Short Writes

A Short Write is a 2 page, double-spaced, work in which you are required to engage with the reading material for the class. The purpose of writing a Short Write is to develop your skills as a critical thinker and reader.

In order to write a successful Short Write, you need to become an active reader. You should keep a reading journal. As you read the course texts, look for recurring symbols, images and ideas and write them down in your journal along with anything else that seems interesting, disturbing, or provocative. Then amass the information you have collected.

This should apply to most of your classes here at Mission, but you should at least do it for this one.

Take one of the themes you have focused on in your reading journal and flesh it out with details, citations, and page numbers. Short Writes should exhibit three primary criteria:
[1] evidence of attentiveness to the text under consideration;  
[2] strong textual support for your argument;  
[3] an explanation of the significance of the theme you have chosen to focus on.

Short Writes serve as models for the sort of process that should be undergone when you write longer essays. In short, you must first read a given text, taking notes and underlining important phrases and passages. Then gather and sort out your notes, making sure your focus is clear and sufficiently narrow. Finally, develop a meaningful and interesting reading of the text.

You will have approximately 6 Short Writes due over the course of the semester.

Your first Short Write, for instance, will be on your favorite movie. It is due this week. All short writes based on material within the Hum 01 Reader (for example Republic) are due on the first day we discuss that reading.