

Profile Essay Assignment Sheet (influenced by Kila Knight)

Due date: October 12

Length: 4-6 pages

Format: MLA

Basics:

For this essay, you will profile a person, group, or event. Profiles use description, details, and language to give the reader better insight into the topic. Well written profiles use **angle** to approach the subject. For this assignment, you will approach this profile as if writing for a magazine like the New Yorker or something equally reputable. Therefore, if you are writing a profile about a person, you would want to include important and interesting facts about the person you have interviewed, and how it is important to his or her story.

This assignment does include research. Once you decide who or what you'd like to profile, you will need to contact them and gain information, without simply using the internet. Pro tip: have a list of questions prepared and practiced for your interview, and ask to record it as well, even if it is on your cell phone. Recordings help make the writing process easier.

Key terms to know (according to Merriam-Webster—feel free to add your own definitions):

- Profile: A concise biographical sketch
- Audience: A reading, viewing, or listening public
- Angle: The direction from which someone or something is approached
- Interest: A feeling that accompanies or causes special attention to an object
- Sway: A controlling influence or authority over something

Grading Criteria:

- Focus
 - Profiles are clear and focused on a certain topic—context is key, but don't forget to clarify your main idea!
- Detail
 - Sensory details (look, taste, smell, feel, hear) are all extremely important. Along with these, quotes and contextual information will help the reader understand and get to know your subject.
- Angle and Audience
 - It's important to keep your audience in mind at all times—it's how you can figure out what items are interesting and which aren't. To help figure out your audience, I suggest reading a few profiles from the New Yorker for a frame of reference.
- Organization
 - Transitions and cohesion are very important to keep the audience focused and invested.
- Final Revision
 - Make sure the final draft is mostly free of formatting and grammatical errors, and should take into account feedback given during peer review and conferences. This does not mean you need to change everything, but show that you at least tried to change big issues.