

MacQuarrie

English 310

Warm-up exercise

Write a 200-250 word essay describing an interesting and/or important experience that you have had which reflects upon life in the Antelope Valley. Use specific details. This is a narrative essay, so you should use the first person “I” in telling your story. Keep in mind the class discussion we have had about how even one or two dramatic personal experiences can shape a person’s opinion about a society, a place, an institution, etc... How did the experience you had influence your view of the Antelope Valley?

Keep in mind our discussion about rhetoric and dialectic (“closed fist and open hand”).

This story, then, does not have to be true and if it is based on an actual incident, you should feel free to elaborate. But remember too that the story should not strain credibility too much – it should be both interesting AND believable.

MacQuarrie

English 310

In-class essay 1

The Antelope Valley:

Pit or Paradise?

For this assignment you will write a paper about what it is like living in the Antelope Valley. Make an unambiguous and objective claim about life in the Antelope Valley -- i.e. it's a pit or it's a paradise --

1. You need first and foremost an objectively framed (no "I") thesis about life in the Valley. Do not be wishy-washy. Think in terms of the six criteria we discussed earlier. Be sure that your thesis is both coherent and sufficiently complex.

2. The paper may, of course, contain opinion, but those opinions should be framed as third person statements: For example, NOT "I hate the Antelope Valley" BUT "The Antelope Valley is a hateful place."

3. Include a range of positive and/or negative aspects life in the AV to help substantiate your argument. Be specific.

300-400 words, double-spaced, written on every other line. I encourage you to apply the pre-writing techniques we discussed in-class: clustering, outlining, etc...

MacQuarrie

English 310

In-Class Essay 2

Rebuttal: The Antelope Valley Paradise or Pit

For this essay you should write a rebuttal of the first draft of your take-home Antelope Valley paper – the one we used in peer review. In this essay you should specifically rebut the arguments you made in that paper. If you argued that the Valley was a fine place in the first essay, you should argue that it is a miserable place in this essay. You may refute yourself by name, and you may even use ad hominem attacks against yourself. Be sharp, and even harsh. For example,

In his essay “The Valley of the Shadow of Death,” MacQuarrie argues that the AV is a terrible place. He complains about the wind, the cars, and the lack of culture. Clearly, MacQuarrie just doesn’t get it. In fact, the AV is a splendid place to live. The environment is still relatively pristine, the air is clear....”

300-400 words, double-spaced, written on every other line. I encourage you to apply the pre-writing techniques we discussed in-class: clustering, outlining, etc... Please approach this assignment with a sense of humor. You should demonstrate, as Aristotle suggests, that you can argue both sides of an issue, and that you can adduce evidence to substantiate your various claims.

MacQuarrie

English 310

The Antelope Valley: Pit or Paradise?

For this assignment you will write a paper about what it is like living in the Antelope Valley. Having made a claim about life in the Antelope Valley -- i.e. it's a pit or it's a paradise -- as part of your evidence, you should write about an experience that you have had here that you think reflects the quintessence of Valley life.

1. You need first and foremost an objectively framed (no "I") thesis about life in the Valley. Do not be wishy-washy. Be sure that your thesis is both coherent and sufficiently complex.
2. As part of the evidence for your thesis you will tell at least one detailed and specific story about something that has happened to you in the AV that contributes to your feelings about the place. Remember that this "anecdotal" evidence is meant to supplement your objective evidence, and not replace it. It should be used to substantiate some aspect of your objective thesis. It should not be more a page in length, and it should be effectively incorporated into the larger paper. You might, for example, use a personal story to support your claim that the AV is a bad or good place because people here are especially friendly or unfriendly. You should only use anecdotal evidence in one place in your essay.
3. Include a range of positive and or negative aspects life in the AV to help substantiate your argument. Use specific details, and stay focused.

3-4 pages, double-spaced, 12 point font. Bring 5 copies of your first draft to class on 9/26. Attach the in-class versions of the Antelope Valley paper that you wrote in class to the typed version that you hand in to me.