

Sequence Two: Major Paper Conference Memo

engl 111 / sec. I / spring quarter 2007-08 / chang



A few weeks ago, you were introduced to this quarter's major paper assignment. Hopefully by this point, you have gone back to the novels to look for significant passages, you have had a chance to read the class's secondary readings a few times, you have been researching your topic, and you have been focusing your major paper's main claim.

Continue to work on your main claim. What is your goal, your exigence for this paper? What question are you asking about *Harry Potter*? What do you think the books are "doing" in terms of the cultural and identificatory interventions we have been talking about in class? Why is it important to read, analyze, and write about *Harry Potter*?

What does *Harry Potter* tell us—the audience of the books and your analysis—about ourselves, our culture, our world? What does it tell us about things like race, class, sex, gender, sexuality, nationality, history, celebrity, power, education, and so on? Obviously, you are not going to be able to write about everything you discover. Choose what is most interesting, most compelling to you. Also choose what you can support with your readings and outside research.

To help you concisely articulate your major paper claim and your writing plan for the major paper, you will draft a memorandum (or memo) to bring with you to your conference (along with a claim worksheet, initial research, and any other pertinent materials). Memorandums (as used in the business and bureaucratic world) are brief, precise, information or data rich, semi-formal to formal, and purposeful pieces of technical writing. Memos usually use block format and contain:

- 1) DATE:
- 2) TO:
- 3) FROM:
- 4) SUBJECT:
- 5) One to five block paragraphs, single-spaced, that cover main points, relevant information, and necessary details concisely and to-the-point.

For your conference, prepare a 1-page memo written to me that:

- 1) expresses your major paper's main claim and explains why you believe it to be a reasonable and viable argument.
- 2) supplements your claim with two or three quotes or other evidence that help elaborate where your final paper is going.
- 3) briefly outlines your paper and possible sub-claims.
- 4) raises any specific questions you may have about your claim, your analysis, or your research.

You may also want to supplement your explanation with what additional research you have found. Be certain to bring the texts you are working with to your conference. Be prepared to discuss your memo and your paper at your conference.

Targeted outcomes: _____

Turn in: 11 inches, memo format, typed, no title page, single-spaced
major paper claim worksheet

Due: at your major paper conference