

## Class Notes and Homework

English 105i, Day 3:

Millions saw the apple fall, but Newton was the one who asked why. - Bernard Baruch

The point of philosophy is to start with something so simple as to seem not worth stating, and to end with something so paradoxical that no one will believe it. -Bertrand Russell

1. Attendance:
2. Reminders:
  - a. Do NOT pre-read lecture notes BEFORE class.
  - b. Work on papers with others but do not share grades and my comments on your work. It will only create antipathy!
3. **Sunday Tutorial:** If Sunday evening tutorial #1 is moved to this Sunday 1/19, who could come? FYI – It's MLK weekend.
4. Did you get any help with pretests from peer mentors?
  - a. Those of you that worked on them with me, are office hours helpful?
5. **Discussion I:** The pre-tests papers?
  - a. Did you understand the prompt(s)?
  - b. How did the individual writing and/or groups go?
    - i. Is this a decent way to do groupwork?
  - c. What topic chosen and why?
    - a. What do you think were the most important things to do with the paper?
    - b. What do you think you did well/poorly?
    - c. Have you looked at each other's work/notes in Dropbox or via the GroupMe?
6. **Discussion III:** In thinking about the pretest, what would you say effective "academic" writing needs/starts with/looks like? From the few pretests I've seen, it seemed like you all thought/believed the same thing.
  - a. Thesis (What is it),
    - i. Claim that some variable (i.e., "x") = Truth
      - i. Why is a thesis good/bad important or essential in academic writing?
  - b. What's next after thesis: 5 Paragraphs/pages of support/refutation and then conclusion
  - c. Why do we write? To WIN Arguments!
    - i. **Example of thesis-driven argument:** You're an...

i. Is this **5-Paragraph** structure “effective” in “winning”?

1. It's a **DEBATE**:

\*Does debate help you WIN?

\*So, **why assign** this type of writing

1. Tradition – i.e., that's what I did in HS so, you have to do it.
2. It's easy for a HS teacher to grade – don't read, just scan for “error”...  
(e.g., your conclusion didn't restate your thesis claim...)
3. Only way to grade AP and other standardized tests

7. Let's test if a thesis works:

i. If I started with the **THESIS “1=2”** – who is on my side?



ii.

iii. **Create a road-mapped (i.e., linear) CAUSAL argument** (**DIRECT if/then statements**) like an advanced math proof.

i. Forces a linear path in reasoning:

b. Let's look at an example:

1. Start with a **Syllogism** (instead of a thesis) as a logical/**pre-proved** foundation to build upon: I call this **foundation** for the argument the **“introductory concept.”**

i. if  $a=b$  and  $b=c$  then  $a=c$

ii. **Why? Because it MUST! Through the**

1. **“Transitive property of equalities.”**

- a. (The “transitive property” is your “**introductory concept**.” This is our argument’s **pre-proved foundation**.
2. Then, from this **foundational** “introductory concept”, we can assert that:
  - iii. some “x” can = some “y”
  - iv. This foundation diminishes **non-sequitur** and allows for a pre-proved jump-off “introductory” point for causation.
3. So, let me try to win an argument by starting with a thesis. So, you may not agree with my claim but, I assert: “1=2”

ii. Do you think I'll win this argument by starting with my thesis?

**Now—let's start with my introductory concept:**

- i. If  $x=y$  then
  - ii.  $x^2=yx$  If provable through a HOW “intro-concept”/then
  - iii.  $(x^2 - y^2)=(yx - y^2)$  If provable through a HOW “intro-concept”/then
  - iv.  $(x+y)(x-y) = y(x-y)$  If provable through a HOW “intro-concept”/then
  - v.  $(x+y) = y$  If provable through a HOW “intro-concept”/then
  - vi.  $2y = y$  If provable through a HOW “intro-concept”/then
  - vii.  $2=1$  (Thesis)
  - viii. QEF — “**quid erat faciendum**” — “precisely what was required to be done.”
8. **2 major Life Lessons of the day:**
  - a. The thesis comes at the end—why?
  - b. Sadly, most non-scientific arguments aren’t about “truth” but about what the writer can demonstrate (better than one’s opponent) **to WIN**.
9. Who wrote their high school papers or the pretest like a road-mapped math proof?
10. \*Learning **to roadmap** an argument will be your **first skill this semester**.
11. The second will be **That versus How**. Example: You know **THAT** 1 doesn't =2 but, does anyone know **HOW**, well enough to **demonstrate** it in a step-by-step roadmap?

\*Dr. Hammer divided by ZERO: ok, but **HOW** is that NOT ok?

\*2 examples

- Projectively Extended Real Line
  - See: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Projectively\\_extended\\_real\\_line](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Projectively_extended_real_line) --
- Also, check out: <https://www.1dividedby0.com/>

**Class work: Groups of 2:**

- Try to create the “roadmap of HOW 1 does NOT =2.

- Anyone to the board!

### Homework: **Pick your own grades!!**

- Spent 30 minutes by yourself trying to create the “roadmap of HOW 1 does NOT =2.
- Send your “**proof**” roadmap to the GroupMe by 9PM tonight
  - Your peer mentor can help you on the proof
- By 10pm, everyone votes for “**strongest roadmap**” i.e., best example of HOW 1 does NOT = 2.
- That person becomes “team captain” and can drop ANY 1 HW grade. So, if you go to all the peer-mentor sessions, your HW grade would be based on only top 4 grades.
- If not elected captain. you can quit and send me your HW as an email stating **THAT** – “I lose b/c 1 does, in fact, =2” and, I promise, if ever asked, to affirm that I don't know the difference b/t a 1 and a 2”. Even though you give up, you will still receive a .8 ( i.e., 80%) on the HW. Or
- Spend the next few days before next class, based on the captain's schedule, (i.e., over dinner, coffee, ice cream, or the GroupMe) trying to help the captain demonstrate not just **THAT** but **HOW** “1” does NOT = 2 by improving their proof.
- The captain will keep track of who helped. By 6:45 before our next class, helpers should have contributed, at least, one hour to the road-mapped “proof” of HOW 1 does NOT =2. The captain will send me those names as their “homework” by 6:45pm. If you help the captain for, at least, the minimum 1 hour, you get .9 (i.e., 90%) on the HW. How do you get that extra .1 (i.e., 10%?) Your argument, unlike a HS paper, must stand up to rebuttal. So...
- In class, the captain will present a road-mapped argument to class on HOW 1 does NOT =2. Prof. Hammer will attack that argument, looking for uses of “**that**” instead of “**how**”. Captain gets .25 bonus if they win (that's a 1.25 on the HW – i.e., 125%) and their team gets their 100%. But, if the team loses, and they admit they lose, they all get 95%. Anyone not on the team keeps their 80%. If you beat Dr/ Hammer, you not only get to humiliate me and feel proud, but the captain now has 125% as their HW grade and only 3 more HW grades to go (if they go to all the evening sessions for 40% of the class).
  - If you want to join the team, text the captain in the GroupMe. She'll decide who earns the bonus points. You'll have to make time based on her schedule.
  - She'll organize the meetings and contact you over the GroupMe.
  - She'll give me a list of who gets the .9 bonus
- Good luck beating me on the math quiz #2=1!! Try to get some pleasure out of beating me and making me look foolish!