**English 7960**

**Mini-Portfolio Project**

**Project # 1: Writing about art and artists.**

**Purpose for this assignment:** This assignment will help you understand and apply “disciplinary literacy.” This term describes my end goal for you to become more active, responsible, and responsive readers and writers. My aim is for you to learn how to look at forms of literacy, in this case artwork, and be able to see a deeper meaning aside from superficial concepts. My purpose is that you successfully learn how to write a reflection essay, learn the necessary skills for journal research, and complete either a biographical essay or create a biographical power point presentation. My hope is that you will take these skills with you to use in other coursework.

**You will have two parts to this project assignment:**

(1a) A short reflection essay describing what factors about the painting appeal to you and why. (200 word minimum). **(10%)**

(1b) A short **biographical** **essay** of the artist (200 word minimum) **OR** a short **power point presentation** explaining the main points of your artist’s biography.

(minimum of 6 slides) **(10%)**

**For the first week of class, we will follow the schedule of activities listed below:**

**Monday: (1a) Reflection essay.**

[**[Artworks](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)**](file:///C:\Users\Patricia\Desktop\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\Mini%20-Portfolio\Mini-Portfolio%20Artworks.wmv)

[Today, we will look at a five-minute video to give you an idea of what I want you to look for in your selected image. Afterwards, we will take time to answer any questions you may have.](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)

[Each of the pictures are numbered. Before Friday, your job is to find one of the art images that speaks to you or interests you in some way. Please take your time and closely examine each picture.](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)

[If you have a specific piece of artwork you would like to use for this assignment, please ask me to approve your choice.](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)

[Here are your](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4) **[main points](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)** [to reflect on in writing your essay. If you answer these questions first, you should have enough information to write your essay.](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)

**[(1a) Reflection essay. Closely examine the artwork several times before answering these questions. (Minimum of 200 words)](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)**

* [Name the author and the piece.](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)
* [How does it make you feel?](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)
* [Does it relate to anything current in your world?](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)
* [Do you recognize any cultural context in the artwork?](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)
* [Do the colors used mean anything to you?](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)
* [What does picture make you think about?](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)
* [Does it remind you of something or make you remember something?](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)
* [Why did you select this piece of art?](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)

**[After you have selected your image, please remember to send me an email before Friday with the number of the picture you chose. Remember, if you have another choice, you must also let me know before Friday.](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)**

**[Project (1a) is due in two weeks, so if you must miss class for any reason, please let me know and complete the research on your own time.](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)**

[For the second part of class today, I will provide a short demonstration of how to create a power point presentation, and then we will practice making a short power point together. Please save the example power point you make today to your external drive, so you can use it later for your assignment.](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)

**[Wednesday:](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)**

* [We will meet in Room 122 in the library at 9 am and stay there for the duration of the class.](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)
* [The](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)[librarian will give a short lecture about finding sources for biographical information in books, journal articles, web pages, or other types of articles.](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)
* [The librarian will also demonstrate how to search for articles virtually, so that you can do your research at home.](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)
* [During class today, we will also discuss the main elements in writing a biographical essay.](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)
* [You will locate a minimum of three sources for this project.](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)

**[Friday: (1b) Artist Biography Essay - (minimum of 200 words) OR Power Point Presentation (Minimum of 6 slides)](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)**

* [On Friday, we will meet in the library for the class time. We will review the main components you will need for your essay or power point.](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)
* [Plan to locate a minimum of three sources you plan to use for this assignment. Copy, paste, and save these sources to a word document and email to me before Monday of next week. I will give you a handout of works cited source examples for the books or articles you plan to use.](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)
* [Main points to be included in your essay:](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)
* [Use this essay or power point to educate your audience (classmate) concerning your artist and the art you chose.](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)
* [Copy your name and your author’s name on the first slide.](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)
* [State author’s date of birth and death.](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)
* [State author’s home state or country.](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)
* [State what period artwork was done.](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)
* [Briefly list any specific cultural context for work.](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)
* [Discuss any special technique author may have used.](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)
* [Follow the power point guidelines we discussed in class. (Posted on Moodle under Project (1b).](file:///C:\\Users\\Patricia\\Desktop\\Eng%207960%20%20Teaching%20Composition%20at%20the%20Two%20Year%20College\\Mini%20-Portfolio\\Artwork.mp4)

**Reflection**

I completed this assignment for an English 111 course in the community college where I teach because of a disturbing trend noted in student interactions as they returned to the classroom post COVID. Students seemed less confident and less willing to express their own thoughts and ideas in the face-to-face classroom. They offered rote answers during class discussion and were hesitant to dig deeper into ideas and thoughts that were unique to their viewpoints. My goal was to draw the students out to voice their thoughts and goals for this classroom writing experience.

To accomplish this goal, I employed the concept of *disciplinary literacy*. I anticipated this would encourage students to understand and apply writing for the ENG 111 course and other writing tasks they may encounter throughout their studies, careers, and lives. Disciplinary literacy focuses on reading, writing, thinking, and communicating original ideas in a variety of settings. It can be easily Disciplinary literacy involves a variety of writing styles as well as “specialized texts, vocabulary, concepts, reasoning processes, sociocultural practices, and modes of inquiry” (Humphrey, 2024, para 6), and can be modified for use in writing arenas other than academia, for example, technical careers and workplace writing.

I chose to use reflection in the field to art to provide what I hoped would be a neutral starting point. My hope was that by writing art reflections, artwork, I would appeal to students’ thoughts and emotions in a personal way thereby opening their minds to new ideas. I was hoping this would give them time to figure out who they were and what they thought about things that were important to them as individuals. I believe this type of assignment would engage student to think and to write about their thoughts. The assignment offered many choices for the students to decide what pictures interested them. I believe unique student writing will result from this assignment. As a result, I hope to impress on the students the many ways writing can be used, and that *one size fits all* writing styles is not the only way writing in effectively done.

Unfortunately, due to my work with a technical writing graduate degree, I have been assigned the more technical writing courses. I really enjoy teaching those writing classes but would live to get back to the basic college writing courses as well.

I have requested to teach a basic writing course in 2025, and I will use this as one of the writing assignments.

Humphrey, C. (2024, June 3). Exploring an important skillset for ELA students. *What Is Disciplinary Literacy and Why Is It Important?* [www.carnegielearning.com/blog/what-is-disciplinary-literacy/](http://www.carnegielearning.com/blog/what-is-disciplinary-literacy/)