

Possible Outlines for the Reflective Essay

These are *possible* outlines that you should not adopt out-of-the-box. In other words, change them to fit your own writing. They are only suggestions.

- I. Introduction
 - a. Mention the two essays that are in your portfolio and draw a connection between them by pointing out:
 - i. Similar themes in the essays (technology, natural vs. artificial lifestyles, human nature, American history, American culture, disasters, etc.)
 - ii. Similar tactics you used, such as arrangement, the use of evidence from the text, and making a connection with your readers
 - iii. Some other commonality
 - b. State your thesis statement for this reflective essay, which could be something like:
 - i. In my interpretive essays, I accomplished the course goals by x, y, z ...
 - ii. In the process of writing my interpretive essays, I learned about the complications of representing “truth” and I tried to spread this knowledge to my readers.
- II. Discuss first interpretive essay
 - a. Identify specific places where you meet the course goals (use quotes/paraphrases)
 - b. Note strategies and choices you made
 - c. Discuss how individuals or groups of people might benefit from the ideas in your essay and how/why you tried to relate to these readers
 - d. Use quotes
- III. Discuss second interpretive essay
 - a. Identify specific places where you meet the course goals (use quotes/paraphrases)
 - b. Note strategies and choices you made
 - c. Discuss how individuals or groups of people might benefit from the ideas in your essay and how/why you tried to relate to these readers
- IV. Conclude your reflection by once again tying both essays together, but saying something different than what you said in your intro.

- I. Introduction
 - a. (see outline above)

- II. Discuss first point
 - a. For example, “Throughout my essays, I balance quoted material with paraphrases to support my ideas and convince readers.” Or “Given my focus on how Neufeld and Junod try to root out biased and warped news stories about national tragedies, I chose to use detailed descriptions so that my readers could experience their arguments. One outcome should be that readers become more critical of the news they read and see.”
 - b. Discuss best examples from both essays.

- III. Discuss second point
 - a. For example, “The arrangement of my essays furthers my purpose by presenting simple ideas first and then complicating those ideas as my essay develops.” Or “I arranged my essays to account for readers who might be new to the ideas that Neufeld and Junod raise. I tried to ease readers into their arguments by using summary and also by contextualizing the Hurricane Katrina and 9/11 tragedies.”
 - b. Discuss best examples from both essays.

- IV. Discuss third point
 - a. Etc.

- V. Etc.

- VI. Conclude your reflection by considering areas of future improvement, lessons learned in general, or final reflections about how your writing “works to build productive, ethical relationships with other people and their ideas and writing.” Use the course website and your relationships with your classmates to your advantage. You have a valuable resource of “other people and their writing” right here in class.