

Ashland English 102 Essay #3

Argument

Begin by reading:

- Richard Rodriguez, “Aria: Memoir of a Bilingual Childhood,” *50 Essays*: pp. 289-311.
- Mike Rose, “I Just Wanna Be Average,” *50 Essays*: pp. 313-326.

Your Writing Task

Choose one of these topics for your Argument essay:

- Unlike most modern educators, Richard Rodriguez argues against bilingual education. Do you agree with Rodriguez or with those who support bilingual education? Why? What if the student’s second language is one that is not so respected by mainstream culture (for example Ebonics)?
- Mike Rose was accidentally put on the vocational track and stayed there for two years because his parents were unequipped to help him. Was Rose mentally deficient in any way? Does he appear to have been socially troublesome in his earlier education? What does Jack McFarland offer Rose that finally helps him learn? Was it inevitable that someone with Rose’s intelligence would eventually succeed?

Hints For Success

Two key concepts here are *control* and *evidence*.

If you feel strongly about the topic—and it’s a good thing if you do—you will still not get very far by name-calling, yelling, or hurling accusations at those who disagree.

Similarly, trying to prove a point by simply discussing your own opinion (“I think this” and “it seems to me”) will not get you very far. Give the reader evidence, not just your own opinions and feelings.

Danger point: Both of the topics above are phrased as a set of questions. These are meant to get your thinking started but you have not finished the essay when you have simply answered all the questions. Go ahead and write out answers to the questions if that will help your prewriting process, but you need to submit a finished essay that makes a point, not just a bulleted list.

Mechanical Details

Length: Minimum 1300 words not counting title, your name, etc. That’s about a four-page paper. There is no maximum, but try to keep it under 1950. Papers significantly under the minimum (90% or less) will not receive the best possible grade.

Format: Standard MLA format. (12-point Times Roman type, double-spaced, 1” margin all around, MLA header.)

Submitting the paper:

- The English Department wants electronic copies of all your essays this semester, so please upload the final product to the drop box in Blackboard. Some students (especially those who use Google Docs) have trouble figuring out how to do this, so ask if you are uncertain how to proceed!
- If you have any trouble getting the Blackboard upload to work, simply print a copy and bring it to class.

Due Dates

1. **Peer editing:** Monday, October 14, 2019
2. **Final copy:** Wednesday, October 16, 2019

This essay is worth 100 points.

Note about peer editing:

Peer editing counts as a quiz. You get credit if you show up in person with two printed copies of your rough draft (at least 90% of the assigned length). Do not expect us to hand your laptop around the room and make comments on your word processing file. Take a deep breath and actually print these out on paper.

- No credit for sending your copy by email.
- No credit for bringing it in later.