

Our Students Placed 2-3 Levels below College English, but Look What They Can Do!

Sample Assignments and Essays

Andrea Hammock
Assistant Professor of English and Reading
Mt. San Jacinto College
ahammock@msjc.edu

Caroline Minkowski
Instructor, Department of English
City College of San Francisco
cminkowski@ccsf.edu

Summer Serpas
Assistant Professor of English
Irvine Valley College
sserpas@ivc.edu

Final Draft Due Date: **Thursday, April 5th**

Context

In her essay “Friends, Good Friends, and Very Good Friends,” Judith Viorst categorizes the various types of friends she has. She writes, “[T]he friendships I have and the friendships I see are conducted at many levels of intensity, serve many different functions, meet different needs and range from those as all-the-way friendship of the soul sisters [...] to the most nonchalant and casual playmates” (150).

Assignment

For this assignment you will write three paragraphs. The first paragraph will be a summary of Viorst’s essay. This paragraph will serve as an introduction and should end with a thesis statement in which you mention the two types of friends you plan to discuss in your two subsequent paragraphs. The next two paragraphs should each describe one type of friend and provide an example from your experience. You must choose one of Viorst’s categories and create one of your own.

Developing your paragraph

- In your first (introductory) paragraph, you will be **summarizing** Viorst’s essay. This means you should begin with a TAG statement that introduces Viorst’s thesis and move to a discussion of her main points and a few key supporting examples. You should mostly use your own words, but you can use brief quotations if you would like. Be sure to cite quotations properly with a page number citation.
- Your introductory paragraph should end with a **thesis statement** in which you introduce the two types of friends you plan to discuss in the following two paragraphs. You should connect your thesis statement to your summary with a transition.
- In your two subsequent paragraphs, you should begin with a **topic sentence** that names the type of friend you will discuss in that paragraph.
- You should **develop your paragraph** by beginning with an explanation of the friendship type you plan to discuss in that paragraph. In your paragraph in which you use one of Viorst’s friendship types, you should summarize her explanation of that type of friend. In your paragraph in which you introduce a type of friend that you made up, you should explain that type of friendship in your own words. You should then move into a fully-developed example or examples from your own life of one or more friends who fit into that category. Be sure to explain *why* the friend fits in the category as you explained it.
- For the **closing** of these paragraphs, you should evaluate why that type of friend is important in your life. Be sure to incorporate the word *because* into this portion of your analysis. For example, “My special-interest friend is important *because*...”

Important Notes

- A rough draft of your essay (3 copies) will be due on 3/29 for the revision workshop
- A clean copy of your revised rough draft of your essay will be due on 4/3 for the editing workshop.

Writing Center Requirements

- **Your formal conference must be completed by 4/4. If you do not complete a formal conference and turn in a completed signature form (attached to this assignment sheet) with your final draft, your grade for this assignment will drop by ½ of a letter grade.**

Prewriting Material Checklist (include in one pocket of your assignment folder):

_____ Assignment sheet and rubric
_____ Rough draft from revision workshop (stamped copy)—due 3/29
_____ Rough draft from editing workshop (stamped copy)—due 4/3
_____ Completed WR 280 Signature form—must be completed by 4/4
Final draft (in the other pocket of your assignment folder)—due 4/5

Rubric for WA 3	excellent	above average	good	below average
Prewriting material —see checklist				
Summary —Your summary begins with a TAG statement that introduces Viorst's thesis and moves to a discussion of her main points and a few key supporting examples using mostly your own words and a few properly-cited quotations if you would like to use them.				
Thesis Statement —Your thesis introduces the two types of friends you plan to discuss in the following two paragraphs and connects to your summary with a transition sentence.				
Topic Sentences —Each of your paragraphs contains a topic sentence that introduces the type of friendship you plan to discuss in that paragraph.				
Development — Your paragraphs explain the type of friendship you discuss in that paragraph and provide specific examples from your experience to illustrate that type of friendship				
Focus —Your paragraphs stay focused on the main point as stated in each topic sentence.				
Concluding sentence —Your paragraphs contain concluding sentences that evaluate why that type of friend is important in your life and include the word <i>because</i> .				
Transitions —You move smoothly from one paragraph to the next.				
Unity —Your essay is unified and stays focused on the same topic throughout.				
Clarity —You have chosen words that work in the context of your sentences, and your writing is clear to your readers				
Editing —You observe the conventions of Standard Written English				
Format —You have followed MLA format .				

Summer Serpas

Writing 301

April 4, 2012

Friends

Judith Viorst, in her article "Friends, Good Friends-and Such Good Friends", claims people have different types of friends that meet different types of needs and friends that range from different significances in one's life. In Viorst's article she talks about the convenient friends, which are friends one would not be friends with if it was their choice. This friend's path crosses over and thus making the two friends. An example of this is a neighbor who could lend their cups and silverware for a party or could take care of one's cats when they are on vacation. Then there are the special interest friends who have the same values and common interests. Viorst gives an example of a girl who talks about a friend who loves to take psychology classes. So the two enjoy each others company solely due to their love and interest in taking psychology classes. Next there is the historical friend who is an old friend that was once an important part of one's life, but is still lightly acquainted. Viorst gives an example of this of a person she once knew in the third grade and has gone on their own way, sharing no common interests, but is still an important part of one's past. Viorst discusses the different types of friends in her article but saves the best for last, the best of friends, and the one who is closest and closely acquainted. Similarly to Viorst, I have various types of important friends, such as cross road friend and soon a life partner friend.

Viorst also talks about the cross road friend in her article. Similar to a historical friend, a cross road friend would be a once important figure in one's past life, who is or was there in one or more crucial events. An example of this type of friend in my life is my cousin and close loved one Sarah. Sarah has been there in many events and continues to be in my life. Sarah was there when we both were helping plan a major relief banquet for orphans all around the world. We struggled together to get tickets sold to as many people as possible. We advertised the dinner together,

Comment [SS1]: Simplistic topic

Comment [SS2]: Lack of analytical thinking in thesis.

pleading our local community to come and support our international fight against forgotten orphans. Sarah was there as support when we both lost our cousin and grandmother in a matter of a month. We helped each other cope with our sorrow for the tragedy that had befallen our family. I was there when Sarah had more things go wrong for her in one a week then she had ever had in her entire life. Sarah is an important cross road friend because Sarah has and always will be one of the closest people in my life. Sarah's role in my life has been important because Sarah has been a means of support in trials and tribulations.

Comment [SS3]: Lack of critical thinking—very brief analysis

An additional type of friend is the life partner friend. A life partner friend is that special person in one's life that has completed the position of the other half of their life. A life partner friend is a life long friend till death due one apart until the afterlife. This friend is not only your friend but you intimate partner and the parent of your children. An example of this in my life is the relationship between my parents. As they courted one another under supervision, they found common grounds and fell in love. They have lived life as life partner friends for many years. My parents were supporting each other when the Soviet Union invaded their home country and forced them to flee to America for freedom and a better life. My parents shared a bond and stuck by each other when they moved into a tiny apartment in Queens, New York. My father barely speaking an ounce of English, worked several jobs, and supported my mother and my two brothers. My mom, who was learning English, took care of the house hold and laid the foundation of our home. Together, when times were tough or good, they supported and loved one another. My parent's relationship inspired me to understand the importance of a life long friend because the person who assumes this position is going to be with you for the rest of one's life. My life partner friend will be my backbone and support me in all the matters we face together. My life partner is important because she will be the one who has the strongest relationship with me out of all the other types of friends.

Comment [SS4]: Formulaic—simply following directions on the prompt, "fill in the blank" style.

Comment [SS5]: Little academic creativity

EXP 389
Fall 2012
S. Serpas
Essay 6

Some people believe that it is human nature to be cruel to others. These people might argue that this cruelty is why Stanley Milgram's subjects acted as they did, and why no one helped Kitty Genovese. Do you accept this explanation of human psychology? Yes? No? Somewhat? And why do you see it like you do?

In coming up with your own position on this issue, I encourage you to think about all that you've learned about Milgram's experiment from

- "The Perils of Obedience" by Stanley Milgram,
- "Review of Stanley Milgram's Experiments on Obedience" by Richard Herrnstein,
- "Review of Stanley Milgram's Experiments on Obedience" by Diana Baumrind, and
- the ideas in Chapter 4 of Lauren Slater's *Opening Skinner's Box*: "In the Unlikely Event of a Water Landing: Darley and Latane's Training Manual—A Five Stage Approach."

Consider the grey areas, rather than arguing strictly on one side or the other. Instead of saying YES we are cruel, or NO we are not, try to come up with a more complex answer to explain human behavior.

In your essay, be sure to include:

- Support for your argument with relevant ideas, information, and quotations from Milgram's essay
- Support for your argument with relevant ideas, information, and quotations from Slater's Chapter 4
- Evidence that contradicts your argument from Milgram and/or Chapter 4—in this part of your essay, you'll need to explain what you think of this evidence (Do you disagree? Do you acknowledge that it has some merit?) and discuss why this evidence does not cause you to abandon your own position

Things to Shoot For:

- Show that you have carefully read the texts from this unit, and that you have fully digested and considered the different viewpoints and evidence.
- Show you are really thinking about the topic—these are complex questions, so don't settle for easy answers. And don't feel that you have to take an either-or position.
- Write so that someone not in our class could understand it. Assume your audience has not read these texts. That means you'll need to briefly summarize key ideas/information and explain any unfamiliar terms.
- If you use the exact words from something you've read, be sure to put those inside "quotes" in your essay, so that readers know you've borrowed another writer's wording.
- Write at least 4 complete pages, typed, 12 point font, double-spaced, 1 inch margins.

Turn-in Procedures:

- Your final draft is due **Thursday, November 29th**.
- Email the assignment to me before the beginning of class the day it is due
- Bring a hard copy to class with the following documents in one pocket of your assignment folder:
 - Writing Center Signature page
 - Draft you reviewed during your Writing Center conference
 - Any drafts you brought to class for peer review, conferences, etc.
 - A blank rubric

Adapted from Dr. Katie Hern's Essay 4: Synthesis Argument from *Window into an Accelerated Classroom: Readings and Major Assignments from English 102 Reading, Reasoning*, available at <http://cap.3csn.org/files/2012/02/Window-into-an-Accelerated-Classroom-revised.pdf>

Reading Activities

Essay 6

“The Perils of Obedience” by Stanley Milgram

This text is a conversation between a psychologist who conducted an experiment into human behavior and others who have reviewed this experiment. List the authors in this text and briefly explain your reactions to each author’s ideas. What did you agree with? What didn’t you agree with? What stood out to you?

“In the Unlikely Event of a Water Landing” by Lauren Slater (handout)

- **Golden Lines:** Highlight or underline five quotations in the text that stand out to you. Write in the margins next to these quotations your reason for highlighting or underlining. These reasons could be a question, a statement, an emotional reaction, or a connection to your life or to something else in the text.
- **Main Idea:** After reading the text, write on the back of the handout two things:
 - The question you think Lauren Slater was trying to answer in her article (her research question) and
 - What you think is the article’s answer to that question.

Blog Posts:

Blog Post #13

Would you have been glad to have participated in the Milgram experiments? Why or why not?

Blog Post #14

Have you ever been in a situation similar to that of Kitty Genovese, when something bad was happening to someone else and people around hesitated to help? Or have you been in the opposite situation, where something bad was happening and everyone clamored to help? Describe one of these situations from your own life and reflect on the reasons why people acted as they did. Are there similarities or differences between your situation and that described in “In the Unlikely Event of a Water Landing”?

EXP 389
Fall 2012
S. Serpas
Feedback Sheet—Essay #6

Name: _____

<u>Assignment Requirement</u>	Not Done	Needs Work	Fair	Well Done
Critical Thinking				
As a writer, you should . . .				
Use a clear critical voice to answer the essay prompt				
Sum up the paper with a clear thesis statement in the first couple paragraphs				
Support ideas with specific examples, details, information, quotes from the assigned readings				
Discuss at least one point that contradicts your own position				
Explain ideas/information fully enough for readers not in our class to follow				
Discuss complexities and not make things seem more simple than they really are				
Organization				
As a writer, you should . . .				
Present ideas in an order that makes sense to readers				
Open with an intro that engages readers and conveys overall focus of paper				
Make sure each paragraph has a clear focus				
Make sure each paragraph is a reasonable length (usually 1/3 to 2/3 of a page)				
Use your critical voice to connect the different parts of your paper together				
End with a conclusion that completes the discussion				
Mechanics				
As a writer, you should . . .				
Observe conventions of standard written English				
Proofread carefully so that sentences are clear and concise				
When paraphrasing, stick to the author's meaning while using your own language (sentences and words are significantly different, not just a few words changed)				
When quoting the author's exact words, use "quotation marks" and copy word for word				
Use your critical voice to lead into quotes & let reader know who quote is from (using TAG and signal phrases)				
Use your critical voice to explain how a quote connects to your essay				
Produce at least 4 full pages in MLA format—double-spaced, 12-point font, 1" margins, no extra spaces between paragraphs				
Use MLA parenthetical citations to document your sources				

Ypani Guerrero

Prof Serpas

Exp 389

11/28/12

Ones Way of Thinking

Every day, people make decisions that determine where the next step we take in life will be. We often don't know whether those decisions will positively or negatively affect us in the long run. Are we really conscious on the decisions we make? In chapter 4 of Lauren Slater's *Opening Skinner's Box*, "In the Unlikely Event of a Water Landing, she describes the murder of Kitty Genovese who had 38 witnesses watching but did not help and a couple experiments done by John Darley and Bib Latane who were experimental social psychologists, that show people's behavior and actions in a situation when someone is in need of help and what decisions they make. Also, Stanley Milgram conducted an experiment to see how far a person will go in shocking someone because a higher authority tells them to do which is described in his article, *The Perils of Obedience*. Stanley's article teaches how obeying to authority has a great impact on the decisions people make. We don't all necessarily mean to do any harm but do so because we are put in a situation to act cruelly based on obeying authority or simply to protect ourselves from being involved in a situation that can negatively affect us. The subjects in Milgram's experiment and the people who witnessed Kitty Genovese murder as described in Slater's article did not act out of cruelty but were forced into doing cruel things by having the pressure of a higher authority or being put in a situation where the environment and the diffusion of responsibility affected their way of thinking and physically taking action.

Obedience is a behavior that is practiced all over the world. It can be used in the way it is supposed to be which is righteous or sadly abused in a malicious way. Milgram did an experiment to test if people will go against their sense of right and wrong by obeying the wrongfully demands of an authority's figure or to reject them. In this experiment, he conducted having the experimenter who is the authority figure and the teacher who administers the shocks to the learner who is strapped to a chair and is being tested on his ability to remember the second word of a pair when he hears the first one again. When he makes a mistake, he then receives a shock increasing the intensity. The learner is an actor so there is not real pain involved. The whole experiment is to see how far a person will go when being ordered to inflict pain on a person. When the learner complains that he is feeling discomfort and reveals

Comment [SS1]: Awkward wording might make some readers focus on superficial errors and not look deeper for critical thinking and synthesis of ideas.

Comment [SS2]: Thesis illustrates strong critical thinking and an ability to look at complexities.

that he has a heart condition, the teacher begins to feel tension and wants to quit. But the experimenter orders him to continue. The outcome was that under orders, 30 percent of them were willing to deliver 450 volts.

Comment [SS3]: Strong understanding of this difficult text.

Milgram writes, "The ordinary person who shocked the victim did so out of a sense of obligation-an impression of his duties as a subject-and not from any peculiarly aggressive tendencies" (178). In this experiment, the teachers were put in a tough situation because even when they did not want to continue and were going against their morals, they did because authority got in the way. The power of authority was stronger to most because of the vulnerable situation they were put in. First they agreed to do this experiment. Second, the environment is located in a laboratory. This is an uncomfortable situation for the teacher. The mental effect of going against authority results in the subject fearing to appear arrogant, rude, and miserable in having to deny what the experimenter says. That unwillingness to "hurt the experimenters feelings is part of those binding forces inhibiting his disobedience" (178). Another reason for acting the way they did and not out of cruelty was because they did not feel responsible for their actions of shocking the learner because all they were doing was obeying to authority that has the sole responsibility.

Comment [SS4]: Carefully explains her argument and smoothly integrates the quotation, both in her writing and in her argument.

In addition, another experiment happened when the teacher was allowed to pick any shock level which resulted in the majority of people delivering low, painless shocks when it was their choice to choose which level of volts to use. The subjects proceeded to for 30 trials. Slater writes, "The average shock used during the thirty critical trials was less than 60 volts" which was lower than when the victim showed the first signs of discomfort (177). There is an exception of the two subjects who shocked at the highest level of 325-450 volts which Slater describes the subjects as, "The sadistic fringe of society" (177). The results of the majority choosing to deliver the lowest of the shock levels comes to show that we do not choose to act upon being cruel and if it was our decision, most likely we wouldn't.

Moreover, Slater writes how the Kitty Genovese murder case was a perfect example of the witnesses acting the way they did due to the environment and diffusion of responsibility. The murder occurred in the early hours of the morning at 3 AM in Queens, New York. Catherine Genovese was coming home from her late night shift at a bar. She parked her car adjacent to her apartment where the 38 witnesses were and stepping out of her car walking towards her building, she noticed a suspicious man so she tried to go to the police call box but never made it. Kitty was horrendously murdered by that man in the period of thirty-five minutes. The murderer was able to get away with three attempts each coming back to finish killing her because none of the 38 witnesses helped Kitty when they

Comment [SS5]: Makes connections between the two texts.

clearly heard and saw what was happening. The most that they did was turn on the lights of their apartment and one yelled, "Leave her alone!" but never once did they go outside to physically show their presence and help Kitty. Acting out of selfishness was carried out in Kitty Genovese's case. They had enough time to figure out that something bad was going on. It makes sense that the witnesses were frozen in fear or indecision, but it was over thirty-five minutes! That is more than enough time to snap out of it and do something about the situation. Only one witness called and by the time police came, Kitty was already dead. The rest who saw, went back to sleep. This to me was a sign of lack of concern and that is not okay. But in the end, their purpose was not to act out of cruelty but more so to protect them from nothing bad happening to them. Instantly anyone reading this case would think the witnesses are cruel human beings for not doing anything. But there is a reason to their actions and that is the environment, timing, and diffusion of responsibility. Witnesses said, "We thought it was a lover's quarrel" and one said, "I didn't know exactly what was happening" (102). The environment and diffusion of responsibility overrode the situation preventing the witnesses to make a move.

Comment [SS6]: Excellent ability to look at complexities and move into the gray areas of academic argument.

Slater also discusses another experiment where Darley and Latane set out to find better answers for the reasoning of the witness's actions. They created an experiment where they replicated a seizure. There was a student who sat in a separate room and spoke into a microphone for about two minutes about the challenges being a college student at NYU. There were separate audio wired rooms where the tape recorders were saying other student's stories and the subject didn't know that the voices were pre-recorded and thought that it was a real person speaking. The gist of this experiment is that one of the students says that he is epileptic and is prone to seizures and happens to get one. The results were that very few acted. "There is something about a crowd of bystanders that inhibits helping behavior" (101). The reasoning to this was the sizing of the group and the relationship of helping behavior.

Connecting to Kitty's case, the more people witnessing, the less they were unlikely to seek help. Also, the diffusion of responsibility played a big role on the actions of the witnesses. Slater writes, "The more people witnessing an event, the less responsible any one individual feels and, indeed, is, because responsibility is evenly distributed among the crowd" (102). This means that there were enough people for someone to take action and witnesses must have thought to themselves that someone will do something and call the police or go out there and help her. With the time and setting of the place, it made things harder for the people to help. They simply didn't

Comment [SS7]: Tying ideas together and making connections

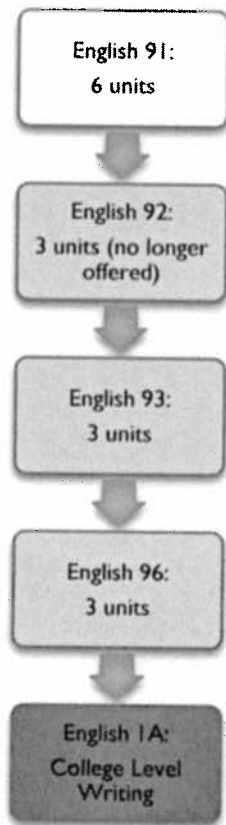
want to get involved. The witnesses did not have bad intentions of being cruel but it was the situation of the environment and diffusion of responsibility that caused them to act the way they did which was not helping Kitty.

Therefore, to end this conflict of confusion, society needs to educate everyone to follow the 5 steps of helping behavior that Darley and Latane developed. They are: 1. You, the potential helper must notice an event is occurring 2. You must interpret the event as one in which help is needed 3. You must assume personal responsibility 4. You must decide what action to take 5. You must then take action. People should set aside what society will think and stand up for what's right. Slater wrote, "The students who saw the films and learned the necessary stages that culminated in good citizenship were nearly twice as likely to offer help than those without such education" (109). The five stages of helping behavior needs to be mandatory to teach everyone.

With people having the proper education of what to do in a situation, it would increase helping and taking action for example saving the life of Kitty Genovese by following these five steps. The subjects in Milgram's experiment and the witnesses of Kitty Genovese case did not innately act out of cruelty. They didn't personally want to cause harm but were involved in a situation where they had a difficult position of either obeying to higher authority or be put in the situation where the environment and diffusion of responsibility caused them to not take action in helping Kitty Genovese.

Acceleration at CCSF

Traditional Sequence



Accelerated Sequence



English 92 Sample Assignment Prompt

This assignment prompt is from *Integrations*, which used to be the required textbook for English 92.

Jonetta Grissom's Future

Write a four-page essay in which you evaluate the arguments for and against granting Jonetta the time off she has requested and explain what decision you think the manager should make and why.

English 92

May 19, 2008

Jonetta Grissom's Future

Jonetta Grissom is a waitress at a local restaurant who wishes to participate in a government-sponsored computer training class, offered for free, to women receiving welfare or a low income. Although the restaurant's manager values Jonetta's work and would like to help her obtain this training, he realizes a decision to allow the time off would negatively impact the restaurant operations. The manager's decision is complicated, because he must also consider whether there are any legal requirements for the restaurant to support Jonetta, or if the outcome would affect the image and popularity of the entire restaurant chain. Although the manager likes Jonetta and sympathizes with her desire to improve her life, this personal view must not affect his duty as a businessman. A review of the details of the situation shows that the correct business decision must be to deny Jonetta Grissom's request.

Even though Jonetta's situation is not easy to decide, any person with functioning heart would want to help someone like her. This employee is a 26-year-old, single, African American woman. She has been working as a waitress for this restaurant for more than four years, showing an outstanding loyalty. The restaurant has otherwise a high rate of employee turnover. Jonetta is not asking to get paid for this time off, but only to reduce her hours for eight weeks. Like every person that is a waitress her job is a dead-end job with no possibility for future advancement, but now, with this new course, she thinks that is the time to improve her skills and make more money. The entire purpose of the state-sponsored program is to help women in Jonetta's situation.

Comment [CM1]: The thesis is very broad. The writer does not specify why the manager should deny Jonetta's request.

The manager likes Jonetta and would very much like to find a way to accommodate her request by giving her the time she needs. However he finds it impossible to make a new schedule for that waitress that would allow Jonetta to take off the required time for her class, especially since Jonetta did not make the request until two weeks before the start of the class session. Jonetta works until 7 pm, but would need to leave at 5 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays to attend the classes. The restaurant is open 24 hours a day, but none of the current waitresses working the other shifts are able to come in extra hours to cover Jonetta's time off. The manager considers whether to hire a part-time worker for this period but realizes the cost would not be possible in his budget. He also realizes that nobody would accept such a part-time job because the pay is too low to make it worthwhile. Even if someone took the job, they would not be capable of filling in Jonetta's time without a lengthy training period, because Jonetta's shift is the busiest for the restaurant and can only be performed by a completely trained worker. It is the manager's responsibility to keep the restaurant running within budget, so the facts of this situation require that the decision must be to deny her time off, unless there is some unexpected change in the personnel that would allow it, or possibly for some future class session where there would be more time to prepare for the changes.

The manager has to consider whether they are legal requirements for the restaurant to make adjustments for Jonetta because of its past discriminatory practices against African-Americans. He consulted with the restaurant office about the situation, and he received a response letter indicating that this case would clearly not be covered by the court order. Even though Jonetta is an African-American, there is no evidence that she would be denied a benefit that workers of other ethnic origins receive. Therefore the

Comment [CM2]: Most of the paragraph consists of paraphrased information from the case study. Only the last sentence contains analysis.

manager can disregard ethnicity to make his decision, because he can be confident that the management's policies are fairly applied.

Another issue the manager should think about is the image of the restaurant chain as long as it is sensitive right now. The letter from the office reminds him about this image, and the sensitivity that remains after the court order against discrimination was served. However, from what is in this letter, the home office does not offer anything extra that would make it possible for the manager to give Jonetta the time off. The essential thing needed would be to increase the manager's budget, so that he could at least attempt to hire a temporary experienced waitress full-time for these two months, but no such offer is made. The reasoning for this is probably a business decision by the restaurant chain, which aims to attract customers mostly by the low cost of its meals. There is no need for the restaurant to provide expensive benefits to its workers. The customers appear more interested in the food prizes than the condition of the workers. Although there is a high turnover of its employees, and each new employee requires some training, the restaurant is always able to find enough employees to accept the low wages and keep the restaurant open. If Jonetta were to quit her job to take the classes, then this could leave the restaurant unable to provide a good service for a temporary time, but Jonetta did not say she would quit, and even if she did it probably would not affect the image of the restaurant chain. The manager can only conclude from the home office letter that he should choose the risk of Jonetta quitting, rather than offer her any exception that would certainly create a higher cost.

The assistant manager, John, tries to help the manager by saying he thinks the training will probably not help Jonetta, and maybe Jonetta will not even finish the course, so making any special efforts end as a waste of time. Certainly, this pessimistic opinion

Comment [CM3]: This paragraph is underdeveloped. It is also not clear how it connects to the previous paragraph.

Comment [CM4]: The writer could have emphasized the connection between this paragraph and the previous paragraph.

Comment [CM5]: Most of the paragraph summarizes the letter and its implications. The writer doesn't get back to her idea about the restaurant's image until the end of the paragraph.

Comment [CM6]: Again, the connection between this paragraph and the previous paragraph is not clear.

should not be considered by the manager in his decision, because the outcome of Jonetta's efforts to take the course is none of the restaurant's affair, and to consider such things really could cause the restaurant to cross a legal or ethical boundary. The contrast in opportunities given to John, who obviously lacks experience as a manager and who is disturbingly unsympathetic, compared to Jonetta, who might make a much better manager with some additional education emphasizes the difficult situation that women such as Jonetta experience. Sadly, though, John's opinion is supported by studies by the National Survey Research Foundation, which has found that most of the courses, like she is trying to take, not teach marketable skills. Dawn Adams, a spokesperson for the foundation as concluded that although some of the programs "provide genuinely helpful training", the programs often are a "cruel hoax," and can be "guaranteed to fail" because they can be "badly designed" (97). However, the success or failure of these courses should not be part of the manager's decision, which must focus on running the restaurant's business.

To hire someone just to cover her shift is not easy. The probability of getting someone to work four hours a week and not even on the same day, just to make a little bit of money is too low and the manager has only two weeks left before the beginning of Jonetta's classes. It seems that it would be easier to hire a completely new employee to cover her position if she really wants to go. Even though he would like to help her, he has to think about his own job, so as a businessman he should not give her the time off.

Comment [CM7]: The only direct quote, also from the case study.

Final Project: Can We Stop Gang Violence? .

I. Individual Work: Essay (adapted from CAP)

Assignment

Taking into consideration what you have learned about gangs this semester, write an essay in which you answer our class's driving question, "can we stop gang violence?." As in previous assignments, I encourage you not to settle for an easy "yes" or "no" answer, but to think deeply about the issues we have explored and acknowledge their complexities.

Audience:

As you will be publishing your essay in an online zine, write so that someone not in our class could understand it. Assume your audience has not read our texts. That means that you'll need to briefly summarize key ideas/information and explain any unfamiliar words.

Things to Shoot For:

1. Show that you have carefully read all materials about gangs that we have studied this semester, and that you have fully grasped all issues, ideas, and concepts discussed in these materials.
2. Show that you are really thinking about the topic--don't settle for an easy answer to this essay prompt. This is a complicated topic that experts disagree on! Don't feel that you have to take an either-or position; just make sure that you state your position clearly and support it with strong information and elaboration.
3. Use quotes and paraphrases from 4 or more texts we have read (at least one from each unit) and 1 library source. Make sure to explain all information by stating what it means and how it supports your points.
4. Include at least one counterargument paragraph.
5. Make sure your essay has a title, an introduction, a unified thesis statement, multiple paragraphs, and a conclusion.
6. The essay should contain appositives, descriptive clauses, verbal phrases, subordination, and coordination.
7. Write at least 4 full pages, typed, 12 point font, double-spaced, 1 inch margins.
8. Proofread carefully!

II. Team Work: Online Zine

Each team will publish its essays in an online zine. A zine is a small publication that is typically about unusual and specialized topics. You will create and make public your zine on Blogger or Wordpress, free Internet publishing platforms. I recommend that you design one page as a cover page with links to additional pages that contain each team member's essay.

As in a real magazine, each team member could have a different staff role:

A tekky/graphics developer who is responsible for creating the overall design of the cover page and making sure that the pages with the team members' essays work with the overall design, creating a cohesive zine.

A big-picture editor who makes sure that each essay is coherent, well-developed, and clear.

A grammar/mechanics editor who makes sure that each essay is free from intrusive errors.

A MLA editor who makes sure that each essay has appropriate in-text citations and works cited lists.

If you don't feel comfortable dividing these tasks, you can work on all of them together.

Even though you will work on your zine as a team, each group member is responsible for writing his or her own essay.

III. Team Work: Presentation

Finally, each team will have 30 minutes to show off their zine!

Present each team member's answer to our class's driving question.

Reflect on your creative process (Why do your zine look the way it does? What choices did you make in putting it together? What was your biggest challenge? How did you overcome it? What was easy? Why?)

Again, I want you to create a presentation that is not only informative, but also fun, something that you would like to see.

Lauren Leung

Caroline Minkowski

English 9293

10 December 2012

Can We Stop Gang Violence?

The country has fought for decades to stop gang violence. We have tried many methods to stop it. In some places, gang-related crime rates have dropped after the government introduced some methods to address gang violence. However, is gang violence actually disappearing in the country? The answer is, no. Gangs still exist and gang violence still exists. We can only reduce the gang violence. We cannot stop gang violence because all methods to address gang violence have their weaknesses, which cannot solve the problem completely.

Even though problem-oriented policing can reduce gang violence, it cannot make sure the gangs are going to stop. In the book *Don't Shoot*, by David Kennedy, who uses problem-oriented policing as a base and promotes the project "Operation Ceasefire" to fix the trouble communities, shares his journey about stopping gang violence. According to Kennedy, problem-oriented policing is basically solving problems by "picking a problem, researching it, finding partners, and figuring out a way to fix it" (31). Writing about the success of problem-oriented policing, Kennedy proves that Operation Ceasefire works as a method to reduce gang violence. For example, he promotes Operation Ceasefire in High Point, a place that is suffering from serious gang problem. After Kennedy's team had worked on it, Kennedy states that, "there hasn't been a homicide, a shooting, or a reported rape in the West End since May 18, 2004. It's been six and a half years, as I

Comment [CM1]: Lauren acknowledges and discusses an opposing viewpoint.

write this. The community has its streets back. People started going outside, using the parks, fixing up their houses” (183). Kennedy believes that problem-oriented policing is really useful to stop gang violence. It can completely break down the gang and give the streets back to the community. However, determining whether problem-oriented policing works or not, it is really based on the gangs themselves. Therefore, if the gangs are not willing to compromise, problem-oriented policing will not work. The people who work with problem-oriented policing do not recommend using law enforcement to lock people up. They believe solving the root causes of the problem is the only way to stop gang violence. Kennedy states that “there was no conceivable way to do so with ordinary law enforcement, no way to crack the one-in-fifteen-thousand program. But it could be done another way: get a drug case ready to go, and then don’t arrest the dealer. Tell him that if he starts selling again the case would be activated and he’d be picked up, without any new investigation or a single bit of new evidence.” (160) Kennedy tells the police not to arrest the drug dealers even if they have all the evidence which proves they are breaking the law. He believes that gang members will listen and make the right choices to stop making mistakes. Thus, the choices are on the gang members’ hands; they can pick to continue what they are doing and take the risk to be sent to the jail or get off from the streets. However, sometimes to stop or not to stop may not be the gang members’ choice. In *The Dream Shattered*, Patrick Du Phuoc Long, who is a Vietnamese counselor trying to help the Indochinese youths, discusses the reasons of Indochinese children staying in gangs. Long explains that in the gangs, there are the people called “Big Brother” who control the younger members. He states that “the Big Brother’s greatest skill lies in his ability to create a fanatical loyalty in the younger members who come under his spell. As

Comment [CM2]: Lauren identifies gang members’ free will (and lack thereof) as a weakness of David Kennedy’s approach to fighting gang violence.

he initiates his young charges into the world of crime, the Big Brother orders them to deny any knowledge of him in the event that the group is caught engaged in criminal activity" (107). According to the "Big Brother rule", the younger gang members are always those who are committing crimes on the streets for the Big Brother. They are loyal to the Big Brother; hence, they think that it is a glory to do something for the Big Brother. They have no choice but continue committing crimes and drug dealing. Even if the younger gang members are arrested, there are other gang members to do their jobs. As a result, we can never stop gang violence with this. It is clear that problem-oriented policing do not work everywhere and there's no way to make sure if it will work because it's based on the gang members.

Besides problem-oriented policing, the court uses gang injunctions to stop gang violence. Even though gang injunctions can stop gangs from hanging out in the public, they do not help the gang members to get a new life. So they will find other ways, which can be illegal, to live their life. Gang injunctions are court orders restricting targeted gang members' activities to avoid their chances involving in gang-related crimes. In the article "Oakland's Gang Injunction Is a Chance to Save Lives", the authors, John Russo and Anthony Batts explain that gang injunctions are effective because "it would prevent them from hanging out together in public and from being on the street between 10 p.m. and 5 p.m. When members of the gang are caught committing crimes they are often together, and it is often during late night hours" (1). Russo and Batts believe that the gang members are all forced to stay home and there will be no more gang violence; this is only possible for a small group of gangs. However, in this modern society, the gang members can still keep in touch with the gangs even if they are restricted to stay out of the street.

Comment [CM3]: Lauren uses Patrick Du Phuoc Long's observations about Big Brothers to support her critique of David Kennedy's Operation Ceasefire.

For example, online network is a really good source to keep in touch with gang-related crimes. In the article “The War on Gangs”, the author Alex Kingsbury states that “wherever they operate, gangs are increasingly turning to computers and the Internet. Often behind password-protected sites, they post photo-graphs of their own gang signs, colors, and tattoos. Police even report that some gangs are using their websites to take positions on local political issues” (n.pag.). Kingsbury explains how the gang members can still involve in gangs. Therefore, gang injunctions can only get the gang members “out of the streets” but do not truly get them out of the gang. Moreover, the targeted gang members’ activities are restricted but with the online network, they can get new members to commit crimes for them. The gang injunctions do not solve the root causes and stop the gangs from reforming. On the other hand, there is an “opt-out” system that can let the targeted gang members who have turned their life around to get removed from the injunction list. However, the procedures are very complicated which they may have to be restricted for their whole life. In the article, “No Way Out: An Analysis of Exit Process of GangInjunctions”, from California Law Review, the author Lindsay Crawford investigates the process of “opt-out”. Crawford states that “community members and local leaders inquired further, asking whether former gang members had any success removing their names from injunctions. The answer was startling: in the entire history of the Los Angeles experience with civil gang injunctions, no gang member had ever successfully removed his or her name from an injunction” (162). Crawford explains that only Los Angeles and San Francisco provide an unofficial way to get removed from the list. In other words, for most of the places that only provide the official “opt-out”, the gang members are not going to be removed even they have turned their life around

Comment [CM5]: Lauren uses “The War on Gangs,” an article she found through the library’s online databases to support her critique of gang injunctions.

already. In the article “Gang Injunctions: Fact Sheet from the ACLU of Northern California”, ACLU claims that since there are no way for the gang members to get back to the normal life without being labeled as gang members, “the injunction could follow them the rest of their life, which can make it more difficult to avoid gang activity.” (1) ACLU believes that the government is giving no way out for the gang members are just going to push them back to the street life or in another form to be in gangs. The gang members need to make money for life; therefore, being in gangs and committing crimes may be the only way that they can live their life. Therefore, instead of forcing the gang members out from the street, the government should solve the root causes which truly get them out of the gangs.

In the meantime, to solve the root causes of gang violence, the government provides other methods. Even though social services can help the gang members with job and education opportunities, not all the gang members who wanted to turn their life around can receive help. Writing about the success of social services, ACLU states that “Los Angeles has numerous gang injunctions – more than any other city, yet lost more than 10,000 youth to gang violence in the last 20 years. New York is a major city with the potential for serious gang problems, yet in 2005 Los Angeles had more than 11,000 gang-related crimes, while New York faced 520. What has been shown to work at reducing violence and gang activity is funding social services” (1). ACLU provides the data that New York, where works on funding social service rather than gang injunctions, is being more successful than Los Angeles in reducing gang violence. When the gang members get jobs, they don’t have to stay on the street all the time; they can actually get out of the gangs. However, not every single gang members can receive help from the social services.

For example, “call-in” is one of the programs that gather the gang members in a room and notice them they can provide job and education opportunities. Kennedy also participates in setting up a call-in. The Operation Ceasefire team sends letters to the gang members to invite them to the call-in; however, he states that “we didn’t know if anybody would show up. Probationers and parolees ignore their terms and conditions all the time and hardly anything ever happens to them.”(63) The team’s jobs are just sending out letters and wait for gang members to come to the meeting; hence, there is a possibility that no one will show up. They are at a passive position where not all the gang members can receive the messages to stop gang violence and receive help. In addition, Ali Winston, the author of “Proposed Oakland Gang Injunctions May Complicate Anti-Gang Efforts”, states that “City documents indicate call-ins have suffered from a perception that the program is a set-up to being put on an injunction list” (1). Winston explains gang members may not show up to the call-in because they are scared that it is a set up; in other words, the gang members think that if they show up to the call-in, it means that they admit they are gang members and get arrested. As a result, gang violence cannot be stop because the gang members do not trust the government is actually being here to help; the gang members are just going to stay in where they are and keep involving in gang violence.

Last, prevention program can prevent future gang members from forming; even though prevention programs can prevent kids from joining gangs, it takes too long that the current problems are not solved. Long interviews one of the Indochinese high school students observes that “we have been treated like outsiders. We haven’t been accepted by the American culture. Gangs allow us to identify with something” (qtd. in Long 100).

According to the high school student, providing more care and help to the students to stay in school is necessary. The government should fix the education system and put the students into the class level which is suitable for them. School should work on accepting the students who are the minority groups; therefore, they are not going to drop out of school due to the failure in classes and losing connection to the school. However, discussing the effectiveness of prevention program in education, Kennedy states that “let’s say it’ll take fifteen years to completely retool the public schools so they work for the most disadvantaged kids in our most disadvantaged communities: wildly optimistic, but let’s say. Let’s say it’ll take another fifteen years to get the first wave of kids through the new schools so they hit their years of peak risk immunized to the violence. That means we live with all this for another three decades. At best” (212). Kennedy explains that to fix the education system is going to take too long that we should work on solving the current gang violence problem. Taking fifteen years to stop the gang violence is not worthy; instead, using the other methods to stop the current gang violence is even better. Meanwhile, there are afterschool program to keep the kids out of gangs. However, in *Always Running*, Luis J. Rodriguez, who was a former gangster in L.A., claims that it’s not as easy to get out of the gang because of peer pressure; he states that “I thought about the globe. Chente was right. A bigger world awaited me. But I also knew: Once you’re in Las Lomas, you never get out – unless you’re dead.” (236) Chente, who is the “teacher” among the Mexican study group, tries to get Rodriguez out of the gang. Rodriguez knows that he should live a normal life but his friends are all in gangs, thus he can’t leave the gang or he is betraying his friends. In other words, even though there are prevention program for the students, other than the problem – it takes too long to see the result, it

also base on the kids' choices.

The government is thinking as many methods as they could think of to stop the gang violence; however, there isn't a perfect method which can stop gang violence completely. Gangs are still going to exist in the community. We have to live with the gangs. Nevertheless, reducing the gang violence to a point where we can live comfortable with it is possible. We have to work with the government, trusting the government to help fighting with gang violence. Consequently, it is not going to be a problem that threatening our safety in the community.

Works Cited

- Kennedy, David M. *Don't Shoot. One Man, A Street Fellowship, and The End of Violence in Inner-City America*. New York: Bloomsbury USA, 2011. Print.
- Kingsbury, Alex. "The War on Gangs." *U.S. News & World Report* 145. 13 (2008): 33-36. EBSCOhost. Web. 1 Dec. 2012.
- Long, Patrick D. *The Dream Shattered: Vietnamese Gangs in America*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1997. Print.
- Rodriguez, Luis J. *Always Running: La Vida Loca, Gang Days in L.A.* New York: Touchstone books, 2005. Print.
- Russo, John and Anthony Batts. "Oakland's gang Injunction Is a Chance to Save Lives." *English 9293 Course Pack*. Print.
- Winston, Ali. "Proposed Oakland Gang Injunctions May Complicate Anti-Gang Efforts." *English 9293 Course Pack*. Print.

Comment [CM6]: Lauren synthesizes information from 6 texts, including an article she found through EBSCOhost.

Final Project Peer Review and Grading Sheet

1

Feedback	Exceeding	Meeting	Approaching	Developing	Beginning	Comments
CONTENT						
The writer makes thoughtful, convincing arguments.						
The writer demonstrates a strong understanding of the texts we have read and the two articles from the library.						
The writer acknowledges and addresses opposing viewpoints effectively.						
DEVELOPMENT						
The introduction gives the reader necessary background information and ends in a thesis statement.						
The writer has an insightful, explicit, argumentative, and unified thesis statement that responds to the writing assignment.						
The writer introduces new points with topic sentences that support and develop the thesis statement.						
The writer uses multiple quotes and detailed, specific paraphrases and summaries from the texts we have read and the two articles from the library to support the points and thesis.						
The writer introduces quotes with context information and signal phrases. The writer also uses quotation marks and citations.						
The writer elaborates thoughtfully; he/she explains <i>what</i> the information means, <i>how</i> it supports the points and thesis, and <i>why</i> it is important.						
The conclusion reminds the reader of the writer's most						

Final Project Peer Review and Grading Sheet

2

Feedback	Exceeding	Meeting	Approaching	Developing	Beginning	Comments
important points and establishes the greater significance of the writer's ideas; it leaves the reader with something to think about.						
ORGANIZATION						
The writer uses appropriate transition words and phrases to demonstrate the connections between ideas.						
The writer organized the essay well. The order of points and paragraphs makes sense; nothing seems out of place.						
The writer discusses one topic per paragraph; the paragraphs are unified.						
GRAMMAR AND CLARITY						
The essay demonstrates that the writer took time to proofread.						
The writer uses coordination, subordination, appositives, descriptive clauses, and verbal phrases.						
The writer avoids grammatical errors.						

ENGLISH 062

Hammock

Paragraph #6

Compare and Contrast

Write a paragraph comparing and contrasting your life NOW to your life ONE YEAR AGO. Be sure to include a topic sentence as the first or second sentence of your paragraph, and follow that by looking at similarities, differences, or similarities AND differences (the choice here is yours!) Be sure to use appropriate transitions when necessary. Be sure that each sentence is complete and carefully check your paragraph for run-ons.

What a Difference One Year Makes

I am such a different person now than I was one year ago. I have experienced a life changing event that has forever molded my life and the person I have become. On April 4th 2010, I was involved in a car accident that was so bad; I am lucky it did not leave me handicapped or dead. Before the accident I had dreams and goals that I wanted to achieve but I did not pursue. I was more interested in living for the moment than living for my future. Yes, I was driven and ambitious, but I directed it more towards my social life and having fun than I did for the benefit of my future. I was not enrolled in school, and I had very few plans for my futures. On the other hand, when I woke up on the morning of April 5th, along with my broken bones and the broken hearts of the people who cared most for me, I decided I would never put myself or my family in situations that I knew could have been easily avoided. I felt so blessed for being alive and knowing that I will someday walk again because I knew my life was spared for a reason. I decided to not let another day go by wasted. I now make the most of every day I have been given. I am using my ambition to pursue my dreams and I am determined to never quit. I have started going to college to achieve an associate's degree in diagnostic medical imaging, where I can help people who have been hurt just like me. I now live for my future as well as the future of my family. It doesn't always take something as serious a bad accident to change someone's life drastically, but in my case this accident has changed my life forever in the most positive way.

Applying Gladwell's Theories – Argumentative Research Essay

In *Outliers*, Malcolm Gladwell argues:

The lesson here is very simple. But it is striking how often it is overlooked. We are so caught in the myths of the best and the brightest and the self-made that we think outliers spring naturally from the earth. We look at the young Bill Gates and marvel that our world allowed that thirteen-year-old to become a fabulously successful entrepreneur. But that's the wrong lesson. Our world only allowed one thirteen-year-old unlimited access to a timesharing terminal in 1968. If a million teenagers had been given the same opportunity, how many more Microsofts would we have today? To build a better world we need to replace the patchwork of lucky breaks and arbitrary advantages that today determine success—the fortunate birth dates and the happy accidents of history—with a society that provides opportunities for all. If Canada had a second hockey league for those children born in the last half of the year, it would today have twice as many adult hockey stars. Now multiply that sudden flowering of talent by every field and profession. The world could be so much richer than the world we have settled for. (268)

Your task is to choose ONE facet of society which you feel needs to be changed in order to foster more successful individuals in our society. In a well-researched, third-person, argumentative MLA formatted essay of 6 pages, write out a researched plan (using Gladwell and at least 5 other academic sources) for how this part of American society must change in order to encourage more success. Possible topics include: K-12 education, preschool, religion, college, parenting, government, unions, workforce, sports leagues, the media, relationships, the income gap, workplace models, availability of technology, communication, corporations, politics, 2-party system, family structures, discipline in the home, cultures, language, etc.

Things to include:

- Using an introductory element, introduce us briefly to your societal change. In the thesis, state which aspects of this societal change you will focus on and how they will foster more success in American society.
- In your body paragraphs, cover the multiple facets of your chosen societal change. Remember to include paraphrases and quotes, but don't forget to include an in-text citation whenever you use outside sources.
- Don't forget to have a strong conclusion.

Robert White

Andrea Hammock

ENG092

18 December 2012

Debit or Credit?

So much of what people consider to be a success in our current world is wrapped around money. Single parents choose to go back to school or pursue their dreams because they need more money. Money is not necessarily a problem or a solution; the problem is credit. It is almost impossible to do anything these days without credit. Good or bad, credit is how financial promises are made. We, as adults in America, make financial promises all the time. Some people agree to pay a mortgage while others agree to pay rent via a rental lease. Most people who decide to attend college will at some point agree to pay back a loan they choose to take in order to pay for that college. However credit is just one part of the equation; the other more important problematic part of the equation is debt. Debt is how the financial world decides what our credit is, and how much our money is worth. The biggest obstacle most Americans face on their journey to personal success is debt and how that debt is managed.

The financial system in America for average middle-class Americans is based on their credit score. This score is referenced whenever a person attempts to make a significant purchase. Many young adults begin building their credit by purchasing a car, or some might decide to apply for a line of credit at their favorite department store. In both cases, a person agrees to pay back an amount of money that they have borrowed. In most cases, a credit score is then calculated on how responsibly that person pays back that debt. Many young adults should be weary of credit card companies offering credit cards to students because they will undoubtedly

Comment [A1]: Arguable thesis, albeit a bit broad

charge high interest rates. Very few Americans take Devin's credit advice. He recommends the following scenario: "I am using the credit card to my advantage, rather than allowing the credit card company to take advantage of me. I have never had to pay a cent of interest" (Devin). By understanding how credit scores are compiled, it is likely one can build credit. Maintaining a high credit score is a result of proper debt management.

Comment [A2]: Good incorporation of a quote, but student should work on better explaining who the quoted author is.

The idea that an individual's worth can be summed up by what they have instead of who they are is a large part of the rising American debt. Many Americans are accustomed to living beyond their means. "Keeping up with the Joneses," a popular phrase which involves comparing one's worth to that of their neighbor, for example to some, is now a way of life. "When they sit down and look at where their money has gone, clients are shocked. They see money spent on fancy coffee and steak dinners takes away from what they struggle to attain: financial security and peace of mind" (Mulkins). The holidays, in particular, bring on a period of the year where some people spend much more money than they bring in, even when it comes to donations. It has been noted that people have a tendency to over extend themselves just to look better off:

People who believe that others make high contributions tend to make high contributions themselves [...] a laboratory experiment suggest strategies for fundraising practice. Informing donors of contributions made by another person influences their perceptions about the descriptive social norm, which in turn influences their giving behavior. (Croson, et al)

According to this study, those who choose to donate money or goods, be it around the holidays or not, are far more likely to donate more if they believe the average donation from others is high even to the point that they will have to go without basic necessities in order to show off their "wealth." This suggests that a portion of America spends more time trying to appear successful

Comment [A3]: Demonstrates great command of MLA, even though he would have been traditionally placed into a paragraph writing course where MLA would not be discussed or taught.

then actually working toward their success. Subsequently some people are forced to suspend their dreams or even withdraw their claims to success due to massive debts built up from trying to appear wealthy.

Debt in America has become a critical branch of the struggling financial system. Ownership of money in America is limited to the wealthy—how many Americans can say they have a dollar that truly belongs to them? How many can say that they have money in their hand that does not have to go towards a bill, or school supplies, food, or rent? One of the problems with money is nobody seems to have enough. For so many people credit is their only option. Moreover, for so many, debt is the result. Investing in the future of the American citizen instead of the future of a company could be a solution:

The problems in the U.S. system are largely self-created. Through a long series of regulatory and other choices with unintended consequences, changes have occurred in areas such as the pattern of corporate ownership [...] Meaningful change will be difficult because the American investment problem is far more complex than conventional wisdom suggests. Many proposals to solve America's investment problem focus on only one aspect of the system, and they ignore the critical connections that tie the system together. To work, reform must address all aspects of the American system. (Porter)

Investing in a company should entail investing in all the people who work for that company. Investments in people, training, and technology are where the lines between global and local economy are merged so people can think less about incurring debt to stay afloat, and spend more time working toward their success and ultimately their happiness. Corporations should invest

Comment [A4]: Great reflection; I would further urge Mr. White to further explore and explain this.

money towards the education, health, and well-being of all employees.

Unfortunately, some companies choose instead to replace their employees to avoid the monetary debt that comes with internal investments. Some employers decide that a person does not have the ability to “get the job done” on time or at all. Some industries replace aging employee for younger ones who make less to do the same job. In some fields, more education can actually lead to a pink slip because corporations do not want to pay the higher salaries that come with higher degrees. In *Outliers: The Story of Success* by Malcolm Gladwell, Gladwell talks about the *10,000 Hour Rule* and the significance on hours of practice applied. Furthermore in an interview with Gladwell on *CNN News: Up Close with Anderson Cooper* in 2008 Gladwell spoke candidly with Cooper about his meaning:

We are far too impatient with people, when we assess whether someone has got what it takes to do a certain job we always want to make that assessment after six months or a year. This is ridiculous. The kinds of jobs we have people doing today are sufficiently complex that they require a long time to reach mastery. What we should be doing is setting up institutions and structures that allow people to spend the time and effort to reach mastery. (Gladwell)

Gladwell went on to say that effort and hard work are tools for success. It seems that by avoiding the initial investment cost a company would spend to train an employee, that company does a disservice to the employee, the community, and their bottom line. Ultimately our country as a whole is suffering due to the fact that our corporations and society are pushing Americans to pursue more and more debt.

Knowing where the money goes is the first and most important part of reducing one's

Comment [A5]: This is interesting, but perhaps not a full solution to the problem poses. I would encourage Mr. White to further pursue a solution to his problem.

Comment [A6]: Overall, nice work doing outside and personal research on the author of our class text. Great motivation!

debt. It is important to understand what money is spent on in order to balance a budget. It makes no difference whether that budget is company-wide or at home. In an article called *The Three Surprises About Change*, a man named Jon Stegner proposed that he could reduce a company's debt and did so by revising the purchase order for gloves used in the company's factories. Stegner reduced the purchasing debt by \$1 billion over five years by deciding to get the gloves for the whole company from one manufacturer (13). By keeping track of what money is spent on, it is easier to make changes to allow payment of debt to be part of one's budget.

Keeping a balanced budget and paying down personal debt will not by any means guarantee success. Choosing to use cash instead of credit won't make someone more or less successful. Being responsible and keeping track of debt will however help put more people in the position to take advantage of opportunities that cross their path, opportunities that may lead one closer to their personal success. By keeping a small amount of money allocated for personal use, ensures the means to be spontaneous. The key to successful debt management is the ability to get away from that debt for a while; to experience life and remember what one is paying for.

Comment [A7]: Good connection between source material and the subject of this essay.

Comment [A8]: Great idea! I would like to see Mr. White explain further the connection between spontaneity and success.

Works Cited

- Croson, Rachel, Femida Handy, and Jen Shang. "Keeping Up With The Joneses: The Relationship Of Perceived Descriptive Social Norms, Social Information, And Charitable Giving." *Nonprofit Management & Leadership* 19.4 (2009): 467-489. Business Source Premier. Web. 7 Dec. 2012.
- Devin, Size. "Start Building Credit Rating While Young, But Learn The Lessons Of Smart Credit." *Canadian Press, The* (n.d.): Newspaper Source Plus. Web. 13 Dec. 2012.
- Gladwell, Malcolm. *Outliers*. New York: Back Bay, 2008. Print.
- Mulkins, Phil. "Tulsa World, Okla., Phil Mulkins column: Average American has \$8,460 in debt." *Tulsa World* (OK) 01 Mar. 2009: Newspaper Source Plus. Web. 7 Dec. 2012.
- Porter, Michael E., and Rebecca Wayland. "Capital Disadvantage: America's Failing Capital Investment System. (cover story)" *Harvard business review* 70.5 (1992): 65-82. Business Source Elite. web.
- "The Three Surprises About Change." Handout. ENG 92. Print.
- "Up Close with Anderson Cooper." YouTube. Ed. Cooper Anderson. YouTube, 21 Nov. 2008. Web. 18 Dec. 2012.

Research Paper Grading Sheet – 100 points
Hammock English 092 MSJC

Assignment Requirement				
ORGANIZATION – 35 points	Well Done	Fair	Needs Work	Not Done
Presents ideas in an order that makes sense to readers				
Open with an intro that engages readers and conveys overall focus of a paper with a clear argumentative thesis statement				
Makes sure each paragraph has a clear focus and logical transitions that help the paper flow and unifies ideas to overall point				
Makes sure each paragraph is a reasonable length				
Uses critical voice to connect different parts of the paper together				
Ends with a conclusion that adequately completes the discussion				
CRITICAL THINKING, WRITING, and READING – 35 points	Well Done	Fair	Needs Work	Not Done
Clear thesis statement in the first couple of paragraphs				
Support ideas with specific examples, details, information, quotes or paraphrasing from appropriate research				
Provides required research requested in assignment criteria				
Explains ideas/information fully enough for readers not in our class to follow				
Discusses complex ideas in a way that doesn't just simplify the main point				
Uses a clear and critical voice that demonstrates understanding of the research conducted				
MLA and MECHANICS – 30 points	Well Done	Fair	Needs Work	Not Done
Evidence of proofreading and sentences are clear, concise, and free of errors				
Paraphrasing is appropriate so that the author's meaning remains true but sentences and words are significantly different (not just a few words changed)				
Uses "quotation marks" when including author's exact words				
Uses critical voice to lead into quotes and lets readers know who quote is from				
Use critical voice after a quote to explain how quote connects to paper				
Produces at least 5 full pages, shows evidence of proper MLA formatting and citing, and participated in writing support activity.				
TOTAL				

Additional Comments:

Faculty across California Impressed by Accelerated English Students

Strong Performance by Students Placed 2-3 Levels Below College in Traditional Sequence

By Homeira Foth, English Instructor, Chabot College

In Fall 2012, City College of San Francisco English Instructor Caroline Minkowski taught an accelerated class for students placed three levels below college English. Instead of taking three full semesters of remedial courses, her students were able to take her six-unit course during one semester, then enroll the following semester in a 6-unit course that combined developmental and college-level English. Minkowski's accelerated course focused on the theme of ending gang violence, with students reading books and articles on the topic and synthesizing what they'd read in their own essays. Teaching the course, she says, changed her perspective on student capacity.

"I learned to trust in students' ability to handle challenges and tackle meaningful academic work," says Minkowski. "Students are not only able to read complex texts and write complex arguments, but they also enjoy these challenges. They value reading and writing about real issues rather than contrived topics, and they are more engaged, earn higher grades."

Minkowski's reflections are echoed by many other faculty teaching new accelerated reading and writing classes within the California Acceleration Project (CAP). In CAP's Community of Practice in Acceleration, teachers report being surprised and delighted by the quality of student work and high levels of engagement in their accelerated classes, and the experience has led many to question the assumptions of the traditional sequence. "Students are more capable than what the older lower-level course outlines & SLOs describe/prescribe," said one teacher at a recent CAP gathering.

This article features teachers from three community colleges across California – Minkowski from CCSF, Summer Serpas from Irvine Valley College, and Andrea Hammock from Mt. San Jacinto College. Each was asked to share sample work from students who were thriving in their accelerated classes but would have been required to take 2 or 3 separate remedial courses in their college's traditional sequence. We asked them to choose students whose performance was strong but not exceptional or rare. Taken together, these examples provide a window into the day-to-day of accelerated classes – the types of assignments faculty are giving, the strengths students are demonstrating, and the areas for continued improvement.

Irvine Valley College

At Irvine Valley College, the acceleration model combines two of their pre-college writing classes into a one-semester, 5-unit class that leads directly to college English. In Summer Serpas' accelerated course, students read full-length books and a number of shorter articles, and they write 3-5 page essays from the start of the semester. Serpas points out that in the traditional non-accelerated courses at Irvine Valley, students typically begin with paragraph-length assignments and have minimal readings.

In Serpas's class the written assignments are based on challenging readings that address the complexities of human psychology and behavior. One unit focuses on addiction, and students read a chapter from

Charles Duhigg's full-length book, *The Power of Habit* and a chapter titled "Rat Park: The Radical Addiction Experiment" from Lauren Slater's book *Opening Skinner's Box*. In another unit, students examine the question: is it human nature to be cruel? The texts include Stanley Milgram's "The Perils of Obedience," on his experiments in which subjects were instructed to deliver electric shocks to another person, and Diana Baumrind's critical review of these experiments. Students also read another chapter from Slater's *Opening Skinner's Box* about situational factors influencing whether human beings help – or don't help – during crisis situations, including the infamous real-life case of Kitty Genovese, who was attacked and killed in front of her New York apartment building while none the 38 witnesses intervened or called for help.

In selecting a strong example of student work, Serpas chose an essay by Ypani Guerrero. Guerrero was originally placed three levels below college English and passed that course, then tried to enroll in the two-levels-below class but couldn't get a seat. This fall, she enrolled in Serpas's accelerated class. Serpas describes Guerrero as "the type of student who had me shaking my head thinking, 'Why was she placed so low?'"

What impressed Serpas about Guerrero's essay was her ability to synthesize two difficult texts. According to Serpas, Guerrero makes strong connections between the Milgram and Slater readings, and she does an impressive job of "pointing out the complexities in her argument." Her thesis: "The subjects in Milgram's experiment and the people who witnessed Kitty Genovese murder as described in Slater's article did not act out of cruelty but were forced into doing cruel things by having the pressure of a higher authority or being put in a situation where the environment and the diffusion of responsibility affected their way of thinking and physically taking action." Serpas notes that Guerrero shows she can think critically about the topic and go "beyond the black and white and dig into the gray areas of academic argument."

Serpas notes that there are issues Guerrero needs to keep working on in her writing — "she has some word choice errors, missing commas, and several instances of awkward syntax" – but she thinks of these issues differently now than in her traditional remedial courses. "[In the past,] I think I focused more on teaching students to eliminate the errors, so students in the class ended up producing a 'prettier' assignment; however, their writing did not illustrate the complexity of thought shown in Ypani Guerrero's writing... This was partly due to the formulaic nature of the assignments I used to give (topic sentence should look like this and be placed here, supporting details should go here, etc.) and mostly due to the lack of opportunity for critical thinking in my previous assignments."

Mt. San Jacinto College

Mt. San Jacinto's accelerated model is a 5-unit developmental course that replaces the two levels below college English in the traditional sequence. Hammock explains that the students in her accelerated course "would have traditionally been placed into a paragraph-to-essay course with few readings and little if any research." A typical assignment might ask them to write a paragraph describing a room in their house. Students in the accelerated course, however, read nonfiction texts and write about a thematic question – in Hammock's case, reading Malcolm Gladwell's book *Outliers* and exploring the theme, "What is success?"

Much like Serpas, Hammock shared a sample essay that illustrated a high level of critical thinking. She chose Robert White. At the beginning of the semester, White admitted that his previous experiences with English had not been positive – in fact, he'd never passed an English class. Hammock assumed Robert's

first essay was going to be a “mess with huge gaps in logic or tremendous grammatical errors.” However, much to her surprise, “I was confronted with a young man who knew how to write, and when he had something meaningful to say, he had a huge motivation to write well.”

In his paper, titled “Debit or Credit,” White explored a societal problem that he believed hinders a person’s pursuit of success, arguing that, “The biggest obstacle most Americans face on their journey to personal success is debt and how that debt is managed.” He used research material to effectively develop his ideas, with seven sources on his works cited page, including the *Harvard Business Review* and the journal *Nonprofit Management & Leadership*. Hammock says, “Robert’s ideas are solid and show both original thought and synthesis of appropriate sources.” She points out that even though White could have expanded on some possible solutions for the issue of personal debt, and strengthened the connections between his argument and the various points from his sources, she was impressed with his “ability to think critically about and solve a complex issue.”

Reflecting on the experience of teaching an accelerated course, Hammock says, “When pushed to expect more of their own writing in a way that is motivating and personal, students like Robert White begin to emerge – students who are capable, motivated, intelligent, and perhaps even future English majors.”

City College of San Francisco

Minkowski was impressed by student Lauren Leung, who grew up in Hong Kong and had been in the United States for four years. Leung was enrolled in Minkowski’s six-unit developmental English class for students placed three levels below transfer. Minkowski reports that Leung was generally quiet and sat in the back of class, but in small group activities she seemed engaged and often took initiative in facilitating discussions. She described Leung as having a growth mindset and not giving up when faced with challenging readings, such as David Kennedy’s *Don’t Shoot*, John Russo’s “Oakland’s Gang Injunction is a Chance to Save Lives,” and Alex Kingsbury’s “The War on Gangs.”

According to Minkowski, Leung formed an interesting thesis in her essay, arguing that gang violence can be reduced but not eradicated “because all methods to address gang violence have their weaknesses.” She then systematically presented and critiqued several approaches to gang violence. She summarized, for example, Oakland City Attorney John Russo’s argument that injunctions prevent crimes by keeping gang members off the street between 10pm and 5am; then used an article by Kingsbury to show that gang members are planning crimes online through social networking sites. She also questioned how much government prevention programs help, pointing out that gang members don’t trust the government and are loyal to their peers.

Minkowski was impressed with Leung’s ability to substantiate her claims through her research and her strong sense of originality in argumentation. According to Minkowski, “Lauren’s arguments are largely her own; instead of rehashing ideas discussed in class, as I often see in the work of students enrolled in courses with non-accelerated curricula, Lauren came up with her own assertions.”

Minkowski also addresses areas of weakness in Leung’s writing, noting that she “still needs work on breaking up paragraphs, transitioning between points and paragraphs, and identifying grammatical errors.” However, she considers these issues “manageable” and believes they will be resolved as Leung continues to read and write. What mattered more to Minkowski was that the student showed she was “ready to work more independently, an accomplishment that will serve her well in the next accelerated

course in our sequence.”

Reflections on teaching accelerated courses

For each of these three faculty members, teaching accelerated courses has yielded important insights into their work as developmental educators.

Serpas has come to question the accuracy of placement tests as an indicator of student ability. She notes that students like Guerrero are clearly misplaced below their true potential and that, “if the placement tests were accurate, there would be a clear difference and much more homogeneity in the various leveled classrooms.”

Serpas acknowledges a concern that faculty sometimes express about whether lower-skilled students will struggle in an accelerated class: “Will acceleration help these students in the same way a slower-paced two-semester course will?” Her response: “After teaching both classes, I truly believe the answer is yes. By providing these students with college-level academic reading and writing assignments, we are increasing their exposure to the kinds of texts they will encounter in college, and exposure to these kinds of texts and assignments will certainly help them gain skills. In addition, in the accelerated classroom, we are giving students an accurate view of college-level expectations and providing the support they need to succeed.”

Hammock’s experience with acceleration has left her concerned about all the students who have not made it through the traditional sequence and been demoralized by the process. “I was awestruck when some of my students, often quite capable writers and thinkers, share with me about ... the English failures they have endured. For too many bright, capable students, being placed two or three levels below college-level English is crippling their self-esteem and their motivation.”

Minkowski says her attitude about students has changed. She realized that when challenged, her students rose to the occasion, especially when given extra support: “Because students feel safe, supported, and responsible for their learning, they become comfortable taking intellectual risks. They value reading and writing about real issues rather than contrived topics.”

Minkowski’s final comments reflect the positive experiences of many teachers in the California Acceleration Project: the “high level of student commitment makes accelerated courses incredible fun and rewarding – both for students and the instructor.”

Available at <http://cap.3csn.org/2013/05/09/strong-performance-low-placed-students/> on the California Acceleration Project’s website.