

How to figure out which English class is right for you

Below is a **SAMPLE assignment from English 121**, which is the English Composition class required for most degrees. Imagine you are given this assignment on the first day of class. You will have several weeks to work on this essay and will be given instruction and practice on being an active and engaged reader, finding sources and weaving them into your essay, writing thesis statements, organizing your essay, and writing introductions and conclusions. You will also be able to ask your professor for help and feedback throughout the process. Keeping this in mind, please read the assignment and then answer the questions on the following page.

NOTE: YOU DO NOT HAVE TO COMPLETE THIS ASSIGNMENT AT THIS TIME. IT IS ONLY A SAMPLE TO HELP YOU DETERMINE WHICH ENGLISH CLASS IS RIGHT FOR YOU.

Summary/Response Essay

ENG 121

Your Purpose and Audience

- **PURPOSE:** Summarize an article that addresses an issue with which you have some personal experience or connection and then analyze the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the article.
- **AUDIENCE:** Your audience has not seen your chosen article, but they are interested in the issue it addresses. They don't know if/why they should be convinced by its argument, so after a summary, they need your help identifying what makes the article effective or ineffective.

Your Essay Structure

This paper will include an introduction, summary, response, and conclusion.

- **SUMMARY:** Before you analyze your chosen article, spend two paragraphs "listening" to its ideas by writing a summary that objectively reports the author's main idea, supporting points, and major evidence without any personal commentary, opinion, or interpretation. Make sure your audience understands the basics of the text before you start analyzing it.
- **RESPONSE:** After you've summarized the article, you're ready to analyze it. This section of the essay is your opportunity to offer your analysis or "response" to the article. Begin with a thesis statement that makes a claim about the overall effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the text. The rest of the response will "unpack" that thesis statement by using specific evidence from the original text to support your analysis. This response will be multiple paragraphs long.


Logistics

- Four to six pages long
- Typed and double-spaced in a standard, 12 point font
- Formatted and cited in MLA style

Overall, how ready do you feel to attempt the assignment?

- A. I feel confident.
- B. I would be OK if I had good instruction and/or if I could receive free writing tutoring outside of class.
- C. I am a little intimidated by it.
- D. I am quite nervous and would need lots of extra help.

Here are some skills you would need to complete the example assignment:

How experienced are you with the following tasks? 	Quite experienced	Somewhat experienced	Not experienced
Academic Writing:			
Using a program like Google Docs or Microsoft Word to type essays			
Writing academic essays that are multiple pages			
Writing an introduction paragraph for an academic essay			
Writing an academic summary			
Writing a thesis statement or claim about a topic			
Analyzing a text and using evidence to support your analysis			
Writing a conclusion paragraph for an academic essay			
Finding credible sources using a library database or searching the Internet			
Incorporating research into an essay without plagiarizing			
Revising an essay so that body paragraphs connect to the thesis and to each other			
Using a format like MLA or APA to cite sources			
Proofreading for grammatical or punctuation errors			
Academic Reading:			
Using reading strategies like annotation to understand difficult texts			
Finding the author's main ideas and supporting points of texts that you read			

Based on your responses:

If you answered D and/or have a majority of checkmarks in the “not experienced” column above, **you are ready for CCR 092**. In this class, you will write college level compositions but with plenty of training and support. CCR 092 is a great class to prepare you for ENG 121.

If you answered C and/or have a majority of checkmarks in the “somewhat experienced” column above, **you are ready for CCR 094 with ENG 121**. In this class, you will write multiple college level compositions but with an added support class CCR 094 to help you be successful in ENG 121.

If you answered B above and have a majority of checkmarks in the “somewhat experienced” column above, **you are ready for ENG 121 but we recommend utilizing campus writing resources outside of class**. Each campus has a Writing Center that offers free tutoring. There is also a virtual Online Writing Lab with trained consultants ready to give you feedback and guidance on your essays. Individual tutoring is available, as well, for students who qualify.

If you answered A and have a majority of checkmarks in the “experienced” column, **you are ready for ENG 121**. In this class, you will write multiple college level compositions that emphasize analytical, evaluative, and persuasive writing skills.