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English 101—Fall 2009
Sections 209 and 219

PAPER 1-a textual analysis

4-5 pages (1000-1250 words), MLA format.

The prompt: Choose one or two of our texts: Moses, Joshua, David, Ruth, Esther, Judith, Kings, Buffy, The Cleaner. Analyze the text(s), creating a thesis driven argument that reveals many of the structural elements of the text: its claims, definitions, support, values, and rhetorical strategies employed to persuade the reader.

Consider one (or more) of the following questions as you brainstorm and draft:

- What does “structural elements” mean?
- What are the text’s “claims”? What does the author want me to think, believe, or feel?
- How does the author support his/her claims? Is (s)he convincing?
- What are the author’s values? How do I know?
- What rhetorical strategies does the author employ?

Some reminders:

- Your thesis should be specific and disputable—what do you want your readers to learn about the text after they have finished reading your paper?
- Use PIE regularly (not necessarily always) in your body paragraphs
- Typed, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, one inch margins
- “Analyze” means to dig beneath the surface—why does the author use a particular word, phrase, etc., and why is that word, phrase, etc., where it is in the text. Is the word choice effective? Why or why not?
- The questions why and how, rather than what, will get you far. Avoid telling your readers what happened in the text.
- *Title* your paper creatively. Paper 1 is NOT a title.
- If you choose two texts, you still must make ONE argument.

As you embark upon this journey that is paper 1, think about your writing process to make it work better for you. We will continue to revisit your writing process throughout the semester. Your writing process includes, but is not limited to:

- What brainstorming process works well for you?
- How do you arrive at a thesis statement?
- How do you revise?
- What physical conditions do you require as you write (e.g. quiet, music, food)

HAVE FUN, AND DON'T FORGET, YOU ROCK.