**Course Guide for English 9x: PreComposition**

EXPLANATORY NOTES

English 9x is PreComposition English, for students who did not place in Freshman Composition (English 101 in Washington State). Prerequisites will vary from campus to campus.

DELIVERY

The course is designed for a 10-week quarter. The materials provided can be used for fully online, hybrid, or face-to-face delivery. There are five modules, each modules covers two weeks of material and is constructed using one story from the Reader. The story is the foundation for many of the activities and lessons that students will complete during the two-week period.

If the Reader is going to be used for traditional delivery, it is recommended that it be provided in an electronic format to take advantage of the illustrations, annotations, and quizzes that are part of each story. **Note:** the quizzes that are provided for each story are designed as self-tests rather than a formal assessment.

ORGANIZATION OF MATERIALS/SUGGESTIONS FOR INSTRUCTION

Weeks one, two, three, six, seven and eight are designed so that students only have to keep track of two due dates; half of the activities are due on Wednesday, and the other half are due on Saturday. Students will need to receive feedback on the work completed before they can proceed. For this reason, the instructor should set aside time to grade the work that has been turned in as soon as possible. For example, use Thursday morning to assess and provide feedback for the work submitted on Wednesday, and Monday morning to assess the work submitted on Saturday. The instructor may need to change the due dates to ensure timely feedback.

For the first half of the course, students should earn partial credit for attempting the homework, even if they do not fully grasp the concepts right away. They should be given feedback, and allowed to resubmit the work for the rest of the credit a few days later. This encourages students to ask questions, prevents them from getting frustrated, and can help account for any problems students may experience with the technology. Sometimes students may not be able to successfully complete the assignment even after having worked with the instructor and with several attempts. In this case, students should be given the option of scheduling a conference with the instructor to go over the lesson, or, to schedule an appointment with the Writing Center on campus.

During the second half of the quarter, students should be able to complete the homework, mostly correct, on the first attempt, because they should know when to ask questions or seek assistance. At this stage, students who submit homework that does not demonstrate a passing understanding of the lecture or grammar practice exercises, should be given no credit for the homework, but be allowed to resubmit for half-credit.

Weeks four/five and nine/ten, students will be working on THEMES. The first 'theme' is the midterm, and the second 'theme' is the final for the course. Both of these assignments require students to participate in group activities, so the deadlines change slightly to accommodate this additional element.

**Note on Classroom Discussions**

The classroom discussions are a very important part of the curricula, allowing students to explore ideas and concepts from the readings, the assignments, and are often used as springboards for the weekly writing assignments. *Based on student feedback* during previous courses, the instructor should read through the posts submitted by Wednesday, and post to the boards as well, to offer additional information (when appropriate), or a new approach to the topic that the students may not have explored yet. This allows the students to self-correct their work for later postings, and reduces any anxiety some students may experience about posting publicly without getting any instruction until the end of the week.

THE READER

The course was developed to be entirely self-contained, with no additional textbook or materials required by the students. The rationale was to make the course as accessible to as many students as possible, including student who live outside of Washington, and even outside of the United States of America.

In order to meet this goal, the Reader was designed using content that was in public domain. Detective Fiction has been recognized as being particularly effective in the building critical reading and thinking skills, as the foundations of the narrative depend on inductive and deductive reasoning. In addition, the majority of students find detective stories engaging, and are motivated to read through the material carefully and to meet the deadlines so they won’t fall behind the rest of the class and be the only one who doesn’t know “who did it.”

Many of the discussion questions and the writing prompts were designed to help bridge the cultural gaps and to illustrate concepts that may be unfamiliar to the students. In addition, many ask students to reflect upon their own skills, and compare their era with that of Victorian London.

The spelling was changed to standard American style because correct spelling is a course outcome, and keeping the original spelling would be confusing.

The stories have been annotated to illustrate archaic terms and obsolete concepts; however, definitions of words that could easily be found in a dictionary were not included in the Reader. The expectation is that students will use a dictionary when appropriate, just as they would for a traditional reader. For example, “gasogene” is annotated with an image and explanation, because most collegiate dictionaries do not include the word. Also phrases that appear in the story, such as “three gilt balls,” or “black-letter editions,” which most students would not be familiar with and would be difficult to research, are also annotated. Finally, archaic or slang terms also have definitions included: “bracelets” meaning “handcuffs” rather than the modern meaning as an item of jewelry, or “ruffs” meaning gangsters, are some examples.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The objectives that follow must be met in every English 95 class. It is each instructor's prerogative to meet each objective as he or she sees fit. The objectives are in random order. Upon successful completion of English 95 the student should be able to:

1. Demonstrate sound principles of reading critically: (CRT)
   1. Recognize main and secondary points making somewhat fine distinctions.
   2. Make simple deductions from a series of facts.
   3. Recognize organizing principles, including the relationship between sentences.
2. Write analytical paragraphs in response to readings. (COM, CRT)
3. Outline the relationships between main ideas and subordinate ideas within assigned readings. (CRT)
4. Craft short essays employing a variety of organizational patterns and (COM, CRT)
   1. Narrow a topic, write a clear and focused thesis Narrow a topic, write a clear and focused thesis statement, and create an outline with main and subordinate ideas.
   2. Support the thesis statement with sufficient appropriate primary and secondary points and details.
   3. Craft appropriate introductions and conclusions.
   4. Use transitional words and expressions and employ a variety of sentence patterns to improve coherence.
   5. Revise drafts that have been critiqued (to improve style and content).
   6. Proofread to eliminate spelling and usage errors.
   7. Use punctuation correctly, for example: (COM)

* Comma: independent clauses; introductory elements; items in a series; coordinate adjectives; nonrestrictive elements; transition, parenthetical expressions, absolute phrases, contrasts; direct address, yes and no, interrogative tags, interjections; He said, etc.; dates, addresses, titles, numbers; to prevent confusion
* Semicolon: independent clauses with no conjunction; transitional expressions
* Colon: before a list, an appositive, or a quotation
* Apostrophe: possessive nouns; contractions; plurals of numbers, letters, etc.
* Quotation marks: direct quotations; titles; with other punctuation
* Other marks: period; question mark; exclamation point; dash

ALIGNMENT OF ACTIVITIES AND ASSIGNMENTS WITH LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**Module 1:** **Week 1**

**Reading Activity:** reading comprehension/vocabulary assessment **(1a, 1b, 3)**

**Grammar:** Basic Sentence Structure and punctuation (period, question mark, exclamation point) **(4g)**

**Lecture:** “Active Reading/Finding the Main Idea” with practice **(1a)**

**Discussion Question:** **(1a, 1b)**

**Writing Assignment:** Students will write a paragraph in response to the reading that will include correct simple sentences and punctuation. **(1a, 1b, 4g)**

Students must complete the **Reading Activity** with a score of 70% or better, and may retake the assessment until that is achieved.

Students must comply to the minimum standards of the assessment rubric for the **Discussion Question** by the third attempt (Week 3).

Students must achieve a score of 70% or better for the **paragraph** as measured by the rubric, and will be allowed to revise until that score is achieved.

**Module 1: Week 2**

**Grammar:** Sentence Variety and Sentence Combining **(4g)**

**Practice:** Main Idea sentences with supporting sentences **(1a, 1b, 1c)**

**Lesson:** Pre-writing activities **(3)**

**Discussion Question: (3)**

**Quiz:** on Main Idea Sentences and Types of Sentences **(1a, 1b)**

**Writing Assignment:** Students will do a pre-writing activity, and write a paragraph that contains a main idea sentence, and that demonstrates three different types of sentence **(2)**

Students must comply to the minimum standards of the assessment rubric for the **Discussion Question** by the third attempt (Week 3).

Students must be able to pass the **final grammar quiz** with a score of 70% or better in order to pass the class. They will be allowed two attempts.

Students must achieve a score of 70% or better for the **paragraph** as measured by the rubric, and will be allowed to revise until that score is achieved.

**Module 2: Week 3**

**Reading Activity:** reading comprehension/vocabulary assessment **(1a, 1b, 3)**

**Grammar:** Fragments **(4g)**

**Lecture:** on Pre-Writing Activities **(4)**

**Discussion Question:** outlining/relationship of ideas within the reading **(3)**

**Writing Assignment:** Students will do a pre-writing activity, and write a paragraph using a variety of sentence patterns, integrating three new vocabulary words. **(2)**

Students must complete the **Reading Activity** with a score of 70% or better, and may retake the assessment until that is achieved.

Students must comply to the minimum standards of the assessment rubric for the **Discussion Question** by the third attempt (Week 3).

Students must achieve a score of 70% or better for the **paragraph** as measured by the rubric, and will be allowed to revise until that score is achieved.

**Module 2: Week 4**

**Grammar:** Run-on sentences and comma-splices **(4g)**

**Vocabulary** in Context exercise and practice

**Lecture and practice**: on outlines/thesis statements **(4a, 4b)**

**Discussion Question**

**Writing Assignment:** Student will begin the theme by creating an outline, and writing a draft of an introduction paragraph with a thesis statement **(4a, 4b, 4c, 4d)**

**Quiz:** Thesis statements, Fragments and Run-on Sentences **(4a, 4g)**

Students must comply to the minimum standards of the assessment rubric for the **Discussion Question**.

Students must be able to pass the **final grammar quiz** with a score of 70% or better in order to pass the class. They will be allowed two attempts.

**Module 3: Week 5**

**Reading Activity:** reading comprehension/vocabulary assessment **(1a, 1b, 3)**

**Lecture/practice:** on making inferences **(1a, 1b, 3)**

**Grammar:** Use of the semi-colon and colon **(4g)**

**Discussion Question:** Students will work on editing and revising the theme in groups **(4e, 4f)**

**Writing:** Complete the 3-paragraph theme **(4a-g)**

Students must complete the **Reading Activity** with a score of 70% or better, and may retake the assessment until that is achieved.

Students must comply to the minimum standards of the assessment rubric for the **Discussion Question**.

Students must achieve a score of 70% or better for the **theme** as measured by the rubric, and will be allowed to revise until that score is achieved.

**Module 3: Week 6**

**Practice:** Inferences **(1a, 1b, 1c)**

**Grammar:** Advanced Commas **(4g)**

**Discussion Question:** outlining/relationship of ideas within the reading **(3)**

**Quiz:** Semi-Colon and Subject/Verb agreement **(4g)**

**Writing:** Students will write a paragraph with a main idea sentence that is free from fragments and run-on sentences, where they correctly use a semi-colon and make an inference **(2)**

Students must comply to the minimum standards of the assessment rubric for the **Discussion Question**.

Students must achieve a score of 70% or better for the **paragraph** as measured by the rubric, and will be allowed to revise until that score is achieved.

Students must be able to pass the **final grammar quiz** with a score of 70% or better in order to pass the class. They will be allowed two attempts.

**Module 4: Week 7**

**Reading Activity:** reading comprehension/vocabulary assessment **(1a, 1b, 3)**

**Grammar:** Quotation Marks **(4g)**

**Lecture/Practice:** on summarizing **(3)**

**Lecture/Practice:** on Transitions **(4d)**

Discussion Question:

**Writing:** Students will write an analytical paragraph based on the readings but will use three transitions **(2, 4d)**

Students must complete the **Reading Activity** with a score of 70% or better, and may retake the assessment until that is achieved.

Students must comply to the minimum standards of the assessment rubric for the **Discussion Question**.

Students must achieve a score of 70% or better for the **paragraph** as measured by the rubric, and will be allowed to revise until that score is achieved.

**Module 4: Week 8**

**Grammar:** Apostrophes **(4g)**

**Practice:** on Summarizing **(3)**

**Discussion Question**

**Quiz:** Grammar (students will be allowed to retake if they don’t pass during Week 10) **(4g)**

**Writing:** Students will write a paragraph where they summarize from the reading **(3)**

Students must comply to the minimum standards of the assessment rubric for the **Discussion Question**.

Students must be able to pass the **final grammar quiz** with a score of 70% or better in order to pass the class; if they are not able to pass this time, they may retake the quiz during Week 10.

Students must achieve a score of 70% or better for the **paragraph** as measured by the rubric, and will be allowed to revise until that score is achieved.

**Module 5: Week 9**

**Reading Activity:** reading comprehension/vocabulary assessment **(1a, 1b, 3)**

**Lecture/practice:** Writing Conclusions **(4c)**

**Discussion Question**

**Writing:** Students will begin work on the final theme by creating an outline for a five paragraph essay that includes an introduction, a thesis statement, and a conclusion **(4a-g)**

Students must complete the **Reading Activity** with a score of 70% or better, and may retake the assessment until that is achieved.

Students must comply to the minimum standards of the assessment rubric for the **Discussion Question**.

**Module 5: Week 10**

**Quiz:** Grammar (retake for those who did not pass at Week 8) **(4g)**

**Peer Review: students** will work work on editing and revising their themes **(4e)**

**Discussion Question:** Final Reflection

**Writing:** Students will turn in a 5-paragraph theme that is mostly free from grammatical errors, contains an introduction with a thesis statement, each paragraph will have a transition and be supported with details, and will have a concluding sentence **(4a-g)**

Students must comply to the minimum standards of the assessment rubric for the **Discussion Question** by the third attempt (Week 3).

Students must pass the grammar quiz with a score of 70% or better.

Students must achieve a score of 70% or better for the **theme** as measured by the rubric. Students unable to achieve this on the final assignment will not be able to pass the course.

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BIO/CONTACT INFORMATION

Jacqui Cain has been teaching the composition series and developmental level English courses at Community Colleges for six years in both Washington and California. She received her MA from CSU Dominguez Hills, and a post-graduate certificate in Adult Reading from CSU Fullerton.

She has presented at many conferences on topics ranging from online instruction, to using games and technology to build learning communities, as well as on the results of her experiences working on the Open Course Library Project. She currently resides in Eureka, CA, where she teaches online for Tacoma Community College in Washington, and for College of the Redwoods in California.

Ms. Cain is happy to share ideas and discuss her experience in developing and teaching the course material. She would love to hear from other instructors who use part, or all of the course content, to get feedback on your experiences as well. Please include “OCL English 9x” in the subject line.

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