**How Do You Construct Meaning?**

Writing Assignment #14

Philosophy is, first of all, reflection. It is stepping back, listening to yourself and other people (including the great philosophers), and trying to understand and evaluate what it is that you hear, and what it is that you believe. To explain how you find meaning in the world is to create a piece of philosophy. To formulate your own philosophy is to say what it is that you believe as clearly and as thoroughly as possible. (“The Big Questions”: A Short Introduction to Philosophy)

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| You are going to write a piece of philosophy that meets the following requirements: **Articulation:** You put your ideas in clear, concise, readily understandable language.**Argument:** You support your ideas with reasons from other ideas, principles, and observations to establish your conclusions and overcome objections.**Length:** At least two pages. |

**Due Dates:**

Final Draft: January 21, 2016

For Example:

I told you all the other day about how Mr. Raymond, Ms. Pound, and I discussed whether or not true empathy exists. I still remain unconvinced, because I think that at our core, human beings behave rather like animals when confronted with danger and unpleasantness. However, **I think it’s important that we continue to try empathizing and feeling**, or else we lose the positive part of our humanity.

**The Caveat:**

* You may NOT write that “my philosophy is that everyone has different philosophies and looking at things”. While that might be true and may really express you interpretation of the world, I want you to reflect and really pick one of your deeply-held beliefs.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**The Personal Meaning Essay!**

(The Last One!)

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| **Score** | **Development of Position** | **Organization** | **Use of Language** | **Sentence Structure** | **Grammar and Word Usage** |
| **1** | No plausible position is taken on the topic; severely lacking in examples, reasons and/or evidence | Disorganized; little or no focus; incoherent | Contains fundamental vocabulary mistakes | Severely flawed sentence structure | Grammar and word usage are so poor that they interfere with meaning; very poor mechanics (like punctuation) |
| **2** | Position on topic is unclear or extremely limited; inappropriate examples or reasons; insufficient evidence | Poorly organized; lacks focus; problems with coherence or flow of ideas | Poor use of language; indicates very limited vocabulary and poor word choice | Frequent problems with sentence structure | Grammar and word usage mistakes are frequent and interfere with meaning; poor mechanics |
| **3** | Position on topic demonstrates critical thinking skill applied inconsistently; inadequate examples, reasons or evidence | Limited in organization and focus; demonstrates lapses in coherence or flow of ideas | Displays developing use of language; contains indications of weak vocabulary and poor word selection | Some problems with sentence structure; lacks a variety of sentence structures | Contains many mistakes in grammar word usage and mechanics |
| **4** | Position on topic demonstrates competent critical thinking skill; example, reasons and evidence are adequate | Generally organized and focused; demonstrates some coherence and attention to the flow of ideas | Displays adequate, but inconsistent, use of language; vocabulary used is generally appropriate | Good sentence structure; demonstrates some variety of sentence structure | Contains some mistakes in grammar, word usage and mechanics |
| **5** | Position is effectively developed through strong critical thinking skill; examples, reasons and evidence are generally appropriate | Well organized and focused; demonstrates coherence and ideas flow well | Displays competent use of language; uses appropriate vocabulary | Good sentence structure; demonstrates variety in sentence structure | Generally free of mistakes in grammar, word usage and mechanics |
| **6** | Position effectively and insightfully developed through outstanding critical thinking skill; examples, reasons and evidence are clearly appropriate | Well organized and clearly focused; clearly coherent and ideas flow seamlessly | Displays skillful use of language; vocabulary is accurate and varied; words are appropriately and skillfully chosen | Good sentence structure; demonstrates meaningful and skilled variety of sentence structure | Free of most mistakes in grammar, word usage and mechanics |

 Your Grade: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_