

**Tutor Workshop: Reading and Writing Strategies for Essay Assignments
March 10, 2008**

Before knowing what to write for the student essay assignment (text-based writing)

1. Tutor must **assess** tutee's understanding of the original text.
 - a. Questions to ask to assess student:
 - i. What is the author discussing? Or What is/are the issue(s)?
 - ii. What is the author's opinion?
 - b. Summarize each body paragraph by writing one formulated main idea sentence in the margin.
 - c. Find the author's thesis and label it.

2. Tutor should ask good questions of the tutee to:
 - a. Help them shape an opinion
 - b. Narrow their topic for the essay, then
 - i. Create a thesis (turn the essay question into a statement)
 - ii. Sketch an outline

 - c. **Possible questions:**
 - i. Emotions- How do you feel about the text?
 - ii. Do you agree or disagree with the authors' point of view?
 - iii. What are some alternative points of views about the topic (issue)?

***The student should have an understanding of the plot of the text and have formulated opinions about the text before they begin to write a structured student essay.**

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After knowing what to write for the student essay assignment (going back to the text for textual evidence)

1. Carefully read the prompt. For example, underline all the verbs that describe what the student needs to do.
2. Go back to parts of the text that correspond to the question being asked.
3. Look at parts of the text that you have already marked.
4. Look at parts of the text you like or remember.
5. Select passages/quotations that support the student thesis.
6. Compare the passages side by side with essay prompt to compose analysis.
7. OR- keep the essay prompt in mind as you read. Always mark passages that can be used for the essay.