

Final Extended Definition Essay

Assignment Introduction:

What is it?

Definition is the explanation of a word. It answers the question: “what does it mean?” Definitions come in two types. A **formal definition** is a short **definition** that states the meaning of a word in one or two sentences (dictionary definition). This type is used for explaining words that might be unfamiliar to the reader, or for giving a particular meaning to a general term. An **extended definition** is a long **definition** in which the word refers to a complicated idea, thing or phenomenon. In this case, defining the word may be the subject of an entire essay (“What is Nature?”).

What is the purpose?

Definitions enable a shared understanding of technical terms or key concepts between writer and reader. Formal definitions are for explaining key terms or technical words in a composition.

Extended definitions are for: 1) exploring abstract concepts that might mean different things to different people, e.g. “love”; 2) explaining technical or theoretical terms that are complex, e.g. “metafiction”; and 3) clarifying the way in which a word has changed in meaning over the years, e.g. “literally.”

When is definition required?

Formal definitions are often required:

When the term is obscure or not likely to be known by the reader. when a precise, shared understanding of the term is necessary to the discipline.

Extended definitions are often required:

When the word is often misunderstood. When the word is abstract and thus subject to philosophical inquiry. When a new or enhanced meaning of the word of the word is being proposed or argued for.

Philosophy: *What is “evil,” according to Kantian ethics?*

Visual Arts: *How do the paintings of Georgia O’Keeffe express elements of abstraction, even as they are representational?*

Psychology: *Discuss problems in the diagnosis and treatment of narcissism.*

Management: *What is stewardship?*

Types of Definitions Traditionally Used in Definition Essays

Analysis: Divide the subject into parts and define each part separately.

Classification: According to dictionary definitions, what classes does the subject belong to?

Comparison: Demonstrate likeness to something more familiar or difference from it.

Details: Describe the physical characteristics, traditional thoughts, and other distinguishing attributes of the subject.

Examples and Incidents: Narrate illustrations that can clarify as a group, theory, or object.

Origins and Causes: Where did the subject come from? What is the background information? What is the history of the subject?

Thesis Statement of a Definition Essay

The thesis statement usually identifies the term being defined and provides a brief, basic definition.

Example: *Assertiveness is standing up for your rights.*

ENGL 211-008 Constructing Natural Worlds- Assignment Guidelines

Extended Definition Essay Requirements:

You will use the work of our course throughout the semester to construct an Extended Definition Essay that defines the term “Nature.”

Topic Questions:

Central Question: What is Nature?

Continuing Questions: What are some historical perspectives towards nature, and how have those perspectives changed? What is our current relationship with nature? How does this differ across regions, classes, and cultures? How do we construct nature in literature? How do we construct nature in relation to the human animal?

Section Requirements:

Your essay will be divided into sections designed to incorporate elements of the various traditional types of definition as they relate to the content of this course. Your essay must contain the following sections:

1. **Introduction**
2. **Three Content Sections**
 - a. Your third content section *must* be Contemporary Nature Writing
 - b. You may choose your other two sections from: Empire, Romanticism, Transcendentalism, Digital Representation
3. **Conclusion**

The Introduction section must be 300 words long and include the following:

- an arguable thesis that includes a basic definition of Nature following the example provided
- a comparison distinguishing “Nature” from “Environment” and “Wilderness”
- an explanation of the content focus of your Extended Definition

Each of the three Content Sections must be 500 words long and include the following:

- a brief definition of the term as appropriate specifically for the context of that section
- evidence from course texts including direct quotations to justify the definition
- a close reading of the textual evidence that supports your definition
- analysis linking content sections together as pieces of a common whole rather than separate responses to the question of Nature

The Conclusion section must be 300 words long and include the following:

- a statement addressing the progression of the definition through the content sections
- a statement addressing the potential future course of the term
- one of the following options:
 - two terms which may be future points of comparison *other than* Environment and Wilderness and a justification for these choices
 - an additional content area for future inclusion in the definition, including MLA citations for three texts that belong in that content area and were not included in the course

Additional Requirements:

Your paper must follow MLA8 formatting throughout, *including but not limited to* being followed by a works cited page.

ENGL 211-008 Constructing Natural Worlds- Assignment Guidelines

Extended Definition Essay Process:

You will construct your essay throughout the course of the semester in the following stages:

Analysis Papers:

During the course of the semester you will turn in 5 short analysis papers. These analysis papers correlate with two of the content sections of your Extended Definition Essay. Information on analysis paper requirements is available in the next page of this document.

Drafting Additional Sections:

In the final weeks of the semester, you will draft the final content section (Contemporary Writing), as well as the Introduction and Conclusion.

Revision:

Your individual analysis papers from the semester will need revision to fully meet the requirements of the final Extended Definition Essay. In the final weeks of the semester, you will revise two of these separate papers into connected sections to be combined with the Introduction, Contemporary Writing section, and Conclusion into a unified final product.

Formatting:

Your Final Extended Definition Paper must be saved as a Microsoft Word document and follow MLA8 formatting throughout.

Submitting Final Paper:

Your Final Extended Definition Paper must be submitted via Moodle. It must be uploaded to the appropriate folder on our course Moodle page by no later than 10pm on Thursday, May 3 2018. No late papers will be accepted.

Assessment:

Your Final Extended Definition Paper will be assessed using the rubric on the following page.

ENGL 211-008 Constructing Natural Worlds- Assignment Guidelines

Extended Definition Essay Grading Rubric: 30 Points			
Expectation:	Meets Expectation Well	Does Not Meet Expectation	Points Earned
The paper makes a unified argument on the definition of Nature based on course texts 4 points			
Introduction is the required length, includes appropriate thesis statement, comparison to Environment and Wilderness, and statement of content focus of definition 4 points			
Each of three content sections is the required length, includes section-specific definition and evidence, includes thoughtful close-reading and analysis evident of the skills practiced in class, makes connections with other content sections, and serves as a part of a unified whole 10 points			
The conclusion is the required length, addresses the progression of the definition through content sections, addresses potential future use of the term, and suggests either two future terms of comparison or an additional content section with 3 suggested readings 5 points			
Essay follows MLA8 formatting including a complete Works Cited page 4 points			
The essay uses language appropriate for a student who has completed First Year Writing. It is well-organized with relatively few grammatical or structural problems 3 points			

Short Analysis Papers

Assignment Introduction:

You will draft analysis papers throughout the semester addressing course texts and themes, and applying literary analysis skills practiced in class.

Schedule:

Papers must be submitted to the correct Moodle folder by the dates and times listed below.

Paper Topic	Due Date
Analysis 1: Empire	January 25 th , 10pm
Analysis 2: Serena	February 15 th , 10pm
Analysis 3: Romanticism	March 8 th , 10pm
Analysis 4: Transcendentalism	March 22 nd , 10pm
Analysis 5: Digital Interaction	April 12 th , 10pm

Assignment Requirements:

Each Analysis Paper must:

- be 300 words in length
- present an argument of the idea of Nature as it exists in the relevant course texts, including a brief and clear definition of Nature as portrayed by these texts
 - for example: for the Empire Analysis Paper, you would base your analysis on Columbus, de Champlain, Morton, and Bradford.
 - You must address the ways in which the authors represent Nature that is specific to their ideology/time. Columbus and Thoreau, for example, would view trees very differently from one another.
- include direct quotation(s) from the appropriate course texts as evidence to justify the definition
 - these quotations must be properly cited in correct MLA8 format
- perform a close reading of the textual evidence provided, including the analysis of relevant literary terms
 - this analysis should serve as the explanation of why the evidence you have chosen leads to the definition of Nature as you have represented it
- identify unique strengths/weaknesses/problems with the idea of Nature as presented in the relevant readings. What complicates the “Nature” these authors present?
 - this would serve as a natural conclusion to your analysis.

Formatting:

Each Analysis Paper must be saved as a separate Microsoft Word Document, and must follow MLA8 formatting guidelines.

Grading Information:

- Analysis Papers are worth a cumulative 25% of your final course grade. You will write 5 Analysis Papers, each of which is worth 5% of your final grade.
- Analysis Papers can be revised following the policy stated on the Rubric.
- Grading criteria for Analysis Papers are included in the Rubric on the following page.

ENGL 211-008 Constructing Natural Worlds- Assignment Guidelines

Analysis Paper Grading Rubric

If you receive checks for “Meets Expectation Well” in each category, your paper will receive an A. Each area in which your paper “Does Not Meet Expectation” will lower your grade. You may revise each Analysis paper once for grade improvement. The revision deadline is 1 week from the day on which your graded rubric was received, by 10pm in the appropriate Moodle folder.

Analysis Paper Grading Rubric		
Expectation	Meets Expectation Well	Does Not Meet Expectation
The paper is 300 words in length and uses language appropriate for a student who has completed First Year Writing. It is well-organized with relatively few grammatical or structural problems.		
The paper has an arguable thesis statement, including a clear definition of Nature as it exists in the appropriate texts.		
The paper includes direct quotations from the appropriate texts, and these quotations are relevant examples which are appropriately cited in MLA8.		
The paper includes a close-reading analysis of the evidence provided, and addresses relevant literary terms present in the quotation.		
The paper identifies unique strengths/ weaknesses/ problems of the idea of Nature presented in the appropriate texts/ ideology of the period.		
The paper meets MLA8 formatting guidelines.		

Panel Discussion Assignment

The course will include a number of panel discussions led by students. Each panel will be made up of three to four students. Register for your Panel on the Moodle Course Scheduler.

Purpose:

The purpose of these panels is to stimulate general class discussion, moderated by the panelists. The panels are audience-participation exercises; the panelists are charged with the task of getting discussion started and presiding over it; they are not expected to bear its main burden, which rests on the class as a whole. Members of the class not assigned to a panel are expected to have given the topic as much thought as the panelists themselves. Remember, too, that if you want help from the audience when it is your turn to be a panelist, you owe the panelists your help and cooperation when it is their turn.

Requirements:

First Four Minutes:

- Each panel topic is the assigned reading due in that day's class. On the day of the panel, each panelist will begin by stating his or her position on/response to the reading **in no more than one sentence**. After all the panelists have done that, they will each have a minute or two to elaborate on or explain their positions (panelists are urged not to talk longer than that at this stage of the panel).

Minutes 5-10:

- Panelists will then, if they wish, discuss the topic *with one another* (e.g., they can disagree with another panelist, ask questions of another panelist, add to what another panelist has said, ask for more explanation from another panelist). (This should last until the 10-minute mark.)

Minutes 10-20:

- Finally, the discussion will then be thrown open to the class at large. More often than not, the discussion branches out from the original stated topic or question to engage other important aspects of the work under consideration. This is perfectly OK and even desirable.

Preparation:

- Panelists should **not** get together to prepare in advance for the panel. Such advance preparation can blunt the edge of controversy and encounter. However, each individual should be well prepared for his or her own panel participation.
- Each panelist should prepare **4 unique Discussion Questions** that they may use during minutes 10-20 to help begin/guide the class discussion.
- If you are not prepared for your panel, I will tolerate no excuse. Be sure to read the text your panel is assigned quite carefully and be prepared to support your response with examples from the text.

Assessment:

- Your panel discussion is worth 7% of your final course grade.
- You will be graded on your participation holistically, as well as by handing in your discussion questions when your panel concludes.

(Panel Assignment Adapted From: the Brian Wilkie Panel; Denise Rogers)

Tests and Quizzes

Assessment Introduction

This course will include a Midterm Exam as well as several Quizzes.

Midterm Exam

- The midterm exam will take place on Tuesday, February 27th in class.
- The midterm exam is worth 20% of your final course grade.
- The midterm exam will address all readings, class lectures and discussions, and assignments up to and including the day before the exam. The exam will also require demonstration of close reading skills as practiced in class and in course assignments.
- More information on the structure of the midterm exam will be provided in class no later than the Tuesday prior to the exam.
- Missed Midterm Exams cannot be made-up, except in the most extreme circumstances and with communication from the Dean of Students.
- Students who qualify for accommodations on tests must see the “Students with Disabilities” section of the syllabus and communicate with the instructor accordingly.

Quizzes

- Quizzes are worth 8% of your final course grade.
- Quizzes will be unannounced and can take place at any point during any class period at the instructor’s discretion
- Some potential quizzes are noted on the Course Schedule, but these will not be the only quizzes given in class.
- Missed quizzes cannot be made up. Absences during quizzes will result in a grade of “0.”
- The lowest quiz grade will automatically be dropped from your final course grade. This calculation will take place during final course grading following the grading of your final paper.
- Quizzes will be closed-book, meaning notes and texts should not be referenced during quiz time, unless an exception is directly communicated by the instructor. Any access of course notes, texts, or technology such as cell phones or laptop computers during quizzes will automatically be considered academic dishonesty and will be dealt with according to the appropriate course policies outlined in the syllabus.
- Students who qualify for accommodations on tests must see the “Students with Disabilities” section of the syllabus and communicate with the instructor accordingly.

Participation Grade

Grading Criteria:

- Your participation in class is worth 10% of your final course grade.
- 5% of your participation grade comes from your ClassCards Assignment
- 5% of your participation grade comes from Classroom Citizenship

Assignment Details:

ClassCards Assignment

- See the attached guidelines for the ClassCard assignment, which you will be expected to complete for each class meeting beginning January 18th.

Classroom Citizenship

- Classroom behavior issues will subtract from your grade—if you are absent or late, utilize a cellphone/tablet/laptop during class, fall asleep, show up lacking the texts/class materials for the day, keep silent too often during our discussions, or are disruptive in any way, points will be deducted.
- If you are present and on time, pay attention during our lectures, stay awake, come to class prepared, engage with our discussions, and are otherwise not disruptive, you will get full credit for classroom behavior.
- It is your responsibility to share your responses, observations, reactions to and questions about the course material with the class. It is an expectation of class membership that you do so.

Class Cards Assignment

You are responsible for bringing a ClassCard to each class meeting beginning Thursday, 1/18. You are responsible for procuring your own index cards for the ClassCard assignment.

Requirements:

- **Index Cards:** Standard 4x6" lined **or** unlined (You will need 32 for the semester)
- **Name and Date** must be written on your index card.
- **Handwriting** must be legible.
- **Bring to Class:** On *one side* of your index card, write a response to the assigned reading. This response may entail the following:
 - A question about something *specific* that you found confusing or would like more information about.
 - A thoughtful connection between texts we have read or between the current reading and the theme(s) of the course.
- **Before Leaving Class:** On the opposite side of your index card, write an extension to your initial response or a thoughtful reaction to the class discussion.
 - If your initial response was a question, it is your responsibility to procure the answer to that question by the end of class. Write the answer on the opposite side of the card.
- **On your way out of class** file your ClassCard in the section *behind* your name in the ClassCard box. You are responsible for correctly filing your ClassCard.

How We Will Use ClassCards:

- To help collect our thoughts leading into class discussion
- We will occasionally exchange cards and write responses to one another's work
- I will sometimes use ClassCards as the foundation for discussion questions
- Quiz questions will sometimes come from cards

Assessment:

This is part of your class prep—coming to class without a card demonstrates to me that you are not prepared for class.

- Your card must be clearly connected to and demonstrate satisfactory completion of the assigned reading to receive credit.
- Your card must be clearly connected to and demonstrate satisfactory engagement with class discussion or lecture to receive credit.