

WR121 ESSAY TWO: JOINING THE CONVERSATION
DUE: MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9
ASSIGNMENT GUIDELINES

"Learning how to think really means learning how to exercise some control over how and what you think. It means being conscious and aware enough to choose what you pay attention to and to choose how you construct meaning from experience."
David Foster Wallace

Assignment Description

In Essay Two, you'll develop your own ideas about an issue within the context of a scholarly conversation. In your essay you'll illustrate the skills of **critical reading**, of **summarizing** two source essays of your choice, of **synthesizing** the ideas from those two source essays, and finally **asserting** and **developing** your own claim on that issue. Word count: 1,200 – 1,500 words

Directions: Choose one of the sets of essays listed below. Summarize both of the arguments. Then comparatively analyze the two. In other words, explain how the authors agree and disagree. Finally craft your own response to the issues the two essays raise.

1. "Small Change: Why the Revolution Will Not Be Tweeted" 312 – 327
"Reforming Egypt in 140 Characters?" 329 – 333
2. "Blue-Color Brilliance" 243 – 254
"Hidden Intellectualism" 380 – 387
3. "Escape from the Western Diet" 434 – 441
"Food as Thought: Resisting the Moralization of Eating" 442 – 447

GUIDELINES

1. Begin with an **introductory paragraph** that introduces the issue, provides context for the issue, and ends with a **thesis statement** that indicates why this issue matters (the "so what" factor).
2. **Summarize** each essay in your paired set. As you are summarizing the second essay, point out ways that this essay differs from the first one you summarized. You may include 2 – 3 quotes in each summary, but make sure to put the rest of the summary in your own words. Each summary should be no longer than one well-developed paragraph of 10 – 12 sentences (for a shorter essay) or two well-developed paragraphs of 10 – 12 sentences (for a longer essay).
3. Craft **your own response** to the issue raised by your source essays. Develop your main point (your thesis) well with specific details, examples, anecdotes, etc.
4. Keep what "they say" (the authors of your paired essays) in view as you move through the development of your response. Keep reminding your readers what claims you are responding to. (Remember your lead-ins and end-sentence citations.) Keep returning to the motivating "they say" points with "return sentences."
5. End with a concluding paragraph (or two) answering the question "so what?" What conclusion have you come to after exploring the ideas in your source essays and your response to those ideas?
6. Use MLA format for in-text citations and include MLA citation at the end of your essay to identify the source essays.