

Reflective Essay:

Reflective critical essay: 10% (to the equivalent of 2000 words)

The reflective piece is not worth much as a percentage, but performs the vital function of allowing you to reflect and as guide to readers of piece. IF YOU CAN SHOW YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING AND POSITION THE READER THIS WILL IMPROVE THE WORK AND YOUR MARKS ALL ROUND.

The key things:

It should reflect critically on the process of writing (see examples): descriptive, purely personal, anecdotal writing should be avoided in favour of formal/conceptual explorations of the nature of the project: e.g. issues of genre, form, language, structure, audience etc.

The reflective piece may broadly take one of two forms:

- 1) Log book/ diary ---- the construction of the piece as it happens (?).
- 2) Reflective essay --- essay format

No two reflective essays will be the same but key elements might include:

- 1) Origins of the project (this should be fairly narrowly limited to the project itself and not everything about you).
- 2) If the project has particular format or publisher/reader expectations these should be discussed (either to show conforming or subverting expectations ---- be careful with the latter!).
- 3) Influences and secondary reading --- again, particularly if the piece works within genre/sub-genre.
- 4) Key developments (easily done in log book format) especially if the project develops/changes significantly.
- 5) Examples of editing work in progress. You can't talk through the entire piece but could give one or two key examples (quotes of versions followed by analysis and explanation of change). Reflection tied to workshop discussion useful here.
- 6) Reflection on finished piece, especially if it is part of a larger project (you can include appendices/synopses to give idea of whole concept)

- 7) Speculation on readership/viewership ---- especially for sub-genre pieces.
- 8) Bibliography.

Structure

- 1) **Intro:** this should tell us what the portfolio consists of and what you will be discussing in the body of the essay.

Body of the essay:

- discuss each piece in turn. In your discussion you should identify the genre/form (or sub-genre) of each piece and the intended readership. Mention if developed from a class exercise.
- Mention one or two creative texts that have inspired or influenced your piece plus one or two lit/crit or craft books that have informed your work. Don't pick these at random. Choose books that clearly connect to your own work and writing process. Reference carefully, including page numbers if appropriate. If you deliberately chose to differ in method or theme from these books, say so and explain why. This discussion may connect with the one below. You can also pepper other elements of the middle section with references to/quotes from, other books or journals/interviews.
- Explain any important decisions around genre/form/ theme eg if you chose to write a sc fi or speculative fiction piece, explain why. Or if you wrote a hybrid autobiographical piece containing both prose and poetry.
- Key developments (easily done in log book format) especially if the project develops/changes significantly
- Reflect on choice of narrative voice and why (first person/third person/close/omniscient etc) and tense (past or present etc)
- For each piece reflect on decisions around one or two other craft elements (one method is to pick different ones for each piece, stating in the intro what you will be discussing for each piece) eg characterisation or use of dialogue.
- Mention any ways you edited these elements You can't talk through the entire piece but could give one or two key examples (**quotes of versions followed by analysis and explanation of change**). Reflection tied to workshop discussion useful here.

- Briefly summarise what you have discussed in the essay. Reflect on finished piece, especially if it is part of a larger project (you can include appendices/synopses to give idea of whole concept). Summarise particular challenges and say whether you feel you have achieved your aims.

BIBLIOGRAPHIES AND REFERENCING

There are various conventions used for presenting footnotes and references. What follows is based on the MHRA (Modern Humanities Research Association) style conventions. The key to successful referencing is to select a recognised set of conventions and to use them consistently in your work. The School advises students to follow the guidelines and conventions detailed below.

REFERENCES

References are normally given in the form of **footnotes** or **endnotes**. Footnotes appear at the bottom or 'foot' of the page, and endnotes appear at the end of an essay or chapter. Word processors will perform these functions for you automatically. If using Microsoft Word:

Select **Insert**

Click on **Reference**

Click on **Footnote** (this will allow you select either footnotes or endnotes)

This will indicate your footnote or endnote in the main body of your work with a superscript numeral, and will automatically locate your reference material either at the foot of the page or at the end of your finished document.

There are basically five types of publications that you will be using as students that would be included in traditional references. (Students should refer to their Student Handbook for the referencing of texts from different media sources, such as the Internet.) A full citation needs to be given at the first mention of a text, but afterwards, references can be incorporated into the text of the essay, set off in brackets. (For the latter, you only require the name of the author and the page reference. If you are using more than one text by that author, then supply the title and the page reference only.)

1. Author's edition:

Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1992).

This is a primary text, as presented by the author. You are asked to supply the name of the author, followed by a comma, followed by the title of the text in italics, followed by publication details in parentheses: place of publication, then a colon, then the publisher, then a comma, then the date of publication. If you need to include a page reference at the first mention of the primary source, substitute a comma for the final full stop and add the page reference. (When you are supplying page references use 'p.' for single page references, and 'pp.' for reference to a selection of pages.)

2. Edited edition:

Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations*, ed. by John Sutherland (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

This is also a primary text, but one where the publisher has engaged someone to help in the presentation of the text; this may involve editing the text, and providing references and an introduction for the reader. You are asked to supply the details given above under point 1, and to include the name of the editor after the title of the text. It is important to ensure that you always cite the precise edition that you have used, or your page references will be of no use to your reader/examiner.

In the case of both author's editions and edited editions, you may be using a second edition or third edition, and so on. Here also you need to include the relevant information: before giving the publication details, insert a comma, then supply the relevant information ("2nd edn.", for example). [For illustration, see bibliography example supplied later.]

3. Critical studies:

Robin Wood, *Hitchcock's Film Revisited* (London: Faber and Faber, 1989).

If you are using a critical work which is part of a series, you should supply the title of the series after the title of the text, separated by a comma:

Fred Botting, *Gothic*, The New Critical Idiom Series (London: Routledge, 1996).

4. Essays in edited critical texts:

Much of your critical reading will involve using books that have been compiled by an editor or editors, to bring together essays on a particular subject by a range of critical authors. If you are referencing one of these articles or essays, the citation should appear as follows:

Luis Bunuel, 'Cinema, Instrument of Poetry', in *The European Cinema Reader*, ed. by Catherine Fowler (London: Routledge, 2002), pp.45-48.

You supply the name of the author you are citing, then the title of their essay, before going on to give the publication details for the book as a whole. (See point 5 for further information on the presentation of essay titles.) You should supply the page references for the essay within the volume at the end of your reference.

5. Articles in journals:

Much critical work appears in the form of articles in journals. The order of information is: the author's name followed by a comma; the title of the article enclosed in single quotation marks (if there is a title within a title this should be enclosed in double quotation marks if it is a short work, or italicised if it is the title of a book); the title of the article is followed by a comma, and then comes the title of the journal which is italicised; this title is followed by a comma and then the number of the journal; this is followed by the year (enclosed in brackets) in which the volume is published, followed by a comma; then come the page references. Because of the volume number, 'p.' or 'pp.' is not required.

Downes, Edmundo and Steven McMillan, 'Defining interactivity: A qualitative identification of key dimensions', *New Media and Society*, 2 (2000), 157-179.

Repeated References in Footnotes or Endnotes

You may find that you need to give repeated references, one immediately after the other in your footnotes or endnotes. There is no need in this case to repeat the full reference each time, or even the abbreviated reference. You may use 'ibid.' (an abbreviation of the Latin word meaning 'in the same place') followed by the relevant page reference. For example, three references in succession to one text would appear as follows:

Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1992), p.46.

ibid., pp.79-82.

ibid., p.97.

BIBLIOGRAPHIES

For assessment essays and research material, you will need to supply a bibliography in addition to footnotes or endnotes. While the format is similar to footnotes or endnotes there are some important differences.

The bibliography must be arranged alphabetically, according to the authors' or editors' surnames.

As a result of this point, the author's or editor's surname will appear first, and the forename or initials will follow.

In the case of multiple authors, only the name of the first author is reversed.

A full stop should not appear at the end of each entry.

If you are supplying a number of texts by one author, then take a new line for each new publication after the citation of the author's name.

Cook, Pam, and Mieke Bernink, eds., *The Cinema Book*, 2nd edn. (London: BFI Publishing, 1999)

Dickens, Charles, *Great Expectations* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1992)

_____, *Dombey and Son* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1996)

Fowler, Catherine, ed., *The European Cinema Reader* (London: Routledge, 2002)

Filmography

For film and media students it is necessary to supply a list of film texts referred to in the course of assignments. This information should be presented in the following way:

Title of film (name of director, year of release)

Jurassic Park (Spielberg, 1993)

CITING THE INTERNET

You are advised to use Internet 'sources' with a certain amount of CAUTION when researching for the extended essay. Most Internet material is not subject to review, nor does it have to conform to the standards of the publishing companies.

On the rare occasions when reference to the Internet may be appropriate, the following guidelines should be adhered to:

You should keep a copy of everything to which you have referred. Sites are updated frequently, so having a hard copy including the date and the Website address is important.

You should maintain a critical awareness. For example all kinds of people publish texts and offer opinions; very little of it is objective or scholarly. It is preferable, wherever possible, to find book/journal sources for the information you have gleaned from the Internet.

As with books, you need to be aware of the dangers of plagiarism. Full references are required whenever Internet material, e-mail or group discussions are used.

The following conventions must be followed:

World Wide Web (WWW) Sites

To cite files available for viewing/downloading via the World Wide Web by means of Internet Explorer, Netscape or other Web browsers, provide the following information.

- the author's name (if known)
- the full title of the document in quotation marks
- the title of the complete work if applicable in italics
- the date of publication or last revision (if available)
- the full http address (URL) enclosed with angle brackets
- the date of visit in parentheses

Model:

Burka, Lauren P., 'A Hypertext History of Multi-User Dimensions', MUD History, 1993, <<http://www.ccs.neu.edu/home/lpb/mud-history.html>> (5 December 1994)

E-mail messages

To cite electronic mail correspondence, provide the following information:

- the author's name
- the author's e-mail address, enclosed in angle brackets
- the subject line from the posting in quotation marks
- the date of publication
- the kind of communication (i.e. personal e-mail, distribution list)
- the date of access in parentheses

Model:

Smith, John, <J.B.Smith@Trinity-cm.ac.uk> 'Aztec Religion' 12 March 1997, Personal e-mail, (15 Apr 1997)