
English 1B

Reading, Writing, & Research

Texts

1. *Writing with Style* by John R. Trimble
2. *In Defense of Food* by Michael Pollan
3. *LaRose* by Louise Erdrich
4. *Like a Beggar* by Ellen Bass
5. *The Country House* by Donald Margulies

Materials

- Blue or black ink pens for in-class writing
- Journal: composition book with lined paper
- Bluebook for Final Essay Exam

Course Description

The reading for this section of English 1B is comprised of books by contemporary American authors, each of whom has achieved notoriety within their field and written many books over a lengthy and productive career. The books provide us with a sample of each of the four primary genres of literature: journalism (Pollan), fiction (Erdrich), poetry (Bass), and drama (Margulies). The writing for this course will focus on the skills of analysis, comparison, creativity, and research, culminating in a comprehensive in-class essay exam. Along the way we'll hone our research and synthesis skills in order to better evaluate and use sources as we develop our ideas.

Objectives

In this class we will learn to read for grace, nuance and subtlety; we will learn to interpret, analyze, and compare; and we will learn to write with clarity, vigor, and freshness, often incorporating secondary sources into the fabric of our writing. Beyond these modest academic goals, I hope this course will also engender an appreciation for the literary arts that will enlarge your vision of humanity. So, on a practical level, our objectives are to raise language competency in reading, thinking, and writing with sources. But the bigger picture has to do with not just what you can *do* but with who you *are*. I hope you will see this class as an opportunity to discover more about yourself and the world around you as reflected in our readings, lectures, activities, discussions, and writings. Education is a transformative process. Who are you in the process of becoming? What part will this course play in that process?

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Assignments

Analysis Paper—a 1,000 word essay whose primary mode of development is analysis of a single literary work. 100 points possible.

Comparison Paper—a 1,000 word essay whose primary mode of development identifies similarities and/or differences between two literary works by the same author. 100 points possible.

Creative Paper—a 1,000 word composition that develops its ideas by means of original insights and imaginative modes. 100 points possible.

Research Paper—a 1,500 word essay that incorporates secondary sources into a smooth, logical, and original discussion of a major contemporary American author. 150 points possible.

Final Essay Exam—a cumulative in-class essay written extemporaneously into a bluebook during our scheduled two-hour final exam period. 100 points possible.

Journal—includes all in-class exploratory writings, class notes, small research projects, etc. 100 points possible.

Quizzes—we will have four pop quizzes worth 10 points each spread throughout quarter on Trimble's book and class lectures. 40 points possible. *There are no make ups for missed quizzes.*

Participation—I'll keep track of your attendance and participation in our little learning community; your regular, mature, positive contributions to our class atmosphere will not go unnoticed. 60 points possible.

Grades

A+	720-750	C+	517-563
A	690-719	C	470-516
A-	658-689	D+	439-469
B+	626-657	D	408-438
B	595-625	D-	376-407
B-	564-594	F	0 – 375

Policies, Etc.

Classroom Behavior Expectations: Please set your cell phones on “silent” while you are in class. For obvious educational reasons (not to mention common courtesy) you may not play games or text message during our class session. If you receive an emergency call during class, please walk outside to take the call. No private conversations during our class sessions. The time for socializing is between classes and on your free time. I expect you to bring your private copy of the current book we are reading and your journal and a blue or black ink pen to class every day. I also expect you to be a fully engaged,

active participant in this class while you are enrolled in it. Your credibility as a college student, not to mention your grade, will drop if you violate these expectations.

Participation: This is a very important part of the class. I really expect you to be reading and thinking actively, critically, and creatively. This is not a class in which you can cruise along in neutral gear for long. I will call on you regularly and keep track of your responses. When you're in class, be prepared, focused, on task. I will note your progress in my roll book. When called upon to read, speak loudly and clearly, reading word-for-word what you have written. Done correctly, you will learn more from this activity than almost any other single activity we do in this class.

Web Access: You must have regular access to the internet to be successful in this class. Among other things, I use my web site to post assignments and links that are required of you. You must also have a regular, working email account. Take a few minutes to familiarize yourself with my campus web site, especially the page entitled, **English 1B**. In fact, you may want to Bookmark it –at least for the next 12 weeks.

Paper Business: There are suggested deadlines for paper assignments during the quarter because most people do better writing about a book the closer to their reading experience with that book. Paper topics will be announced and described on my web site at the conclusion of our collective reading of each book. I recommend that you take about a week to write each paper (the research paper will take you two weeks). This gives you the advantage of my feedback and evaluation before the next assignment pops up. But the only firm deadline is our final exam day (see Study Schedule). *All papers and journals must be submitted before midnight on final exam day.* In this sense, at least, there is no such thing as a “late paper;” however, there is no mercy after midnight on final exam day; that’s judgment day. There are no rewrites for poorly-written papers; do it right the first time.

Turnitin.com: You will submit your out-of-class papers for this course to this web site. Another Bookmark? Visit the site in advance of our first due date and scroll to the “Training” link on the menu banner. Then click on “Student Training” and watch the video tutorials on how to set up your account and upload a paper. If you’re already familiar with Turnitin.com, you may go straight to the “Student Quickstart Guide” button under the “Resources” menu for a quick review of the process. Our course ID number and password can be found on the first paper assignment instructions on my De Anza web site.

Among other things, Turnitin.com will search the web for language matches with your paper once you upload it, issuing an “originality report,” which tells the percentage of language your paper shares with other similar writings found on the internet. A certain low-level amount of shared language is possible, considering brief quotes, etc. But whether intentional or accidental, if your originality report on any given paper that you submit to this class climbs above 20%, you will receive an ‘F’ on that assignment. One chief purpose of this class is to help you with your writing. If you present somebody else’s writing as your own, you will defeat that purpose.

Tutoring & Assistance: The overall goal of English 1B is to prepare you to read, think, and write at the level necessary for success at the university and beyond; however, not everyone who enrolls in English 1B is prepared to succeed at this level. If you find yourself struggling or falling behind, please take advantage of the many opportunities on campus for tutoring or individually-paced skills courses in reading, grammar, or writing. You will find this course particularly challenging if English is not your native language, or if you have a learning disability that causes difficulty in reading and/or writing. If so, seek help early and often from Disability Support Services (<http://www.deanza.edu/dsps>) or the Student Success Center (<http://www.deanza.edu/studentsuccess/wrc>).

Some Good Writers Talking Shop

“If I were asked to name the most important items in a writer’s make up, the things which shape his material and rush him along the road to where he wants to go, I could only warn him to look to his zest, see to his gusto If you are writing without zest, without gusto, without love, without fun, you are only half a writer.”

--Ray Bradbury

“No style is good that is not fit to be spoken or read aloud with effect.”

--William Hazlett

“People get better at using language when they use it to say things they really want to say to people they really want to say them to, in a context in which they can express themselves freely and honestly.”

--John Holt

“For me and most of the other writers I know, writing is not rapturous. In fact, the only way I can get anything written at all is to write really, really shitty first drafts.”

--Anne Lamott

“Writing and rewriting are a constant search for what it is one is saying.”

--John Updike

“This is what I find most encouraging about the writing trades: They allow mediocre people who are patient and industrious to revise their stupidity, to edit themselves into something like intelligence. They also allow lunatics to seem saner than sane.”

--Kurt Vonnegut

“Writing is very easy. All you do is sit in front of a typewriter keyboard until little drops of blood appear on your forehead.”

--Walter “Red” Smith