

Essay #3

BACKGROUND:

For the past few weeks, we have been discussing the English-Only debate. We started by watching *English Only in America?*, which gave some important information about the history of English-Only in this country, and outlined some of the common arguments for and against making English the official language of the United States. Next, we read articles by S.I. Hayakawa, founder of U.S. English and a major proponent of English-Only, and Robert D. King, an opponent of English-Only. Now that you are well-informed on the topic, you will be able, through writing, to communicate your own views on this controversial issue.

THE ASSIGNMENT:

Write an essay in which you take a position on whether or not English should be the official language of the United States. Your argument should be clearly stated in your thesis, and you should support your claims with specific examples from the video, texts, and any relevant personal experiences. While your position should remain clear and consistent throughout your essay, be sure to thoughtfully address each side of the issue.

Your essay should be 4-5 pages, typed, double-spaced, in 12 point Times New Roman or Arial font.

QUESTIONS TO GET YOU STARTED:

- What are some common arguments for and against English-Only? Do you agree or disagree with these arguments, and why?
- What are the benefits of instituting English as the official language? What are the disadvantages?
- Where do you stand on this issue? Are you for or against English-Only, or are you somewhere in between?
- How does the English-Only debate relate to bilingual education?
- How is “English-Only” tied into the idea of having a “national identity?”
- What do you believe ties us together as Americans? Is speaking English an integral part of being an American?

DUE DATES & REQUIREMENTS

First draft with prewriting due Wednesday, November 2 at the beginning of class. First drafts must be a **minimum of three pages**. You must hand in one copy to me along with your prewriting. You must also bring in enough copies of your essay for each of your assigned group members. *Drafts which do not meet the minimum page requirement will receive no credit. Failure to exchange papers with your classmates will cause you to receive no credit for the peer responses, regardless of whether or not you attend the workshop.*

Peer Responses for In-Class Workshop due Friday, November 4 at the beginning of class. You must bring in your peer responses for discussion with your workshop group. *Failure to turn in peer responses or to attend the workshop will cause you to receive no credit for this part of the assignment.*

Workshop Write-Up with Revision Plan due Monday, November 7 at the beginning of class.

Second draft due Wednesday, November 9 at the beginning of class. Second drafts must be **submission length** (at least 4 full pages, and not exceeding 5 pages). You should include your peer responses along with your second draft. I will provide you with written feedback that you can use to revise for the portfolio.

Note: Make these assignments and class times a priority. Completing drafts and receiving feedback is vital to your success in this class. You will receive no credit for late or incomplete assignments.

If you have any questions about this assignment, or if you need additional feedback, please come to my office hours, or make an appointment to see me at another time.