

Short Paper 1.4: Major Paper Conference Memo

engl 131 / sec. D / winter quarter 2010 / chang



You have been introduced to the major paper assignment for the quarter, which asks you to expand, complicate, or challenge what you started in the first sequence short papers and carry on through the second sequence. You have done several readings (hopefully read them more than once) that have introduced the concepts of an academic claim, of rhetorical reading, and the work of cultural studies. You have had some practice with reading and analyzing writing and other cultural productions.

Continue thinking about the major paper project. What is your central claim? What is your position on the reading of and teaching of and thinking about *Harry Potter*? What evidence, support, or resources have you found to strengthen and articulate your argument? In other words, what does *Harry Potter* tell us, the reader of your analysis, about ourselves, our

culture, our world? 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 the readings and with 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 a working claim for your major paper and proposes why you believe it to be a reasonable and viable argument and why the paper is worth researching.
- 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 started. Be certain to bring the texts you are working with to your conference. Be prepared to discuss your memo and your major paper at your conference.

Targeted outcomes: 1, 2, 3

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

Due: at your major paper conference