts quickly (and dirtily) is the best way to push along the development of that idea; it will actually save you time in the end
- that you don't have to be in control all the time; in fact, you want to seek out chaos and confusion
- that you throw away a lot of writing as your work toward your final draft

This approach to writing is different than you have probably written before. VERY different. But this time, *as an experiment*, try it. Below I will outline the general "method" or sequence of steps to follow for each draft.

## Task #4A: Writing Quick Draft #1

1. Do whatever you need to prepare yourself to write. Typically, this involves looking at the reading, any notes you have on it, your outline, or anything else you need to. Also, it means clearing a space and time when you can write and work uninterrupted for about 30 minutes. Note: You will need to type this draft so you can turn it in.
2. Before starting to write, **put all your notes and reading and such away**. Maybe have them accessible for a quick glance, but you won't be writing these quick drafts from notes or materials--you'll just be writing from what is in your head.
3. Write in a freewriting manner for roughly 30 minutes on the topic. Follow the kernel sentence through each of the parts of the essay.
  - 15 minutes on what Beck or Staples says
  - 15 minutes on what your experience related to what they say isTry to write all the way through the whole essay. Both sides.  
(Don't worry about grammar, form, or if you digress. This IS NOT a draft you will keep, so it can be really really rough--Elbow has a lot to say about this kind of writing).

### Post-Writing

4. Directly after you finish, PRINT your draft. Then take 15 minutes (or more) to read your draft. Underline sentences you like, make notations in the margins or on a separate sheet about key insights, ideas or questions. Look for the emerging "center of gravity" in your thinking.
5. POST the electronic version (as is) into the E3-quick1 forum. (Just post. We will not be doing any peer response on this draft.)

## Task # 4B: Instructions for Writing Quick Draft #2

1. Do whatever you need to prepare yourself to write. Typically, this involves looking at the reading, looking at your quick draft #1, any notes you have on it, your outline, or anything else you need to. Also, it means clearing a space and time when you can write and work uninterrupted for about 45 minutes (a bit longer this time).  
Note: You will need to type this draft so you can turn it in.
2. Before starting to write, **put all your notes and reading and such away**. Maybe have them accessible for a quick glance, but you won't be writing these quick drafts from notes or materials--you'll just be writing from what is in your head.
3. Write in a freewriting manner for roughly 45 minutes on the topic. Follow the kernel sentence through each of the parts of the essay.  
--20-25 minutes on what Beck or Staples says  
--20-25 minutes on what your experience related to what they say is  
Try to write all the way through the whole essay. Both sides.  
(Don't worry about grammar, form, or if you digress. This IS NOT a draft you will keep, so it can be really really rough--Elbow has a lot to say about this kind of writing).

### Post-Writing

4. Directly after you finish, PRINT your draft. Then take 15 minutes (or more) to read over your draft. Underline sentences you like, make notations in the margins or on a separate sheet about key insights or ideas or even questions you are having. Look for the emerging "center of gravity" in your thinking.
5. POST the electronic version (as is) into the E3-2 forum. (We will be doing peer response on this draft.)

## Task #5: Peer Response Draft E3-2 Questions

As we have done before, I am asking you to do three peer responses, and you can do a fourth for extra-credit. Please copy and paste the questions into each response:

### Peer Response Draft E3-2 Questions

1. SAY BACK what you hear is the writer's kernel sentence (They say \_\_\_\_, but my experience tells me \_\_\_\_.)
2. POINT to what you like that the author is doing or where they are going.
2. What is ALMOST SAID? The author almost gets to or is leading to something. What would you say it is?
3. If this were your paper, what direction would you take it in? What could you add to where they are going?

### **Task #6: Writer's Review Topic Draft E3-2** (posted as a reply to your E3-2)

Do this Writing Review after you have completed peer response (and hopefully when you have received some peer response). Your response should be 150 words minimum.

**Topic:** Gather all your Quick Drafts together and look them over. Look over any other scratching and notes that you've accumulated as you have worked on this essay. Has your thinking an approach toward this topic evolved through these drafts. Describe what sorts of insights you've gained that you think are particularly significant. Write an outline of how you will set up and develop your final draft.

### **Task #7: After Quick Draft #2: Learning Activities**

Learning About Using Quotes for Evidence and Support

Look over these guides for using quotes carefully:

[Guidelines for Using Quotes](#)--this is the one you want to study!

[The Sandwich Principle for Using Quotes](#)

Also read chpt. 38 in SFH.

Read about Avoiding Plagiarism, proper summarizing and paraphrasing, and doing direct quotations in SFH chpt. 46.

### **Task #8: Grammar Review Exercise #6--Learn about Pronoun Reference and Pronoun Agreement**

Follow the instructions for doing this GRE found within the GRE Assignment Sheet:

<http://www.lirvin.net/0301bbsite/GramReviewExercisesFI3.pdf>

### **Task #9: Composing Your Final Draft**

By this time, you should have a "center of gravity" and a good sense of what you really want to say and in what sort of sequence. For your final draft, I would like you to write a more careful draft. This is NOT a freewriting draft. It is also not built from the direct draft of one of your quick writes. It is a new draft itself, so like before don't write looking at a previous draft. Write fresh. Put that stuff aside.

#### **A) First write for content and form (including using quotes correctly)**

--this draft should have an introduction, body and conclusion. You could have multiple paragraphs that develop each side of your essay (you don't have to bunch them into single paragraphs per side)

--you also should think about the organic structure of your thinking that has developed as you have worked on this paper. Make a new paragraph whenever you move from one main point or part to another in your paper.

--Keep the "using quotations" guide by your side as you use quotes

--You can work on this draft with all your notes and text by your side. Pull out sentences or sections you have written that you want to use, BUT this draft should not be a simple recopying of a whole previous draft.

- B) Review these Essay #3 examples** to give you added perspective on what to do and not to do:  
[E3 example #1](#)  
[E3 example #2](#)
- C) [Review the Evaluation Sheet for Essay #3](#)** to see the criteria upon which your writing will be reviewed.
- D)** Lastly, after you have made any changes you need to the content and organization, edit your paper for any grammatical or proofreading errors. I suggest printing off a copy of the paper and doing it by hand. Make your changes, and you have a final draft to turn in.

### **Task #10: Turning in Your Final Draft**

When you feel that your Essay #3 is ready to submit, please first put it into MLA Manuscript Format. [View this website from the Purdue OWL](#) with an explanation of what that means as well as page 700 in the SFH.

Your paper needs to be double-spaced, with 1" margins, using 12 point font. You also need a heading in the main text of the first page and pagination in the header. See [this youtube video](#) on getting page numbers into your header.

When you have your story in proper MLA Manuscript Format, please submit the final draft to the "Essay #1 Final Draft" assignment. You should upload your file. Once it is uploaded, give a shout! Another one bites the dust.

\*\*\*NOTE ON FILE FORMATS: If you are using Open Office or Microsoft Works, please resave your file first as a Word file or an RTF file formatted document and then upload that resaved file. \*\*\*

Files not turned in in MLA Manuscript Format lose -5 points from the grade.