Assignment #1: Analyze a Genre

The purpose of this assignment is to demonstrate how well you can define a genre by analyzing four examples of a genre you choose. To do this, you’ll need to find three (3) examples of that genre on the same subject, and one (1) example of that genre on a different subject. You will introduce and define the genre, compare the four examples and discuss commonalities in the genre that exist among all of them. You can also discuss any differences that exist and explain why that might be.

For example, you could analyze four examples of *how-to guides*: three of them could be recipes (*how to guides* for a meal), and the last could be a instructions manual for setting up a TV (*how to guide* for setting up an electronic appliance). You should define the genre characteristics and rhetorical situations of these how-to guides in general, and then you can talk about the ways in which these examples are all similar, despite being about different topics. You can also talk about any differences that bend genre conventions. To conclude, you could provide suggestions to those who might want to write in this specific genre.

Note: This is an analysis and not a list, so it is not enough to simply list or describe what each example has in common. Use the categories in “Rhetorical Situations” and “Genre Conventions” in *The Bedford Book of Genres (BBG)* to organize your paper.

To get started, choose an appropriate genre to analyze. If you’re not sure what to choose, ask your instructor for guidance. Read and annotate the examples to highlight anything interesting you notice about the rhetorical situations (BBG p. 15) and the genre conventions (BBG p. 25). Take notes on similarities or differences. Decide which categories within rhetorical situations and genre conventions you want to discuss. (Hint: you won’t do a thorough, in-depth job if you discuss all of them.)

When you’re ready to begin the writing process, think about the following:

* How is this genre defined in terms of the rhetorical situation and genre conventions?
* What about the rhetorical situation and the genre conventions will you discuss?
* What are some similarities/differences in genre or rhetorical situation across all the examples? What evidence do you have from each example to “prove” this?
* Is there anything that doesn’t conform to the genre conventions? Why is it still part of the genre then?

Alternatively, you can think about the paper in these four categories:

1. Style—How would you characterize the tone of this genre? Are there any deviations in your examples, why? What appeals are used?
2. Design—How is the text designed? How does the structure and elements of the text impact how it works and how it reads?
3. Medium—Where is the genre located? How does the medium impact the look and feel of the text? What about the medium makes this genre different.
4. Use—How is this genre used? Why is it used? Who uses it?

**Format & Layout**

[Insert how you want students to format their paper. As the instructor, you can add more specificity to the prompt but do not change the scope or rigor of the assignment.]

Your paper should be formatted with 1-inch margins. Font should be legible and no larger than 12-point. Specific quotations should be referenced using your course’s citation style. The final assignment should be between 2-4 single-spaced pages. Final submission should be as an Adobe PDF or MS file.

*Sample Paper Outline:*

* Introduction
	+ Introduce the Paper, the Purpose, and the Paper’s Structure
* Genre Definition
	+ Explain what the genre is and how the genre uses style, medium, and design
	+ Introduce the four examples you have of the genre
* Genre Examples
	+ Explain how the genre examples all reflect their shared genre’s conventions
	+ Explain how the genre examples differ from each other and how these differences impact their style, design, and medium.
* Genre Critique
	+ Explain what the genre is used for and who uses the genre
	+ Provide guidelines for when the genre should be used and when it should be avoided.
* Conclusion

 **Due Dates**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** First Draft **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** Peer Review **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** Final Draft

**Final Submission Checklist**

* I have defined the genres and introduced the specific categories of rhetorical situations and genre conventions that I will discuss.
* I have 4 examples of the same genre – 3 on the same topic, 1 on a different one.
* I have included a thesis statement that captures the focus of my paper.
* I have included in-text citations and a Works Cited/Reference page.
* I have formatted my paper [as my instructor has described.]

**Rubric**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rhetorical Competency | **Supporting Skill** | **Stylistic Competency** | **Supporting Skill** |
| Audience Awareness | Level of detail is appropriate to audience’s knowledge level  | Purposeful Arrangement  | Major sections and subsections have clear headings.   |
|  | Content is presented in a manner that guides the audience through the text.  |   | Each paragraph develops a single idea, logically. |
|  | External source material supports the text’s main message.  |   | Sentences have clear structure and correct punctuation. |

Students will be graded on the following scale: Insufficient, Novice, Competent, and Proficient. [You may not modify the provided rubrics for your course.]

Assignment 2: Writing with Genres in Context

The purpose of this assignment is to:

* 1. demonstrate how well you can explain a genre of your choice,
	2. compose your own example of that genre, and
	3. justify how your example conforms (or successfully bends) the genre conventions.

There will be three major components to this paper. First, working with your genre of choice, define what the genre is and how it works (rhetorical situation, genre conventions, etc.) using three (3) examples of the genre. Then, you will compose your own example of that genre. Finally, you will explain why your text belongs in the genre and how it matches up with the examples you provided.

To get started, choose a genre you want to compose in. (This is important because you don’t want to be stuck with a genre you don’t like if you have to compose in it.) If you’re not sure what to choose, ask your instructor for guidance. Before you compose, find three (3) examples of that genre to use as evidence for defining the genre and how it works. You may want to refer to the checklists for rhetorical situations (BBG p. 15) and genre conventions (BBG p. 25). After you’ve defined the genre, compose your own example and justify how that example conforms or successfully bends the genre conventions.

When you’re ready to begin the writing process, think about the following:

* How would you define this genre, especially in terms of the rhetorical situation and the genre conventions?
* How do the examples you’ve chosen conform to the genre? Do any of them bend the genre, and if so, why are they still part of the genre?
* How will you transition from the definition to your composition?
* How will you justify your composition as belonging to the same genre? (Ideally, you should use the same criteria for justifying your composition as you had for the examples.)

You can also think about the paper in these four categories:

1. Style—What is the tone of the genre? How does it appeal to readers?
2. Design—What formatting choices define the genre? What types of design choices are possible? How are they used?
3. Medium—Where is the genre found? How does that location/technology impact the format of the genre and access to it?
4. Use—Who uses this genre? How do they use it? What types of things usually get talked about with this genre?

**Format & Layout**

[Insert how you want students to format their paper. As the instructor, you can add more specificity to the prompt, so long as you do not change the scope or rigor of the assignment.]

There will be three major components of this assignment: your explanation of the genre, based on your examples; your example of the genre; and your explanation of how your example fits the constraints of the genre as you’ve defined them.

*Sample General Outline*

* Introduction
	+ Introduce the paper’s purpose, the sections, and their orders
* Genre Definition
	+ Explain what genre you’ve chosen
	+ Define the genre’s style, design, and medium
	+ Explain who uses the genre and why they use it
* Genre Text
	+ Include your text here
* Genre Text Explanation
	+ Explain how your genre text matches the constraints you’ve chosen
	+ Explain how the genre conveys your message and why it is an effective choice for the message
* Conclusion

Your paper should be formatted with 1-inch margins. Font should be legible and no larger than 12-point. Specific quotations should be referenced using your course’s citation style. The paper should be between 3 and 6 single-spaced pages. Final submission should be as an Adobe PDF or MS file.

 **Due Dates**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** First Draft **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** Peer Review **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** Final Draft

**Final Submission Checklist**

* I have included a thesis statement that captures the focus of my paper.
* I have defined the genre and introduced the specific categories of rhetorical situations and genre conventions that I will discuss.
* I have 3 examples of the same genre.
* I have composed my own example of the genre.
* I have justified why my composition belongs to the genre using the same criteria that I used for my examples.
* I have included in-text citations and a Works Cited/Reference page.
* I have formatted my paper [as my instructor has described.]

**Rubric**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rhetorical Competency | **Supporting Skill** | **Stylistic Competency** | **Supporting Skill** |
| Audience Awareness | Level of detail is appropriate to audience’s knowledge level  | Purposeful Arrangement  | Major sections and subsections have clear headings.   |
|  | Content is presented in a manner that guides the audience through the text.  |   | Each paragraph develops a single idea, logically. |
|  | External source material supports the text’s main message.  |   | Sentences have clear structure and correct punctuation. |
| Genre Awareness | Genre is defined in clear terms | Purposeful Voice  | Tone of author is identifiable and consistent. |
|  | Genre definition is supported by relevant evidence.  |   | Key terms are used consistently. |
|  | Genre is presented in a way concurrent with genre benchmarks |   | Design choices are used in a way concurrent with genre benchmarks |

Students will be graded on the following scale: Insufficient, Novice, Competent, and Proficient. [You may not modify the provided rubrics for your course.]

Assignment 3: Group Project Proposal (Final Paper Part I)

The purpose of this assignment is to propose a research topic and strategy for your final assignment: an advocacy campaign. For the final campaign, you will create three (or four) texts from different genres on a topic of your choice. Like any good campaign, the three (or four) texts will share the same general message in ways that make sense for their particular audiences and contexts.

In this assignment you will make two major moves. You will explain the conversation (what people are already writing about in your research topic), and you will justify the genres you plan on using to join that conversation. In other words, you will explain the message you hope to share about your chosen research topic, the genres you plan to create, and the rationale behind choosing those genres and that message. Each member of the group will choose their own genre and create a text within that genre that communicates your shared message.

To get started, [join a group that you work well with]. Choose a topic that you feel will interest you for at least two assignments. If you’re not sure what to choose, ask your instructor for guidance. Conduct some preliminary research using both academic and popular sources to figure out what has already been said about the topic and what ongoing problems they might be looking to solve.

**Questions to Consider**

When you think you’ve found a problem within the topic to advocate for, consider the following questions:

1. Status Quo—What does this conversation look like? Who participates? What do they talk about? What genres are commonly used to talk about this?
2. Stakeholders—Who are the stakeholders in this conversation? Who has something to gain or lose in this conversation? Which stakeholders seem to have the most access to this conversation? Which stakeholders do you see underrepresented?
3. Changing the Conversation—Taking into account your discussion of stakeholders, does the status quo need to change? Why? If it doesn’t need to change, justify why it can stay the same. What message do you plan to bring into this conversation? Who do you plan to target with that message?
4. Strategy—Taking the above into account, what genres do you plan on using in this conversation? Which stakeholders do you plan on targeting with your individual texts? Why are these genres effective for your target stakeholders? What style, design, and medium choices will you make in composing these planned texts? How will your combined texts come together to create a successful campaign?

**Format & Layout**

[Insert how you want students to format their paper. As the instructor, you can add more specificity to the prompt, so long as you do not change the scope or rigor of the assignment.]

This assignment is broken into two major sections: your research on the conversation you will join and your explanation of your strategy for joining it.

*Sample General Outline:*

* Introduction
	+ Introduce the purpose of the paper and the conversation you will join
	+ Introduce the paper sections and their order
* Research on Conversation
	+ Explain the current status quo of the conversation
	+ Describe the stakeholders and their relationship to the conversation
* Joining the Conversation
	+ Explain whether you plan on changing the conversation or continuing the conversation and why you have made this choice.
	+ Specify what your strategy for joining the conversation will be, who will be targeted, and which genres you will be using to do this work.

NOTE: Each group member’s contribution in the proposed portfolio should be equal to the rest of the group, and the final contribution from each member should be the equivalent intellectual work of a 2-4 page paper. [You will organize all your parts and submit all of your components together as one cohesive paper.]

Your paper should be formatted with 1-inch margins. Font should be legible and no larger than 12-point. Use your course’s citation style. The text should be 3 to 6 single-spaced pages. Final submission should be as an Adobe PDF or MS file.

**Rubric**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rhetorical Competency | **Supporting Skill** | **Stylistic Competency** | **Supporting Skill** |
| Audience Awareness | Level of detail is appropriate to audience’s knowledge level  | Purposeful Arrangement  | Major sections and subsections have clear headings.   |
|  | Content is presented in a manner that guides the audience through the text.  |   | Each paragraph develops a single idea, logically. |
|  | External source material supports the text’s main message.  |   | Sentences have clear structure and correct punctuation. |
| Genre Awareness | Genre is defined in clear terms | Purposeful Voice  | Tone of author is identifiable and consistent. |
|  | Genre definition is supported by relevant evidence.  |   | Key terms are used consistently. |
|  | Genre is presented in a way concurrent with genre benchmarks |   | Design choices are used in a way concurrent with genre benchmarks |
| Conversation Awareness  | Text cites other sources to define larger conversation. | Purposeful Documentation  | In-text citations are used consistently |
|  | Text’s argument engages with larger conversation |   | Citations are collected in a Works Cited page or equivalent  |
|  | Text’s argument is supported by outside sources. |   | Citations are connected to text’s argument |

Students will be graded on the following scale: Insufficient, Novice, Competent, and Proficient.

Assignment 4: Group Genre Advocacy Project (Final Project Part II)

In this final assignment, your group will present your collected texts as a coherent advocacy campaign. Your portfolio will introduce your group, your topic, and your work. Grades will be assigned based on the rubric definitions that your group worked out with your instructor during conferences. Each individual member will be graded on their own document. One major component of this assessment will be how well the individual text coordinates with the larger group message and other texts.

Each individual member will be graded on their own document; however, a major component of your grade will be based on how well your individual part works with the other texts to generate a coherent message.

**Format & Layout**

[Insert how you want students to format their paper. As the instructor, you can add more specificity to the prompt, so long as you do not change the scope or rigor of the assignment.]

*Sample General Outline for Portfolio:*

* Portfolio Introduction
	+ Half-page (single-spaced) introduction of group, message, and genre
	+ Table of Contents
* Portfolio Item 1
* Portfolio Item 2
* Portfolio Item 3
* (Portfolio Item 4 if group has four members)

Your paper should be formatted with 1-inch margins. Font should be legible and no larger than 12-point. Each group member’s contribution should be equal to the rest of the group, and the final contribution from each member should be the equivalent intellectual work of a 2-4 page paper.

**Rubric**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rhetorical Awareness | Genre’s advocacy is appropriate to circumstance | Purposeful Style  | Voice of writer is appropriate for relevant stakeholders  |
|  | The scope of the argument or advocacy is feasible.  |   | Genres in campaign coordinate with each other for a shared goal |
|  | Genre responds to or represents stakeholder concerns |   | Design of texts supports argument. |

Students will be graded on the following scale: Insufficient, Novice, Competent, and Proficient.

You will be graded based on the grading contract you’ve worked out with your instructor during conferences and classroom discussions during Assignment 3.

**[You should generate descriptions of each of the above skills for your students to help them understand your personal take on grading them.]**