

Critical Response Essay - Part One

The first essay for this class is a Critical Response essay demonstrating your ability to closely read a complex text and respond through the academic habits of mind with a claim-driven essay. Our target reading for this assignment is Trevor Hoag's "From Addiction to Connection: Questioning the Rhetoric of Drugs in Relation to Student Technology Use." The homework and in-class work we've done related to this essay should give you a start, and your response can take any of several directions from there. You might consider some of these prompts to build on your initial thoughts:

- What is your general reaction to the essay? Where do you agree with Hoag? Where do you disagree? How does that shape your understanding of his/her message? (Note for this last question it will be helpful to have identified his main claim, as well as the other rhetorical elements of the essay).
- You – the student – are the subject of many of the remarks in some of these readings. How do they sit with you? Do the claims made in the essay match your experience? Where are there similarities? Where are there differences?
- Your teachers – both here in college and before – are also the subjects of some of his remarks. How have your teachers enacted (or not) the actions or attitudes Hoag describes?

You may work with your classmates to come up with other ways to respond to each of these readings, though your essay must be your own. Remember that the prompts are not study questions, so you should not treat them as specific questions to answer in order. Rather, they are guidelines to help you shape a potential thesis for your paper. As with other formal academic essays, your thesis should be clear (that is, your response should be governed by a clear central message), with supporting claims in the body of the essay, using only the assigned essay for support. Additionally, your essay should demonstrate a thoughtful engagement with the reading, and should offer **at least 3 specific references** to the reading to support your comments.

Your essay should be 2-3 pages (600-900 words) long, double-spaced, following MLA conventions for both format and citation (see *Keys* or similar resource). Be sure to include a Works Cited page at the end. This essay will be graded as a homework assignment, but it should present your best writing skills.