

## Assignment Prompt: Composing Process Essay

*At a glance:*

**DUE: Tuesday, September 26**

Portion of Final Grade: **10%**

Brief description: You will write an essay about the embodied ways that you write essays: Where are you located? How is your body situated? How do you move and feel as you write?

Essay length: **4 full pages**

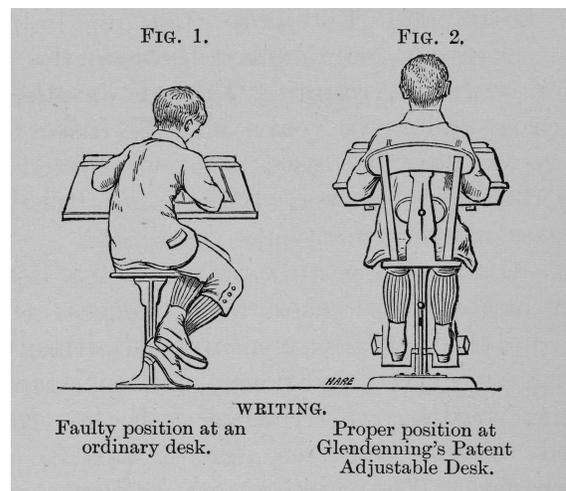
Submit by uploading to Canvas.

Your goal for this assignment is to **write an essay**, 4 full pages in length, that metacognitively analyzes your own composing process; that is, the process of how you write. In this instance, you should give particular focus to your **embodied** process of composing: what is your body doing while your mind is “busy at work”?

In the context of this assignment, “analyze” means “to break something down into its different parts, in order to understand better how they function together.” Additionally, in

this context, “metacognitive” means to think *reflexively*, that is, to think about your own role in what you are doing, and to about your thought processes as you’re doing so. Together, this means you should think carefully about what you do and why you do it, and make a claim based on your answer.

**Firstly:** you should choose a moment of your composing that you want to observe. Start by picking what kind of writing you do that you want to study; possibilities include: essay writing, email writing, text message writing, social media writing, or any other mode you come up with. **Next:** you should plan to carefully observe yourself as you write. Ideally, this will take place over a period of time, not all at once. Take good notes on the kinds of things you observe yourself doing with your body when you’re not usually paying attention.



A fair warning: this process of close self-observation will probably be odd; we are not used to noticing, in hyper-attentive detail, everything that we do. Be aware that your act of observing is changing your behavior somewhat, but don't let it stop you.

You should also consider all aspects of the *rhetorical situation* in which you are writing; see Blevins' chapter in *RACW* for more on this. Make note of: what is the context of your writing? whom are you writing to? why are you writing? what are you writing? These are all relevant details to your overall interpretation. Use them to form your claim.

Diagram from Bernard Roth, *The treatment of lateral curvature of the spine* (1899). Public domain.

### Guidelines:

Your task is to **write an essay** that carefully analyzes your own writing process, with particular focus on the role that embodiment plays in this process. You should:

- Clearly and explicitly **state an argumentative claim** that offers an interpretation of your own embodied composing process. Your claim, or thesis, can **answer the following question**: what role does embodiment play in your writing process, and how does it do so? *Remember that for a statement to be argumentative, someone should reasonably be able to disagree with it.*
- **Support** your claim with **specific and relevant evidence**. For this essay, you are likely to have two main sources of evidence: (1) observations of your own experience of writing; and (2) quotations from your own writing that will allow you to discuss the connections between how you wrote the example and the result.
- **Arrange and organize your essay** to discuss several aspects of your main point. What, in other words, are the sub-points that make up your main point? Then, what's the most logical order in which to discuss these sub-points? How can they build on one another? How can you ensure they come together cohesively?
- **Write in clear and logical sentences** to ensure that your ideas are conveyed without confusing your readers.

**Grading:** (Plus/Minus =  $\pm 0.2$  from the point value given)

A	B	C	D	F
Essay explicitly states an insightful and original claim interpreting the writer's composing process; supports the claim with strong, specific, and relevant evidence; is carefully and logically organized; uses language that is carefully chosen, clear, and precise	Essay displays a thoughtful claim interpreting the writer's composing process; supports the claim with sometimes strong and relevant evidence; is reasonably well and often logically organized; uses language that is often clear and precise; may be somewhat shorter than full length	Essay displays a mostly commonplace claim interpreting the writer's composing process; supports the claim with occasionally relevant evidence; has a discernable but not always logical organization; uses language that is sometimes confusing; is notably under length	Essay offers no claim interpreting the writer's composing process; uses little or irrelevant evidence to support the claim; displays no discernable organization; uses language that is frequently confusing; is significantly under length	Missing; no assignment submitted
5/5	4/5	3/5	2/5	0/5