



**Carol Osborne
Curriculum Project
Assignments, Rubrics, and Unit Exam**

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Descriptive Writing Assignment

Read “The Longtang,” an excerpt from Wang Anyi’s 1995 novel, *Song of Everlasting Sorrow*, noting how she uses descriptive details to convey both the appearance and the atmosphere of a place, in this case, the neighborhoods in old Shanghai.

1. Highlight phrases or passages that you feel are particularly effective in establishing a visual image in your mind or in evoking a particular mood. In the margins, star all examples of similes, metaphors, contrasts, or sensory details, and be ready to discuss the effect of each. (I will call on you to share the passages you feel are effective and to explain the tools the writer uses in these passages.)
2. Examine the overall organization of the excerpt and be ready to explain this organization in class.
3. Make a list of words that are unfamiliar to you. Look up the definitions of three of these words in a GOOD dictionary, preferably the *Oxford English Dictionary*, and be ready to share these definitions with the class.

Writing Assignment

Now that you’ve read and analyzed the excerpt, try your hand at describing a particular place that you know well. You want your reader not only to be able to visualize this location, but you also want to evoke a mood through your description. Have some sort of organizational strategy in mind as you write, both for the overall piece and within each paragraph. Edit carefully, making certain each word is carefully chosen. Your final paper should be no longer than two pages. Bring your finished draft (formatted according to syllabus guidelines) to the next class.

Research Assignment

ENGL 102-Osborne, Fall 2009

Research Project: Exploring China

Goals:

1. To become more familiar with the history and culture of China
2. To practice the skills of academic scholarship in locating, evaluating, drawing from, and referencing a variety of resources

Objectives:

Students will

1. Demonstrate the ability to choose a topic and narrow the focus of that topic sufficiently to enable a collection of detailed, useful resources
2. Demonstrate the ability to locate a variety of resources using the databases and other search engines suitable for academic scholarship
3. Demonstrate the ability to summarize, evaluate, compare, and synthesize the content of a variety of resources
4. Demonstrate the ability to share information orally and in writing, giving proper attribution to secondary resources

Research Project Steps:

1. Chinese history and culture encompasses a broad spectrum of possibilities for your individual topic. The first step will be to determine what area of inquiry you wish to pursue. To help you search for possible topics, I have put a travel guide and two general encyclopedias about Chinese history/culture on reserve at Kimbel Library, and I have put links to some useful websites on Blackboard. Peruse these materials until you find an area 1) that interests you, and 2) that you have not investigated before.
2. Read as much as you can about your topic, using the internet or general reference works, until you see ways of narrowing it to a manageable size. As you begin to narrow the topic, also consider questions that will guide your inquiry, and think of possible audiences who would be interested in knowing the answers to these questions.
3. Create a detailed research proposal that contains the following:
 - A paragraph in which you describe your topic, explain its significance, and share why you chose it
 - A list of specific questions you hope to answer during the course of your investigation
 - The types of resources you hope to consult
 - A possible audience who would be interested in the information you gather and formats you may use to share your findings
4. Meet with your instructor to discuss your proposal, narrow your topic further if necessary, and come to the library instruction class fully prepared to begin your search for materials
5. Collect materials, noting the instructor's specifications below, and bring them to class as directed
6. Read and take notes, making certain to indicate when you are copying verbatim and when you are paraphrasing, (or if you've printed/Xeroxed your own copy, highlight important sections)
7. Following the MLA Documentation Guide in your *First-Year Composition Guide*, prepare a bibliography of your sources, and after we practice writing annotations in class, complete an annotation for each of your resources

8. Decide on the audience, purpose, and format for your project, secure your instructor's approval, collect visuals (taking care to record the source of each and NOT to violate copyright), and prepare your research project according to the specifications below

Final Products:

1. An annotated bibliography containing at least 10 credible sources, including the following:
 - a. At least two books, or chapters of books (excluding encyclopedias or general reference books)
 - b. At least two articles from scholarly, peer-reviewed journals
 - c. At least two articles from general circulation magazines or newspapers
 - d. No more than two websites (ones that identify an author whose credentials indicate expertise and no questionable bias, that have been recently updated, and that contain no glaring errors)
(I will also ask you to find at least one website that does not seem credible or suitable for use in an academic paper, but this site should NOT be included as one of the 10 sources in your annotated bibliography.)
2. A researched document that uses words and pictures to convey information about your topic to a particular audience of your choosing. The format this document takes will depend on your purpose and audience, but all projects should adhere to the following guidelines:
 - a. Internal citations give proper acknowledgement to information taken from secondary sources, but put into your words.
 - b. Direct quotations are introduced, punctuated, and cited properly (and used sparingly).
 - c. Information from secondary sources is synthesized effectively, reflecting your organization of the material, not that of one of your sources.
 - d. Acknowledgment is given for the sources of all visual materials.
 - e. Information is effectively organized and clearly communicated.
3. An oral presentation (to be given within a small group) in which you share your knowledge with your classmates. You will probably utilize #2 as part of this presentation, but you should refrain from reading directly from the document. These presentations should be 10-15 minutes in length.

Rubric for Research Assignment

Name _____

Research Project (50 points)

Topic:

Audience and Purpose:

Rationale for format chosen:

Criteria	Target	Possible Points	Points Earned
Quoting outside sources	At least one quotation, aptly chosen, is introduced, punctuated, and cited correctly. Quotations are smoothly integrated into the student's prose and followed up effectively with the student's words and argument. In the case of a longer document, direct quotations are used sparingly, and longer quotations are put in block format.	10	
Paraphrase	Internal citations give proper acknowledgement to information taken from secondary sources, but put into the student's own words. These citations follow MLA formatting guidelines. At least six sources have been used in the project.	10	
Organization and synthesis	Information from secondary sources is synthesized effectively, reflecting the student's organization of the material, not that of the sources. This organization is logical and effective for the purpose and audience specified. All paragraphs cohere; transitions between paragraphs are apparent; the project has a clear focus with effective introduction and conclusion.	10	
Visuals	Visual elements enhance the meaning of the prose elements and are clearly identified and explained. Acknowledgment is given to the source of each visual element.	10	
Content	The topic has been narrowed sufficiently to allow the communication of detailed information. The project reflects a thorough investigation of an array of secondary sources and a sound understanding of the topic. The form of the project suits the audience and purpose, and the information is clearly and effectively communicated with minimal grammatical and mechanical errors.	10	

Annotated Bibliography (100 points)

I. First, your bibliography will be evaluated according to the following rubric:

90-100	Annotations are well-written, with concise, yet detailed summaries of important points in the source. Evaluative comments within the annotations reflect a scholarly assessment of the usefulness and unique qualities of each source. It is obvious that the student has read, understood, and critically appraised at least ten sources of information (with a minimum of 2 books, 2 scholarly journals, 2 general circulation magazines or newspapers, and no more than 2 credible websites included). Few, if any, grammatical errors mar the annotations.
80-90	Some annotations may fall short in summary or evaluative contents, but on the whole, they show the student has completed the research according to the guidelines specified above. There may be a few minor grammatical errors, but these do not interfere with meaning.
70-80	Some annotations may be missing key components (summary or evaluative information), or serious grammatical errors interfere with clear communication. Otherwise, the student has completed the research according to the guidelines specified above. First-person perspective may detract from the academic voice that is to be used in an annotation.
60-70	The bibliography contains entries for fewer than ten (but more than eight) sources, or does not adhere to the types of sources specified (containing more than two websites, fewer than 2 scholarly articles, etc.); or annotations are unacceptably general and/or brief.
50-60	The bibliography contains combinations of the flaws listed above. Bibliographies containing fewer than eight sources or ones that are missing annotations cannot receive above a 60.

Initial Grade for the Bibliography: _____

II. Second, one point for each error in formatting will be deducted from the initial grade. (Bibliographies that are not alphabetized will have ten points deducted automatically.)

(This assessment is designed to measure a student's ability to follow the MLA documentation guidelines and to proof his/her work carefully. That is the reason so much emphasis is being placed on this component in determining the grade.)

*Final Grade for Bibliography: _____

*Points may be added for bibliographies that show a student's advanced research skills in locating useful information through a variety of approaches.

Oral Presentation Evaluation Sheet

Name of Evaluator: _____

For each category, rate each student's performance from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent). Rating sheets that reflect a lack of discernment (all 5's) will be ignored.

Name of Presenter	Knowledge of topic	Clarity of communication	Use of visuals	*Presentation skills	Ability to generate interest	AVG
1.						
Comments:						
Name of Presenter	Knowledge of topic	Clarity of communication	Use of visuals	*Presentation skills	Ability to generate interest	AVG
2.						
Comments:						
Name of Presenter	Knowledge of topic	Clarity of communication	Use of visuals	*Presentation skills	Ability to generate interest	AVG
3.						
Comments:						
Name of Presenter	Knowledge of topic	Clarity of communication	Use of visuals	*Presentation skills	Ability to generate interest	AVG
4.						
Comments:						

*Presentation skills include vocal performance (volume and expression), eye contact, poise, and pacing.

Writing Exercise: Practice in Synthesis

I am giving you three articles about the Dalai Lama's visit to Taiwan, one from the *New York Times* and two from the *China Daily*. Remember, the *China Daily* is the English-language newspaper in the People's Republic of China, practicing self-censorship to avoid antagonizing the government (and also subject to governmental censors as well). After reading and noting the important points in each article, write 2-3 paragraphs suitable for an academic audience in which you explain the controversy over the Dalai Lama's visit to Taiwan, synthesizing the information you pick up from the two sources. Show that you know how to paraphrase, use a direct quotation, and use internal citations properly. Finally (and this is the hardest part of the challenge), make your critical evaluation of the sources you have used evident within the paragraphs without taking the focus from the topic you are addressing, the Dalai Lama's visit.

Student Sample (corrected)

The Dalai Lama is planning a visit to Taiwan as announced by the President of Taiwan, Ma Ying-jeou, on Thursday (McDonald). This visit has created quite the controversy between Taiwan and China. That controversy is highlighted in a quote from the Taiwan Affairs Bureau of China: "No matter under what form or identity Dalai uses to enter Taiwan, we resolutely oppose this" (McDonald). *China Daily*, the official newspaper of the mainland, highlights the objections to the visit, claiming that the Chinese feel that the Dalai Lama's motives are more political than religious for the recent typhoon victims ("Dalai Lama Urged..."). The visit is causing more of a protest among the people than serving its purpose of bringing relief ("Typhoon-affected...").

My example written in class

The Dalai Lama's visit to Taiwan, designed to bring comfort to victims of Typhoon Morakot, is also igniting political discord. Leaders of the Democratic Progressive Party invited the controversial spiritual leader, and President Ma, despite having refused such a visit last year, has allowed it this time, presumably to assuage the people's anger over his administration's handling of the disaster (McDonald). Taiwan's government leaders do not plan on meeting with the Dalai Lama and have issued statements expressing their hope that he will avoid "political maneuvering" ("Dalai Lama urged"). According to the *New York Times*, however, the visit does pose a threat to the vital connections between Taiwan and the People's Republic of China, which have grown stronger in recent years. In fact, officials in China have already issued a statement opposing the visit (McDonald), and the official newspaper within mainland China, the *China Daily*, has highlighted the protests the visit has sparked within Taiwan itself ("Dalai Lama Urged..."). The two reports of the Dalai Lama's visit in *China Daily* clearly illustrate the PRC's disapproval through their focus on the objections raised by ten political groups in Taiwan, the Labor Party, and even the victims of the typhoon ("Typhoon-affected").

Midterm Exam for MW Class

Part I. Research and Analysis (2 each for a total of 10 points)

1. How do you determine the credibility of an internet resource?
2. What is the difference between paraphrase and summary?
3. Why do we use the author's name, or in the case of a source without an author, an abbreviated title, in the internal parenthetical citations of a research paper?
4. What information belongs in each annotation of an Annotated Bibliography?
5. What is the difference between tone and mood?

Part II. History and Culture of China (2 each for a total of 10 points)

1. When the Communists assumed power within the People's Republic of China in 1949, who became their leader?
2. In the 10 Propositions lecture, I said, "China is more than China; China is less than China." What do these two paradoxical statements reveal about the People's Republic of China today?
3. What are longtang (in Shanghai) and hutang (in Beijing)?
4. What do the Chinese mean by the "Hundred Years of Humiliation"?
5. What are the three main ideological systems that have shaped Chinese culture?

Part III. Short Stories (30 points)

1. Choose an image or a phrase that was repeated within one of the stories that we read. Explain how that image or phrase functions as both a unifying and symbolic element within the story. (5 points)
2. Choose **ONE** of the following pairs of characters to compare. Discuss the similarities and differences of the two characters, using details from the stories to support your interpretation of their attitudes, personalities, or beliefs. (10 points)
 - a. Zhang Ming, the narrator of Wang Shuo's "Hot and Cold, Measure for Measure," and the narrator of Alai's "Fish!" in terms of their philosophical approaches to life
 - b. The narrator of Lu Xun's "Hometown" and the protagonist in Mo Yan's "Old Gun" in terms of their sense of identity as it relates to their pasts
3. Choose **ONE** of the following topics to address in a well-supported, thorough discussion and interpretation of the stories: (10 points)
 - a. We began our study with an excerpt from a novel by Wang Anyi, "The Longtang," and ended with Xi Xi's "The Floating City." Compare the methods each writer uses to describe particular places within China. What impressions do these writers give of Shanghai and Hong Kong, respectively, and how are these impressions conveyed?
 - b. Compare Yan Lianke's "Black Bristle, White Bristles" and Mo Yan's "Old Gun" in terms of the social criticism each author makes. What aspects of Chinese society and culture do these authors address, and how do they employ social critique that is subtle enough to escape censorship?
 - c. Compare the treatment of love and relationships in **TWO** of the following stories: Zhang Ailing's "Sealed Off," Shen Congwen's "Meijin, Baozi, and the White Kid," Wang Shuo's "Hot and Cold, Measure for Measure," and Yan Lianke's "Black Bristle, White Bristles"
4. Choose **either** A or B (5 points)
 - a. For **two** stories you have not discussed in the essays above, create **three** questions that would lead someone interpreting the story to a deeper understanding of that particular narrative.

- b. Identify the source of **ONE** of the following quotations and explain its meaning in the context of the story:
 1. “It’s like a path across the land—it’s not there to begin with, but when lots of people go the same way, it comes into being.”
 2. “You see, before a person even takes leave of a spot where something has occurred, that event has already vanished into nothingness.”

Extra Credit.

1. What does MLA stand for?
2. What changes to the MLA documentation format were made in 2009?

Midterm Exam for T/Th Class

Part I. Research and Analysis (10 points)

1. What are the four guidelines you should remember when incorporating a direct quotation into your essay? (4)
2. When does a writer need to provide a block quote? (2)
3. When does a writer need to provide an internal parenthetical citation? (2)
4. What is the difference between tone and mood? (2)

Part II. History and Culture of China (10 points)

1. I began the first lecture on China with the warning that this country is filled with contradictions and complexities. Give at least three reasons that account for the difficulty of making unilateral declarations about China as a nation.
2. Who is the current president of the People's Republic of China?
3. How are Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan related to the People's Republic of China?
4. What are longtang (in Shanghai) and hutang (in Beijing)?
5. What are the three main ideological systems that have shaped Chinese culture?

Part III. Short Stories (30 points)

5. Choose an image or a phrase that was repeated within one of the stories that we read. Explain how that image or phrase functions as both a unifying and symbolic element within the story. (5)
6. Choose **ONE** of the following pairs of characters to compare. Discuss the similarities and differences of the two characters, using details from the stories to support your interpretation of their attitudes, personalities, or beliefs. (10)
 - a. Zhang Ming, the narrator of Wang Shuo's "Hot and Cold, Measure for Measure," and Lu Zongzhen, the man on the tram in Zhang Ailing's "Sealed Off" in their attitudes toward and treatment of women
 - b. Liu Genbao, protagonist in Yan Lianke's "Black Bristle, White Bristles," and Wu Di, who appears in Wang Shuo's "Hot and Cold, Measure for Measure"
7. Choose **ONE** of the following topics to address in a well-supported, thorough discussion and interpretation of the stories: (10)
 - a. We began our study with an excerpt from a novel by Wang Anyi, "The Longtang," and ended with Xi Xi's "The Floating City." Compare the methods each writer uses to describe particular places within China. What impressions do these writers give of Shanghai and Hong Kong, respectively, and how are these impressions conveyed?
 - b. Compare the views of the protagonists in Lu Xun's "Hometown" and Alai's "Fish!" in terms of their sense of identity as it relates to their pasts.
 - c. Compare Yan Lianke's "Black Bristle, White Bristles" and Mo Yan's "Old Gun" in terms of the social criticism each author makes. What aspects of Chinese society and culture do these authors address, and how do they employ social critique that is subtle enough to escape censorship?
8. Choose **either** A or B (5 points)
 - a. For **two** stories you have not discussed in the essays above, create **three** questions that would lead someone interpreting the story to a deeper understanding of that particular narrative.

- b. Identify the source of **ONE** of the following quotations and explain its meaning in the context of the story:
3. “It’s like a path across the land—it’s not there to begin with, but when lots of people go the same way, it comes into being.”
4. “You see, before a person even takes leave of a spot where something has occurred, that event has already vanished into nothingness.”

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