Engaging Assessment:
Options, Ways and Means

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The essay

Student writing is the struggle to carry out institutional ritual activities to provide access to the academic literacy of the disciplinary community
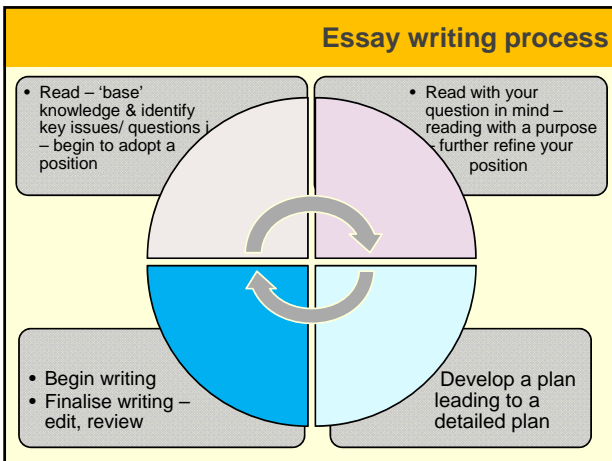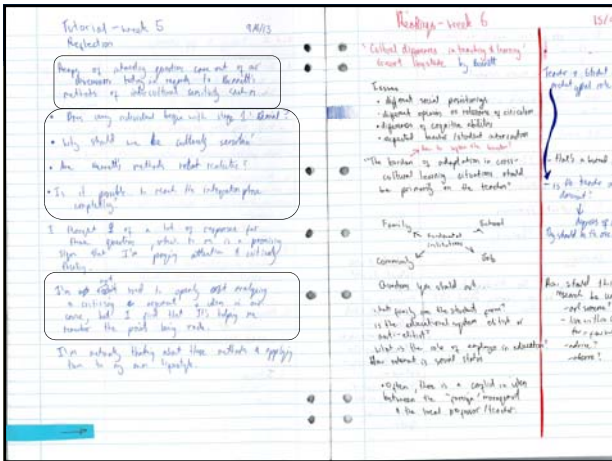
(Richards & Pilcher, 2013. p.2)

For Arts, the essay remains *the* ritual activity.

The essay

We can familiarise students with the essay writing stages through a series of tasks/ activities.

These activities
- are assessed easily
- are low stakes
- can/ should align with your course outcomes
- allow students to write effective papers

Essay writing process

- Read – 'base' knowledge & identify key issues/ questions i – begin to adopt a position

- Read with your question in mind – reading with a purpose – further refine your position

- Begin writing
- Finalise writing – edit, review

Develop a plan leading to a detailed plan

Reading 1

Reading response journal

Summarise key point(s) in own words (content)

Record your comments, questions and reactions (Reflective writing) Can help stu to develop critical voice

Bring to the tutorial every week

Maintain throughout the semester – an on-going record

Sts repeatedly report that it is extremely useful in the essay writing process

Reading 1

Reading response journal - evaluation
Pass/ fail?

Graded?

Which you choose may depend on how important you think it is

i.e.   if you think it's worth 5% of course grade, P/F
        10%? 15%? then maybe it's worth grading
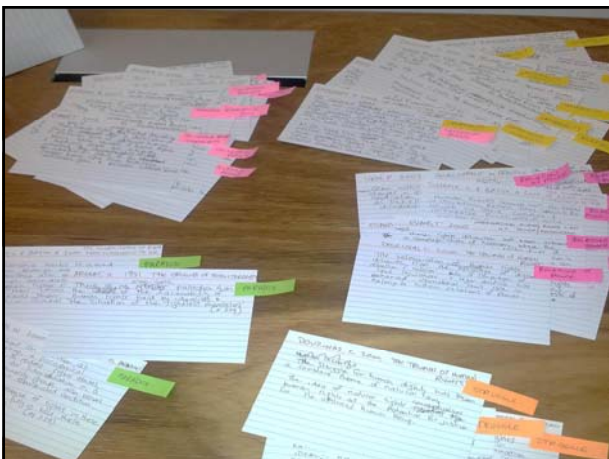
Reading 2

Annotated bibliography
Additional sources found by student - especially relevant for Ugrad yr.2 & 3, post grad courses

Why?
Requires sts to search for and evaluate sources in good time - It's good academic practice
(Also ties in with Arts Foundation assessment)

When? Initial evidence submitted a reasonable time before the essay deadline.

Evaluation – pass/ fail - Could get stus to submit as part of final submission.

Planning

Detailed outline including
> argument/ position/ thesis
> major sections
> sources to use and where to use in paper

Decent outlines usually lead to good essays.
You have to do your thinking before you write otherwise you'll probably end up in a mess.

Outline: 'The Benefits of Immigration to Industrialised countries'
Position/argument: immigrants provide net economic growth and cultural benefits to industrialised countries.

1. **Background: industrialised countries**
   A. **Demographic changes**
      1) Ageing population – define – no single deftn therefore provide own using Zieter, 2004, p.145, Filing et al website, Carragher et al 2009 p340-344. Causes? → next para
      2) Zero or negative population growth – brief discussion of why and where Italy & Jpn → Zieter 2004, WHO report 2010 website
   B. **Changes in labour force**
      1) Reduced work force, esp. in low-level service and agricul jobs (Bailey 1999, 45-6; Jones 2002, 23; UNESCO 2005, xxi-xvii).
      2) Ageing work force may lack contemporary skills – why significant? Possible consequences? → Harbinger 2007 p33, Jpn Gvt Report website 2005, Zaffir & Gotlieb 2009,p441
      3) New ideas needed for old problems → Zaffir & Gotlieb 2009,p443, Costello 2008 p22
2. **Benefits of immigration**
   A. **Demographics**
      1) Younger average age of immigrants = larger tax pool in long run → Weston & Negetre website, Tse & Win 2008 p232, UN Report on Pop 2010 website
      2) Higher birth rate among many immigrant groups (Jones 2003, p. 345)
   B. **Labour features.....**

Presenting

(As part of the drafting process.)

Students present their ideas to peers. (5 mins)
> Could do as whole group (more stressful – very time consuming)
> Or, could do concurrently in groups of 3-4.

Followed by Q&A (5 mins)
> Presenter prepares qstns and audience also responds to ideas.

Presenting

Why?

1. Presenting ideas is an academic expectation. It's not a 'soft' or 'easy' option.
2. Verbalising your ideas (in public) is very different from thinking in private.
3. Can provide timely peer feedback before submission.
4. Keeps students on track – avoid the last minute panic.

(Could do as poster presentation or powerpoint – more time-consuming for student – may need to grade rather than Pass/ Fail)

Presenting

When
A week or two before the deadline

Evaluation
Could be pass/ fail or graded (Travis has some tips)

Poster presentation or powerpoint – more time-consuming for student – so, increase its value/ weighting

Presenting

Time effective

Worthwhile for you

Worthwhile for students