

Dr. Owen Cantrell  
English 1101: Composition  
Rock N Roll Composition  
Spring 2015  
TR 9:30-10:45; TR 11:00-12:15

## **Personal Essay**

### **Purpose**

Your purpose for this assignment is to reflect on the impact of music in your life (either a specific song or a playlist/mixtape of songs) and explore how music has affected you, influenced the person you are today, or perhaps changed your outlook on life. When you finally reach these conclusions, you should compose a short essay in which you form a narrative describing your musical choices to your audience and explain the impact that music has had on you. The argument is rather formal, and, as such, careful attention must be paid to organization, punctuation, and grammar.

From *How to Write About Music*:

To get going, you might write a full description of the song or a detailed description of even a very small element of it. For this preliminary exercise, make your prose descriptive and objective rather than personal and analytical. Then write a personal, subjective paragraph about the same aspect of the song. Here you'll use description too, but you'll do so in the service of articulating your own experience of the song. By formally separating descriptive and objective writing from personal and subjective writing, you may begin to gain a clearer sense of how to move between the reality of the song itself and your own experience of it. Use that perspective to find the voice you want for the essay, complete a final draft and then revise it until it's in its final form. (179)

### **Objectives**

- Describe the musical, lyrical, and formal components of your chosen song or mixtape.
- Construct a personal narrative that clearly demonstrates the importance of the song or mixtape to your own life.
- Utilize appropriate grammar, syntax, spelling, punctuation, and organization.

### **Assignment Requirements**

- 2 full pages in length

### **Sources**

- None required

### **MLA format**

- 1" margins on top, bottom, left and right; left justified
- Name block includes your name, instructor's name, the class (ENGL 1102), and the date
- Header should be ½" from the top right margin and include your last name and page number
- The entire document should be double-spaced and in 12-point font

**Assessment**

Your paper will be evaluated on the quality of the following:

- Use of sensory language
- Thesis
- Development of ideas
- Organization
- Coherence
- Consideration of academic audience
- MLA format

**DUE: Two copies of the draft are due at the beginning of class on Tuesday, January 26th.  
The final is due by 11:59 via Lore on Thursday, January 28<sup>th</sup>.**

**Personal Essay**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Topic \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Formal Requirements</b> (meets page requirement, MLA format, font)	<b>Organization</b> (Clear coherent sentences; sound thesis, evident development of ideas)	<b>Clarity (Clear and selective examples, use of transitions, awareness of audience)</b>	<b>Mechanics</b> (complete sentences, correct use of sentence-level grammar, clear use of clauses and phrases)
/20	/30	/30	/20

**Total Grade:            /100**