

WRA 101 AY 2024–2025 SAMPLE ASSIGNMENT

PROJECT 2 (P2): CULTURAL OBJECT INQUIRY

Project Goal

To inquire into the uses of an everyday cultural object and discover how that object relates to the cultural values and practices of a group that you participate in.

To work toward this goal, you will:

- inquire into cultural values and/or practices by focusing on an everyday thing
- practice asking questions and doing research to find answers
- learn about yourself in relation to others: that is, your cultural participation, membership, or influences.
- communicate about your object and culture to an audience.

Your project will have 3 important parts:

- Introduction to and description of the object
- Introduction to and description of the culture and its values and practices (related to the object)
- Link to yourself: how do you participate in the culture? How are you influenced by the culture? How do you use the object?

Select an OBJECT that is part of a CULTURE and important to YOU

For the first project, you looked to your own experience and history to find material to tell a story about learning. For this project, you'll look to an everyday cultural object as a place to begin a process of inquiry into a culture.

This project, like others in the course, is about discovery—that is, the goal is not to report on something you already know, but to set out to learn about something more, and to narrate your process of learning. You'll begin the process by **selecting a material thing—an object**—that has value in the culture(s) in which it participates.

For example, I might choose the piano I have in my home as my object. Through it, I might discover not only something about its value in my own life (How did I come to play piano? Where do I play it now?) but also about a culture in which that object participates (amateur piano players, local musicians, band members, church goers, piano bar attenders, Alicia Keys fans, etc).

So the object you choose should be something of use or value to you. It will serve as the means by which you inquire into the values and/or practices of culture (or subculture) in which you participate, and how you have been influenced by these.

What is a culture?

Culture can be defined in a lot of ways, and we'll explore the idea of "culture" in class. For now, think both small and big: the object you choose might be associated with a smaller **subculture** (like a friend group or fan group), an **institutional culture** (like a workplace or a school), a **local culture** (like a neighborhood), or a **historical culture** (like a religious, ethnic, regional, or national culture).

Important note! *Keep in mind that even though you're using an object to help you think more broadly about cultural values and practices, your project will not only be about that object. **The project will be about a culture, and you in relation to others in that culture.***

Parts of the Project

This project has four parts:

1. A proposal + workshop (graded for completion)
2. A first draft + workshop (graded for completion)
3. A plan for revision (graded for completion)
4. A final draft (graded for content; 10% of course grade)

1. Proposal—Due to Eli Review

Once you have chosen your object, you'll draft a proposal. In it, you'll begin to imagine how this object will help you tell a story about a culture and your participation in that culture.

The proposal should address the following questions:

1. What object have you chosen? How would you describe it (especially to somebody unfamiliar with it)? Of all things, why did you choose this particular object?
2. What other objects did you consider, but decide NOT to use? Why did you make this decision?
3. Have you used this object with others? Who else would have such an object? Who else does NOT have such an object?
4. What culture is linked to this object that you might discuss in your project? How would you describe this culture?
5. What questions do you have about the culture or object? What kinds of research could you do to find answers to your questions?
6. What do you predict will be difficult about composing this project? What are you most nervous or worried about? On the other hand, what are you most confident about?

2. First Draft

Once you have reviewed your proposal and considered feedback on it, you'll compose a first draft for review.

Criteria for success:

1. Your draft should have an introduction that allows your readers to know what object and culture you will discuss.
2. The body of the paper should **provide details** about your selected object and culture, and your experiences in that culture.
3. The body should include **evidence** in the form of:
 - observations about the object
 - observations about the culture
 - examples from experience
4. Your draft should have a concluding section that provides a **main point or takeaway** about the object, culture, and you.
5. Don't worry too much about length, but aim for _____

3. Revision Plan—Done in Class via Eli Review

Informed by feedback from your peer reviewers, you will draft a revision plan that describes how your revised project will differ from the one you proposed and submitted for your first draft review. Your revision plan should address the following questions:

- What are your goals for the final version of your project? What work do you hope it will accomplish?
- How did your proposal help you understand your purposes for the project?
- In what ways was your first draft successful—and not so much?
- What responses from your reviewers will (or will not) guide your revision and why?
- What is your plan for making revisions to your draft? In other words, what stays, what goes, what gets added, what gets altered?

Successful revision plans will make direct references to your proposals and first drafts and the comments from your peer reviewers. In other words, you will quote or paraphrase things you said in your proposal and draft and suggestions made by your reviewers.

4. Final Draft (10%)

Criteria for success:

1. Your draft should have an introduction that allows your readers to know what object and culture you will discuss.
2. The body of the paper should **provide details** about your selected object and culture, and your experiences in that culture.
3. The body should include **evidence** in the form of:
 - observations about the object
 - observations about the culture
 - examples from experience
4. Your draft should have a concluding section that provides a **main point or takeaway** about the object, culture, and you.
5. Don't worry too much about length, but aim for _____