

Writing Paragraphs: Week One Independent Exercises / Worksheet
Due with 1st Polished Paragraph on Thursday, 28 January, by 12:30 pm, to JT Olin box

The following are process work exercises you must complete independently toward the writing of your Week One Polished Paragraph. Please download this document and complete your independent exercises directly on the worksheet, saving a copy to your computer. The exercises are informal writing, designed to prepare you for writing three polished paragraph. Although you will only complete one polished paragraph for the week, you must complete and turn in all exercises. Like an essay, the polished paragraph is formal writing, and should represent your best work in critical thinking based on a prompt, presentation and development of idea, and writing quality. However, a polished paragraph should function like an essay-in-miniature; it contains an idea of limited scope, with perhaps only one example contained within to tease out the nuances of that idea.

For Monday, 1/25

1. Read Hacker (2, 3, 8, & 9), King, “I Have a Dream”, Divakaruni’s “Live Free and Starve”, and Goldberg, “The Rules of Writing Practice” (in that order, please). Consider what language and tone in Divakaruni and King tell you about audience or argument. Choose one passage from either essay on which you’ll base your exercise, with the following in mind:

- What’s organizing the writer’s choices in language?
- How do these choices affect you as a reader?
- In what moments and passages do you feel moved, confused, thoughtful, angry, bored, or inspired?

2. Type the passage **HERE**:

3. Get ready to write. Review the following questions for direction in case you have difficulty beginning or continuing to write:

- What specific words, phrases, or patterns do you see in the writing of this passage?
- What are the meanings and ideas within the passage? How do you recognize these ideas and meanings? How do you know they’re important? (Note: remember you’re writing about writing)
- Where is the passage within the larger text? What does it do in terms of content and structure? What’s around it?
- How do you know your conclusions about this passage are fair for the entire text?

4. Set a timer for twenty minutes, and begin writing below. Remember, no stopping till the timer goes off – and you may write more if you wish. Time & date started: _____. Type **HERE**:

Time & Date Ended: _____

5. After you have completed your timed freewrite, underline your three most interesting ideas or observations about the text. Then rewrite each one below, imitating something about the writer’s style you discussed in your freewrite. If you would like to continue toward a polished paragraph based on one of the ideas or observations from this set of readings and exercises, try to use the style of the writer you wish to discuss. Bring a printed copy of your worksheet-in-progress to Monday’s class.