THE EVALUATIVE REVIEW

PROJECT 4

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ENGLISH 1010 and 1010H

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Moonshower / 1010 / Project 4 / Evaluative Review PowerPoint Guidelines

We do it every day: we tell our friends and family about books we've read, movies we've seen, music we've heard, and places we've been, such as restaurants—and college. Why not share your judgment in reviews? Writing reviews is a valuable skill that you will be able to use your entire lives. To learn how to write reviews, we must learn the conventions of review writing. Conventions are rules, methods, or practices established by usage or custom, by general agreement or consent; accepted usage, especially as a standard of procedure. All genres of writing have conventions, and we will learn the conventions of reviews in this project. You will prepare a PowerPoint project that will be a review of MTSU as your school, an album/song/performance you love (or don't), a book you've read or will read (do you need to read something for another class?), or a restaurant, which you must visit during November. There are a number of other things you can review--please consult with me! Your PP project will include six or more graphics—photos / graphics you will find and cite, or that you will take or create yourself.

PLAN OF ATTACK: Please read carefully as due dates for major components of the assignment are outlined here.

1. Your PowerPoint presentation must have a minimum of 12 slides.
2. Your PowerPoint presentation must have a minimum of at least six applicable graphics—photos you take yourself—and any other art, video clips, pull-out quotes, etc. Be creative.
3. Your AUDIENCE? Your classmates.
4. Your PURPOSE: To review MTSU, an album, a book, or a restaurant, a podcast, a movie, a TV show, a game, etc. etc., using the conventions of a good review, in a multi-modal presentation.
5. You will see examples of all of these types of reviews.
6. You will scaffold and write your review and then put the text into your PowerPoint slides.
7. You will practice all of these types of reviews before you decide what YOU are doing.
8. Your PowerPoint presentation is due on _____ in the appropriate dropbox.
9. Your PowerPoint must have a cover slide with your MLA header information:
   a. Your Name
   b. My Name
   c. Class
   d. Date
   e. Title of PP Project: Be creative!
10. Your PowerPoint presentation must address the elements listed below in the explanations of the different types of reviews based on the critieria (points) listed in your thesis that you have chosen.
11. Word count within the PowerPoint is a minimum of 800 words. You will draft the individual parts in Word before putting them into your PowerPoint, so you will know your word count. :)
12. You must use correct grammar and punctuation.
13. Points will be deducted for a lack of creativity or for excessive mechanical errors.

MUSIC REVIEW (DisQ 14)

If you choose to do a music review, follow these guidelines:

1. Have a logical structure
2. Include relevant information and links in the review
3. Use as many images as possible, make sure they're up-to-date
4. Focus on music description and comparisons to convey the music
5. Offer unique and personal perspectives
6. Listen to the album enough to know what you really think about it
7. Proofread your music review properly!

a. Choose an album from an artist that you like or dislike.
b. Listen. Before you start writing a review, listen to the music from start to finish at least twice.
c. Research Is Key. Once you've listened to the music, do your research. Find out as much as you can about the artist, the songwriters (if the songs are written by someone other than the artist), the musicians on the album, etc.
d. Think About Context. Which album is this for the artist? His first? Third? How have her albums sold? Has this one done as well or worse than earlier albums? What is the genre? Is this a new genre for the artist?
e. Consider Different Angles. How did this artist get her start? Playing the clubs? A talent or reality show?
f. Avoid Bias. If this is an artist whom you normally love, still try to review without that bias. If this is an artist that you have no real admiration for, listen with an open mind.
g. Be Honest.
h. Write Clearly.
i. End with a recommendation.
j. Review and revise.

Do DisQs 14. Follow the instructions IN the DisQ boxes.

DisQ 14: The Music Review

DO the following exercise:

REFLECT. Think about reviews you've read. All reviews evaluate something--a product, a performance, a text--and they do so using relevant criteria. Someone reviewing a movie, for instance, would generally consider such factors as the quality of the script, acting, directing, and cinematography.

Part 1. Read the page in your packet discussing music reviews.

Think about a song or album you are familiar with or a performance by an artist that you have recently seen.

Develop a list of criteria--at least four points--for how you plan to evaluate the song/album/performance. Example: quality of sound, songwriting skills, live performance, evolution of band/musician over time, instrumentation, originality, and so forth.

My Example: **The Beatles' *Rubber Soul* album / Criteria: evolution as a band, originality, songwriting skills, and musicality**

Compose your thesis statement using your points. My Thesis: **While The Beatles had already established themselves as a band willing to evolve with the times, most fans cite *Sergeant Pepper's* or *Magical Mystery Tour* as the watermark of their growth. I'd argue that *Rubber Soul* is the seminal album showcasing their evolution as a band, originality, songwriting skills, and musicality.**

Next: Write a topic sentence for each of your points.

TS 1: *Rubber Soul* illustrates the Beatles' **move** away from short, pop-ish songs to longer, more experimental songs.

TS 2: Very few bands in 1965 produced albums as **original** as *Rubber Soul.*

TS 3: Lennon-McCartney continue to top the lists of the world's greatest **songwriters**, even nearly sixty years since the debut of *Rubber Soul.*

TS 4: The Beatles incorporated a variety of cultures, traditions, religions, and experimental sounds, yet their music was still accessible to masses--this is proof of their supreme **musicality**.

POST IT HERE IN THE BOX.

MTSU Review Class Activity

a. Read in your *Everyone's an Author* pp. 328-344 and 356-361 about Writing Reviews.
b. Create an account with a password at www.unigo.com. Select a category (new student, etc.). Click on Create New Account. Fill out "Your Info."
c. Go through their questions which ask about your high school GPA, ACT or other scores, and other college-related questions--this takes about 10-15 minutes, but it is great because it not only lets you pick five colleges (MTSU and four others, please). When you pick the colleges, you click on them until they show up in that box. Once you've answered the questions, the site compiles a list of your five choices and hundreds of OTHER suggestions for you that you may not have considered.
d. After you've answered all the questions and hit FINISH, it gives you a page of your college selections and many others. If you don't see your colleges, click on MY ACCOUNT (top right corner) then My Colleges, your list will come up. On each one, there is a teal-green box on the right that says "Ratings and Reviews." Click on that. You'll see eight categories with stars. Below that to the left are individual reviews by students. Read those and make notes. On the right are great questions and answers called "Top Questions about XXX University." Pick a question or several and see responses. Take notes.
e. Do this for two universities of your choice (NOT MTSU)--be sure to write down the unis you're discussing on your notes. We will discuss in class.

   If you decide for your Review Project you'll write a review about MTSU, remember:

f. Research is key.
g. Avoid bias.
h. Be honest.
i. Write clearly.
j. End with a recommendation.

Do DisQs 15. Follow the instructions IN the DisQ boxes.

DisQ 15: The College Review / MTSU

Part I: Follow these instructions after reading the section on MTSU reviews in your packet:

Based on your experience thus far at MTSU, speculate about the FOUR categories you will use to write your review. These categories will come from the ones below:

- On-Campus Housing
- Off-Campus Housing
- Campus Food
- Campus Facilities
- Class Sizes
- Activities
- Local Services
- Academics

EVERYONE will choose ACADEMICS. So, your job now is to list the three other categories you're choosing (besides Academics) and write one to two sentences about **why you've chosen** each of the three other categories. Do NOT give your opinions here, yet, about your specific reviews. Just WHY. Here's an example:

Academics: MTSU offers a unique Concrete Engineering program not available at most schools.

Campus Food: I'm choosing this category because I live on campus and eat here 24/7, so I have a lot to say.

On-Campus Housing: I live on campus, so this is definitely something I can discuss.

Class Size: Class size is important to me for a variety of reasons.

So, after choosing four categories and writing a sentence each on WHY you chose these categories, write a thesis.

Compose a Thesis Statement based on the points YOU chose:

While MTSU was not my first choice or Plan A, the academic programs offered, the wide variety of on-campus dining, on-campus housing, and class sizes have convinced me that sometimes Plan B is a good plan.

That's it--that's all you have to do.

The Book Review

Book reviews evaluate recently-written or classic literary works. They offer a brief description of the text's key points and often provide a short appraisal of the strengths and weaknesses of the work. Book reviews are often a college class assignment, but they also appear in many professional works: magazines, journals, and newspapers. They typically range from 500-750 words, but may be longer or shorter. A book review gives readers a sneak peek at what a book is like (without revealing the ending), whether or not the reviewer enjoyed it, and details on purchasing the book.

If you decide to do a book review, use the following guidelines.

a. BEFORE YOU READ

Before you begin to read, consider the elements you will need to included in your review. The following items may help:

- **Author:** Who is the author? What else has s/he written? Has this author won any awards? What is the author's typical style?
- **Genre:** What type of book is this: fiction, nonfiction, romance, poetry, youth fiction, etc.? Who is the intended audience for this work? What is the purpose of the work?
- **Title:** Where does the title fit in? How is it applied in the work? Does it adequately encapsulate the message of the text? Is it interesting? Uninteresting?
- **Preface/Introduction/Table of Contents:** Does the author provide any revealing information about the text in the preface/introduction? Does a "guest author" provide the introduction? What judgments or preconceptions do the author and/or "guest author" provide? How is the book arranged: sections, chapters?
- **Book Jacket/Cover/Printing:** Book jackets are like mini-reviews. Does the book jacket provide any interesting details or spark your interest in some way? Are there pictures, maps, or graphs? Do the binding, page cut, or typescript contribute or take away from the work?

b. AS YOU READ:

As you read, determine how you will structure the summary portion or background structure of your review. Be ready to take notes on the book's key points, characters, and/or themes.

- **Characters:** Are there characters in the work? Who are the principal characters? How do they affect the story? Do you empathize with them?
- **Themes/Motifs/Style:** What themes or motifs stand out? How do they contribute to the work? Are they effective or not? How would you describe this author's particular style? Is it accessible to all readers or just some?
- **Argument:** How is the work's argument set up? What support does the author give for her/findings? Does the work fulfill its purpose/support its argument?
- **Key Ideas:** What is the main idea of the work? What makes it good, different, or groundbreaking?
- **Quotes:** What quotes stand out? How can you demonstrate the author's talent or the feel of the book through a quote?

c. WHEN YOU ARE READY TO WRITE

Begin with a short summary or background of the work, but do not give too much away. Many reviews limit themselves only to the first couple of chapters or lead the reader up to the rising action of the work. Reviewers of nonfiction texts will provide the basic idea of the book's argument without too much detailed. The final portion of your review will detail your opinion of the work. When you are ready to begin your review, consider the following:

- **Establish a Background, Remember your Audience:** Remember that your audience has not read the work; with this in mind, be sure to introduce characters and principles carefully and deliberately. What kind of summary can you provide of the main points or main characters that will help your readers gauge their interest?Does the author's text adequately reach the intended audience? Will some readers be lost or find the text too easy?
- **Minor principles/characters:** Deal only with the most pressing issues in the book. You will not be able to cover every character or idea. What principles/characters did you agree or disagree with? What other things might the author have researched or considered?
- **Organize:** The purpose of the review is to critically evaluate the text, not just inform the readers about it. Leave plenty room for your evaluation by ensuring that your summary is brief. Determine what kind of balance to strike between your summary information and your evaluation. If you are writing your review for a class, ask your instructor. Often the ratio is half and half.
- **Your Evaluation:** Choose one or a few points to discuss about the book. What worked well for you? How does this work compare with others by the same author or other books in the same genre? What major themes, motifs, or terms does the book introduce, and how effective are they? Did the book appeal to you on an emotional or logical way?
- **Publisher/Price:** Most book reviews include the publisher and price of the book at the end of the article. Some reviews also include the year published and ISBN.

d. REVISING

When making the final touches to your review, carefully verify the following:

- Double-check the spelling of the author name(s), character names, special terms, and publisher.
- Try to read from the vantage point of your audience. Is there too much/enough summary? Does your argument about the text make sense?
- Should you include direct quotes from the reading? Do they help support your arguments? Double-check your quotes for accuracy.

Do DisQs 16. Follow the instructions IN the DisQ boxes.

DisQ 16: The Music Review

DO the following exercise:

REFLECT. Think about reviews you've read. All reviews evaluate something--a product, a performance, a text--and they do so using relevant criteria. Someone reviewing a movie, for instance, would generally consider such factors as the quality of the script, acting, directing, and cinematography.

Part 1. Read the page in your packet discussing music reviews.

Think about a song or album you are familiar with or a performance by an artist that you have recently seen.

Develop a list of criteria--at least four points--for how you plan to evaluate the song/album/performance. Example: quality of sound, songwriting skills, live performance, evolution of band/musician over time, instrumentation, originality, and so forth.

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Next: Write a topic sentence for each of your points.

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TS 4: The Beatles incorporated a variety of cultures, traditions, religions, and experimental sounds, yet their music was still accessible to masses--this is proof of their supreme **musicality**.

POST IT HERE IN THE BOX.

Restaurant Review (DisQ 17)

(Read https://owlcation.com/humanities/How-to-Write-a-Restaurant-Review-With-Examples)
Before you visit the restaurant, do background research. Find out how the restaurant markets itself to its target audience. This will help you evaluate their success with respect to their goals.

a. VISIT THE RESTAURANT
   - Build a Chronological Narrative
     When writing your review, describe your experience with a chronological structure. Start with when you entered the restaurant and proceed through to when you departed.
   - Use complete sentences, descriptive phrases, and specific details.
   - Include Restaurant Information
     Include information about the cuisine, price range, location, operating hours, and contact information. Do they serve alcohol? Do they allow smoking?
   - Do they accept reservations? If not, how long is the typical wait?
   - Do they offer any live music or entertainment?
   - Is the restaurant suitable for families, children, large groups, etc.? Or is it more intimate and romantic, suitable mainly for couples?

b. SET YOUR EVALUATION CRITERIA
   - Clarify which criteria you will be using to evaluate the restaurant. Since you may be writing multiple reviews, it's important to consider this question ahead of time.
   - Evaluation criteria could include (but are not limited to): quality of the food, service, interior and exterior design, ambiance, cleanliness, and value for money.
   - Be a customer, not a reviewer.
   - Be a Customer, Not a Reviewer
   - In order to ensure that your experience of the place is genuine, don’t tell the staff that you are there as a reviewer. If they know this, they may behave differently than they would otherwise.
   - For your review to have credibility, it must reflect an experience that any customer might have. If you do a good job of establishing credibility, readers will seek out your reviews of other restaurants, as well.
   - Include Both Pros and Cons
   - Even Michelin-starred restaurants have their drawbacks. No place is perfect!

c. TAKE LOTS OF NOTES
   - Carry a notebook or use your smartphone to jot down details, even those that might not seem important, like the color of the plates, how the food is presented, etc. Small details are important in helping readers visualize the whole dining experience.
   - Discuss Only What You Sampled
   - While discussing the food, limit yourself to the food and drink you actually tried.
   - You can mention other cuisines that might be offered by the restaurant, as well, but don't attempt to provide an exhaustive list of every dish.
   - Be Clear, Fair, and Honest

d. WRITE YOUR REVIEW

- This should go without saying, but it's very important that your review be fair and honest. Remember that your review has the power to persuade people whether or not to go to this restaurant.
- If your review is negative, be sure to maintain a high level of professionalism. It doesn't help your credibility if you sound ranty.
- If you think the restaurant overlooked certain details, you may certainly mention it as a word of caution, but don't belabor the point.

PROOFREAD AND EDIT

- Even professional writers need editors and proofreaders! Read your review twice, even three times—and make sure it's error-free. Ask a friend or colleague to read it through for you, as well. Another pair of eyes is always helpful.
- Reviews should be clear and well written. If the person you asked to proofread it thinks it needs more work, take the time to polish it up.

MAKE YOUR RECOMMENDATION

- Finish your review by providing your concise recommendation. Thumbs up or down?
- Your last line should be a call to action. Make sure it's effective.

- **Do DisQs 17. Follow the instructions IN the DisQ boxes.**

DisQ 17: The Restaurant Review

This is an easy one! Follow these instructions:

Restaurant Review

1. Read the two "Restaurant Review" pages in your packet.
2. Go to a restaurant of your choice--it can be fast, full-service, on campus or off.
3. Eat. :)
4. Decide on FOUR criteria that you would use to review the restaurant. The handout pages discuss evaluation criteria.
5. Craft a thesis for this restaurant review based on your four criteria points. Here's an example: **While Burgers and Beer was not my first choice for dinner, the quality of the burgers, the drink choices, the cleanliness of the restaurant, and the arcade section all made for a delicious meal and fun evening with my friends.**
6. Now, Write one sentence about each of YOUR FOUR criteria points. For example: Cleanliness: There was no dust on the light fixtures and no cob webs in the corners, which is always a relief to me.
7. Craft a one-two sentence recommendation.

BEGIN WORKING ON YOUR POWERPOINT:

1. Decide if you are going to review MTSU, an album, a book, a movie, a video game, a podcast, a TV show or series, or a restaurant. Ask me if your idea is not on this list!

2. Decide what criteria (points) you will use from your responses to the notes you've made and your responses to the DisQs for this project. You will want to have at least three points.

3. Write your INTRODUCTION with a solid hook, transition and thesis. Refer to the categories or criteria that you are discussing; those categories should drive your thesis statement because they will be the points. From your thesis, write a rudimentary outline.

4. Draft Intro with a clear THESIS.

5. Bring your TYPED, PRINTED Intro to class.

6. Draft your outline with quotes and notes. Begin writing your paper.

7. Bring your drafts to class when directed.

8. Make sure you upload a draft of your PowerPoint to the Draft Workshop Dropbox BEFORE class on Workshop Day, for workshopping. Bring your laptop to class.

9. UPLOAD your Final polished PowerPoint Review before class on its due date.