

Mosaics Chap 14: Definition Writing

Using Chapter 14 on definition writing in your *Mosaics* text as a guide, write an essay of **3 pages** defining a specific concept: the *general* topic for this assignment is **security** (~~alternately, you may choose one of the following instead: **abandonment, freedom, ethnicity, boredom, hope**~~). Your task this time is to further narrow that general topic down into a specific aspect, characteristic, or type of *security* that you can then define from multiple angles.

What do you think of when you hear the word *security*? What kinds of associations do you make with this word? What examples, memories or experiences does it call to mind? If you have a roof over your head, food to eat, and money in your pocket, you have a sense of security. Write an essay defining a certain aspect of security.

- i. Choose your particular concept of *security* carefully: begin this process by doing some brainstorming or listing of possible ideas that you could explore in a discussion that seeks to more fully define what the word actually means to you
- ii. Decide how you plan to define your term – by synonym, negation, or category [or all three – see below]
- iii. Develop your definition with lots of good explanation and specific examples
- iv. Use the other “rhetorical strategies” or writing approaches you have already practiced – description, illustration, compare/contrast – to help you fill out your discussion

It is absolutely key in this assignment that you lay out your definition(s) thoroughly – do not leave your readers wondering what you think of the word. Use well-organized examples in your body paragraphs to support your working definition, and put that working definition right up front so that your reader will know *exactly* what you wish to communicate with the examples and explanations you provide – the goal here is to provide your reader with a “mental hook” on which to hang the definitions and explanations in the rest of your essay.

To make this work easier, think about defining your particular sense of security using the 3 most common methods of defining a new term or concept: through synonyms (similar words or ideas), negatives (opposing words and ideas), or categories (groups of words or concepts that are related or connected to your own particular conception of *security*). These methods are explained in Chapter 14, right after the first sample essay on dumpster diving.

Please Note: You may choose to do a limited amount of outside research to help you with this essay, but you may not write about yourself or your own experiences. I want you to define an aspect of security that is external to you, and then show us examples that illustrate, clarify, and expand on that definition. If you choose to include part of a dictionary definition, that’s fine – but use it only *briefly*, and do not rely on it to do the definition work for you. Please also remember that if you quote or paraphrase words or ideas from another source, you must attribute that material to its original source by naming the author and the title of the source in the body of your discussion.

Proofread your work very, very thoroughly, and use academic language throughout the essay. This means making sure all of your **verbs** are in the **same tense**, it means **eliminating contractions** and **slang speech**, and it means ensuring that **every sentence** is **complete**. Lastly, make sure to not use 1st person (I, me) or 2nd person (you, your) speech in this essay – keep your attention focused on the definition, on the particular sense of *security* you are defining, rather than yourself.

I want **focused, error-free work** from all of you this time.