

Queensborough Community College – CUNY
English 101
Professor Chris Leary : cleary@qcc.cuny.edu
Wednesdays from 6 :10PM through 10 :00PM
H232

Course Overview:

Instead of having everyone start with a store-bought textbook on the first day of class, we are going to construct a “class anthology” from scratch during the first half of the semester. In other words, our textbook will be an anthology comprised of texts that have been selected by the students in this class, and arranged by us in a logical manner. *(Note: An anthology is a collection of different texts usually written by different authors. Texts in an anthology can be newspaper articles, excerpts from novels, screenplays. They can be from different time periods or from today. You will see many examples of anthologies during this semester.)*

Creating a good class anthology requires a lot of prep. As you will see in the breakdown below, we won’t be finished creating our course anthology/textbook until **Week Ten, November 4th through November 8th**. The reason it takes so long to construct is that, in order to create the *class* anthology, every individual in the class needs to first create an *individual* anthology, on a topic of their choice. In Weeks 1-8, you will put together your own personal anthology, which means that you don’t write the texts that are included, but you select and arrange them.

What should your anthology be about? I’ve seen students in past classes create good personal anthologies on topics like “animal rescue,” “African drumming,” “tattoo art,” “financial scams,” and “controversies surrounding the practice of breastfeeding.” The one thing that all these good anthologies had in common was that the editor/student had significant personal investment and experience with the topic of the anthology. For instance, the editor of the “tattoo art” anthology did not have any tattoos himself but 1) he had friends and relatives who did, 2) he had watched several documentaries about tattooing, and 3) there was a popular tattoo parlor near his house that he walked by often. It was a topic that intrigued him, which meant he didn’t mind reading dozens of articles and stories about the topic, something all anthology editors must do.

Once we’ve got our class anthology constructed, we will study and write about the texts you have chosen. For the Final Exam, I will provide essay questions that ask you to quote from and make connections between texts in the class anthology.

Week-by-week Breakdown of the Course

Week 1. I want everyone to be sufficiently intrigued by the topic of their anthology, and I think that only happens when your topic is one that you have “lived.” In order to figure out if you’ve