
Reaction Papers

Description

A reaction paper is written in response to either a guest speaker, a film, or a field trip. Any underlined item listed in the course schedule (see syllabus) represents a topic on which you may write a reaction paper. It is recommended that you take notes during each speaker, film, or field trip as though you were going to write your paper on that presentation. This will help you get the most out of each presentation and make it easier to write your reaction papers.

Due Date: Please refer to the course schedule in your syllabus for the due date.

Format (5 points)

Each paper should be 650 – 900 words. The text should be typed using 12-point font, double-spaced, and 1-inch margins. Minimum length: 650 words (around two full pages of writing (*i.e.* not including title, your name, etc.)).

Content (30 points)

• **BACKGROUND** (10 pts):

- How does the topic of the speaker or film fit into the context of the course material that we are learning?
- Provide background information from the lecture notes and/or text to explain the biology behind the speaker/film topic

• **OPINIONS & POINTS OF VIEW** (10 pts):

- What key points were made by the speaker(s) or in the film?
- Describe at least 3 key points—be specific!

• **NEW INFO THAT YOU LEARNED** (10 pts):

- Describe at least 3 new pieces of information that you learned from the speaker(s) or film.
- Discuss your personal opinions about the speaker(s) or film, and the reason(s) for your opinion.

Writing (15 points)

- Make sure to pay attention to the overall organization and paragraph structure of your essay. Usually, a well-organized essay will begin with an introductory paragraph, continue with at least three body paragraphs, and end with a concluding paragraph. There should be clear structure within each paragraph (*i.e.* thesis statement first, followed by supporting information, then concluding statement).
- Check over your sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
- If you need help with your writing, go to the drop-in hours at the James Oliver Writing Center in room B-261.
- Your paper must be in your own words—plagiarism will not be accepted. If you quote a speaker or dialogue from a film, be sure to put the words in quotes to distinguish from your own writing.

Grading rubric on opposite side →

Reaction Paper Grading Rubric**Name** _____**Total Points** _____ **/50****Content: Topic Background****(10 points):** _____

- Topic background and connection to course content (lecture notes, text) are covered thoroughly, clearly, and accurately

Content: Opinions & points of view**(10 points):** _____

- At least three key points made by speaker or film were addressed thoroughly, clearly, and accurately

Content: New info learned**(10 points):** _____

- At least three new pieces of information were described
- Personal opinion of speaker or film was discussed, along with reasons for your opinion

Writing**(15 points):** _____

- Grammar, punctuation, and spelling are correct
- Logical progression of sentence structure and paragraph structure

Format**(5 points):** _____

- Paper is typed, 12 point font, 1 inch margins
- Paper is at least 2 pages (excluding title, name, etc.)