# Reading Response Guidelines and Examples

**Reading Response (RR) and Response to Peers Directions**

RR is worth 30 points each and is due on Monday

Response to peers is worth 10 points each and is due on Weds. unless an essay is due.

**Format:**

**Reading Response (RR)**

Label each RR with its number AND each response within the RR with the name of the reading or viewing that you are responding to.

For example:

Reading Response 1

Frankenstein chapters 1-4

Post all assignment responses in ONE post in the discussion post for that reading response.

Include a word count at the end of your post (250-500 words requirement)

**Response to Peers**

Select at least three of your peer’s posts in the given discussion to respond to. You do NOT need to respond to multiple readings in a given post, but you need to make sure you meet the Response rubric requirements in EACH response.

Include a word count at the end of your response

150-250 word response for each peer response

**Purpose of Reading Responses**

The purpose of your reading response is to show both that you’ve read the assigned readings and that you have engaged in analysis and critical thinking in response to them. These are key components of the student learning outcomes (see below) for English 126

**Student Learning Outcomes**

1. Demonstrate clear and critical thinking in writing assignments.
2. Read and critically evaluate college-level material from a variety of sources.
3. Evaluate the validity and soundness of arguments.
4. Identify common formal and informal fallacies of language and thought.
5. Distinguish and use both deductive and inductive reasoning.
6. Distinguish factual statements from judgmental statements and fact from opinion.
7. Draw sound inferences from data given in a variety of forms.
8. Distinguish and use effectively both the denotative and connotative aspects of language.
9. Discover, evaluate, and use outside sources in the development of writing.
10. Apply some of the classical divisions of rhetorical appeal, such as ethos, pathos, and logos.
11. Identify some of the deliberate abuses and manipulations of rhetoric and be able to identify them in general occurrence and avoid them in writing.
12. Analyze critical thinking in arts and sciences.
13. Appraise the development of meaning through symbols and symbol systems.
14. Analyze critical thinking in arts and sciences.

**What to Include in Reading Response**

1. Always use your own words! Do not quote but paraphrase where needed. No response should have more than ONE quote.
2. Incorporate ARQ lessons! This is imperative to show your critical thinking skills and is part of your grade.

*Summary* (up to 50 words):

1. BRIEF 1-2 sentences that focuses on the main idea of the reading. Do not tell me what the author does (“Shelley writes about her experiences”), tell me what the author argues (“Shelly argues that technology without caution is destructive”). Quality counts! I don’t want more words, I want words that indicate that you read and understood what you read.
2. Always use author’s last names.

*Analysi*s (up to 250 words)

1. What is important in this reading? Why is it worth reading? What does the author have to say that is of value?
2. How does what you are reading relate to other texts you’ve read in class or out of class, be specific?
3. What do you think of the author’s ethos, pathos and logos (see handouts on these topics) and how do these tools work to create the text?
4. Use supporting evidence for your points. Do not make unsupported claims.
5. Apply strong sense critical thinking skills

*Evaluation* (up to 100 words)

1. What do you think of the quality of this reading? What makes it good or bad? Support your claims
2. Where do you see fallacies in the reading or unsupported assumptions?

*Response* (up to 100 words)

1. Critical evaluate the quality of your peer's response. See example

Note that your analysis should be the longest part of your response.

**What to Include in Peer Response**

**Purpose**: the purpose of peer responses is to provide constructive, critical feedback to one another and to engage in a discussion that furthers the ideas we are developing. Please do not spend the words saying how much you liked (or didn't like) what someone said.

**Response**

Your focus should be on

1. Summarize what you heard the author say in a sentence or two: “If I understood, you are saying . . . “
2. State whether you feel the author has supported their claims: “The evidence you provided seems to . . . “
3. Be specific! Not general. Reference word-for-word what your peer has said.
4. Include what you thought, “When you said . . . , I thought. . . “
5. What do you feel is left out? “I wish you would have talked about . . .”
6. Add to the conversation, “After reading your response, I think . . . “

Use these exact prompts to develop your response initially.

**Best Practices**

It is always best to type your work in a word or google document and then copy and paste the text into Canvas. MANY, MANY students have emailed me as the deadline for an assignment approaches saying they lost their response in Canvas, that it just disappeared. Unfortunately, this is not an excuse for turning in late work. Do NOT let this be you.

**Reading Response Example**

*Reading Response 1*

Wonder Woman, The Splash Page, pp. xi-xiv

Andrea Student

Dec 12, 2017

In “The Splash Page”, Lepore argues with passion and zeal that Wonder Woman was both a catalyst for feminism and a strike against it. The Secret History she is going to tell is that which shows how this product evolved from William Marston own conflicted and deceptive life. While Lepore makes the argument that she will disclose this “secret history”, the reader may wonder just why it matters. Lepore provides some hope for logos in her evidence for this Secret History’s importance: Wonder Woman bridges the gap between Women’s Suffrage and WWII (p. xiii) and mirrors the decline of feminism that happened after WWII. And, her ethos is buttressed by her list of all the materials she consulted to create this book. Wonder Woman, she argues, remakes feminism (though she does not say how) and the results have not been to the good.

Like Vance in *Hillbilly Elegy*, Lepore is taking on an entire class of people (for Vance it’s Hillbillies and for Lepore its Super Heroes) and attempting to draw generalizations about their effect on society. She states that though Superheroes are supposedly a force for good, “they are lousy at fighting equality” (p. xiii). This is an intriguing premise, certainly, but it also seems a bit farfetched: Vance is dealing with real people, Lepore’s characters are made up. Did they really have an important and noticeable affect on all of feminism and, in the process, society? Should we expect fictional Superheroes to be good at fighting equality?

Ultimately, the “proof is in the pudding”, and I guess we will know whether her claims that Wonder Woman both promotes and detracts from feminism will out by the end of the book. So far, I like the energy she shows in her writing and her passion for her topic. Though the inclusion of the comic strip does make me wonder how serious she is in her endeavor.

**Example of Peer Response**

Notice the italicized phrases are those I suggested be used.

*If I understood what you are saying*, I think you are arguing that Lepore’s argument is that Wonder Woman, as a product of Marston’s own life, is both good and bad, but you aren’t convinced that such an argument is very important. *I see a lot of good evidence* for your claim when you paraphrase Lepore’s statement that WW is a bridge between suffrage and WWII. I thought this was what she was saying too. But I don’t think I agree with your questioning whether this is a worthwhile endeavor. Comic books and superheroes, especially now, are prevalent and everyone watches them. I think it’s worth it to think about the effect they have. *When you said,* “the inclusion of the comic strip”, *I thought* that you were going to say you liked having a little bit of visual and escape from pure text. But it sounds like you didn’t like it. I did. I am looking forward to more of that in this book. *I wish you would have talked about* what you think of superheroes. That might make me understand better your point of view*. After reading your response, I am* interested in hearing how WW detracted from feminism.

Word Count 552 words