Your final essay is a chance to employ the skills you have developed throughout the past eight weeks to make your writing do what you want it to do. After working on different kinds of analytical writing (personal reflection, research, definition, etc.), this essay provides you with the opportunity to create your own writing prompt and to choose your own topic for an essay. For those of you who have a million paper topics rolling around in the back of your heads, this will be a welcome opportunity. For those of you who struggle to find paper topics, this will present more of a challenge—but I assure you that your brain and experience are unique and that there are many profound insights the world can gain from learning how you break down and make sense of an issue. Choosing your own essay idea allows you to use your skill at writing to achieve what you want it to, so choose carefully to make sure you like it.

You will have to pitch your essay idea to your instructor and peers: you will have to convince us of its potential. Remember that the essay must be a claim-driven analysis.

Some Ideas to Consider:

- Choose an interesting topic and angle from your Writing the World exercise.
- Choose a topic that has come up in one of your other classes (or in your life, the world, etc.) that you want to take a stand on.
- Analyze a local event, controversy, organization, institution, or place to advance an argument about it.
- Analyze a certain film, event, issue, or place and explain how it has effected you and your life (in a way that makes your audience care . . . not journal writing).
- Use an assignment that you thought sounded interesting from someone you know in another English 100 course. You will have to get the assignment sheet.

**Thinking Ahead to Portfolio: Some Warnings**

- If this essay contains an element of personal reflection, it may be too similar to the style of writing in your Literacy Snapshot. You will not be able to use both essays for portfolio.

- Please don’t forget that this is still analytical writing that will need to be in-depth but still unified to make a particular point to a purposefully chosen audience.
Getting Started: Prewriting

• What do you have to say?

• Who needs to hear your argument? Why?

• What form will your essay take?

• What will this writing you produce do?