

## My Own Private Lexicon Assignment

Points: 50

### **So you want to improve your writing?**

We have been experimenting with language in class and reading experimental texts. Now it is your turn to compose an experimental essay that is one part vocabulary review, one part grammar boot camp, and one part poetic essay.

This assignment is all about following the process step by step until you achieve the final result. You will discover many things about your writing along the way, but you can only discover them for yourself. Trust in the process and use this assignment to take your writing to the next level.

Many students tell me that this assignment more than any other is responsible for improving their writing, while helping them to remain true to their voice.

*Get ready to work hard and have fun!*

**Step 1:** Choose an article from a magazine (online or print) of approximately 300 words in length that is about something that you are interested in, such as automobiles, food, computers, fashion, or sports.

**Step 2:** Make a list of all the words in the article. The list needs to be in alphabetical order.

**Step 3:** Lexicon. Make a dictionary with your list. Define all of the words on the list using a credible dictionary. Online dictionaries are acceptable. You may use online dictionary-making tools, if you wish. Be resourceful. You need to make sure that you have a definition for every word in your magazine article. Your document should look like a dictionary. Some students also include the part of speech and multiple definitions, but that is not required. It's your education; make it as amazing as you wish your life to be. (The only time is "now," and it is a gift, which is why they call it the "present.")

**Step 4:** Citation. You **MUST** cite any and all dictionaries that you use as a references page in APA style.

**Step 5:** Personal narrative. Once you have this lexicon, or list of words and definitions (it will be a very long list), you will compose a personal narrative using **ONLY** the words in your lexicon.

*Note: If you use words not in your lexicon, you risk losing points. Think strategically about how you will accomplish this seemingly impossible task. It will require PLAY. You will need to play with the words in your lexicon. Have fun. Experiment.*

**Your personal narrative will include only words from your lexicon.** You can repeat words as often as necessary.

### **Exceptions**

You can use any articles (a, an, the), pronouns, and prepositions. If you don't know what a pronoun or preposition is, look it up on [Purdue OWL](#).

Your personal narrative must be exactly 300 words (not including the title), descriptive, detailed, and fabulous!

Format your personal narrative according to the guidelines in the syllabus: double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point font.

Your personal narrative needs to be guided by the prompts below.

**Personal Narrative Prompts:**

Pick **one** of the following prompts to help you compose your piece.

- Tell about a time that you learned something new about yourself. How did you feel before? After?
- Describe a time when you realized you were no longer a child. What happened? Who was there?
- Relate a story about a time when you felt challenged by life circumstances. How did you make it through?

**Important:** *You must only use words from your lexicon, except for articles, pronouns, and prepositions. For every word used that is not on your lexicon, 3 points will be deducted from your final score. Ask yourself, is it worth it?*

**Be Sure You Turn ALL the Necessary Components:**

- Magazine article
- Lexicon
- Citation(s) of the dictionary(-ies) used in APA
- Personal narrative

LEXICON RUBRIC

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| Includes 300+ word article on a topic of choice. (10 pts.)   |  |
| Includes a lexicon of all vocabulary from the article, except prepositions, articles, and pronouns, with definitions from APA-cited dictionary(ies). (10 pts.) |  |
| Responds to the assigned prompts, such that it takes the form of a personal narrative. (10 pts.)   |  |
| Follows grammar, punctuation, and spelling conventions, as appropriate for the context. (10 pts.)  |  |
| Meets the assigned 300-word length using only words in the lexicon. (10 pts.)  |  |

TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_/50\_\_