

Biography In-Class Writing Assignment

25 POINTS POSSIBLE

NOTE: You will get two days to write. If you are absent on either or both days, you will get time to make-up your work.

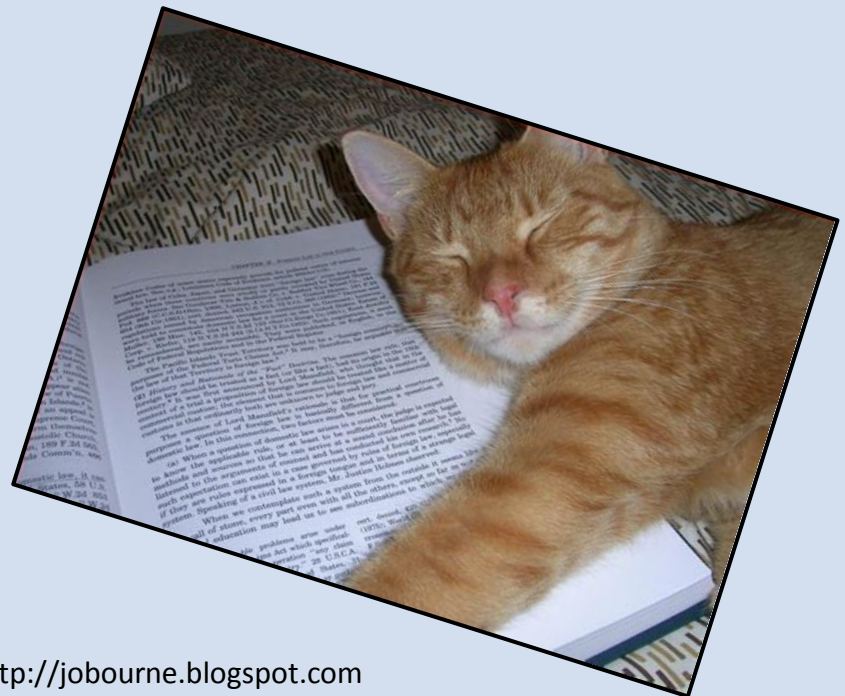
IMPORTANT: You will use your book for this assignment, but you may not use notes or drafts written outside of class.

WHAT COUNTS:

Content

Style

Conventions



The instructions on your assignment sheet will read:

Imagine that you are a magazine or television journalist who has recently been awarded an interview with the subject of the book you read. Your writing task is to provide two quality interview questions (in the voice of the journalist) and two quality answers (in the voice of your subject) that illuminate noteworthy incidents from the subject's life. Of course, you should ask questions that encourage "depth" of response, rather than simplistic answers. Details and examples are expected in each discussion, to show that you have undoubtedly read the book. Feel free to be creative. It is certainly possible to be creative and informative at the same time.

Also printed on your assignment sheet:

- * You must ask one question from each half of the book.
- * You must incorporate at least one quotation from the book in each question / answer set. Please indicate, in parenthesis, the page number of each quote at the end of the sentence in which it is used. No part of the subject's response may be directly copied from the text without proper documentation. Feel free to use more than one quotation to enhance each question / answer set.
- * Your work will be graded on the quality of each interview question, as well as the meaningfulness of each response. Specifically, remember CONTENT, STYLE, and CONVENTIONS when you write. All of these areas will be assessed. Although you can do a good job with good effort, it will take extra effort to earn the most points. You are welcome to quickly prewrite/draft your work on scratch paper before writing it on the "official" interview form, which is attached, though only the formal sheet will be graded.

Let's look at some examples, so you can see the caliber of work expected.

Imagine that Tina Fey is the subject of the book you read:



POOR question and POOR response:

Q: Where do you get your drive?

A: My mom and my dad are my comedy inspirations. I like making people laugh. It's what I do.

GRADE: F

COMMENTS: Are you kidding?

BETTER question and BETTER response:

Q: You've been described as shy, yet you're extremely popular and work in a public medium in movies and on TV. What factors motivated you to switch from introvert to extrovert?

A: I'm still shy in public, but not when I write. I wrote a column in my high school newspaper that made people laugh and I loved it. I'm living in New York City now, but the desire to make people laugh lingers. "This is my thing" (54). My whole family is funny, actually, including my mom, dad, and brothers. We're always goofing around. I love what I do.

GRADE: C (Average)

COMMENTS: This question includes some additional info., but MORE is needed. The response is fair, but it's still basic. MORE content is necessary, along with style.

BEST question and BEST response:

Q: “Shy superstar” sounds like a paradox, yet these words definitively describe you. You’ve evolved from a nerdy student who grew up in Upper Darby, Pennsylvania, to a comic, executive producer, and Emmy-winning actress. From entertaining the country on the television shows *Saturday Night Live* and *30 Rock*, to writing, producing, and appearing in *Mean Girls*, *Baby Mama*, *Date Night*, and more, you’ve transformed yourself. How?

A: I don’t deny that I was, and still am, publically shy; my confidence comes out mostly in my writing. In high school, I wrote a satirical column for *The Acorn*, our newspaper, and took my comic aim at convenient subjects like teachers and goofy school policies. This didn’t make me cool, but it did make people laugh, and I loved it. The drive to entertain followed me to New York City. To be honest, I “believe that everyone has something they’re good at. This is my thing” (54). More specifically, my mom and dad are my comedy inspirations. My mom’s a dry wit and my dad has a good sense of silliness. He introduced my brothers and me to the Marx Brothers, Laurel and Hardy, and even the Three Stooges. Growing up, my whole family played to each other. We have a smart-alecky humor. A college roommate from the South said, “How come when I ask someone in your family a question, they give a smart-aleck answer before the real one?” (92). Comedy is in my blood.

GRADE: A

COMMENTS: I like the amount and quality of the content in both the question and the answer. This response also incorporates style and the required quotation.

REMEMBER:

YOU WILL BE GRADED ON THE QUALITY OF YOUR QUESTION,
AS WELL AS YOUR ANSWER.

WHAT COUNTS:

CONTENT

STYLE

CONVENTIONS

😊😊 Write well! You can do it! 😊😊