List three problems you often encounter with student writing:

1. 
2. 
3. 

How can we minimize these problems?

THREE TYPES OF ASSIGNMENTS:

A. How does this assignment invite problems in student writing?
   Write a 10-page paper on a topic relevant to this course. Obtain my approval for your topic by midterm. Use APA documentation. Your paper is due December 5. You must provide proof that you went to the University Writing Center.

B. How does this series of “repeated” assignments help avoid problems encountered in “A”?
   On each of the following due dates—9/9, 9/23, 10/9, 10/14, 10/28, 11/11, and 12/2—turn in a 350-word critique of an article that relates to the list of class topics that is on your syllabus. For each of the article critiques, summarize the article in 4-5 sentences. Explain how the article has influenced your own opinion on the topic. If you quote, do so briefly and cite in APA style. Choose your articles from the list provided on our class website. Be prepared to have a classmate briefly respond to your critiques in class, using the peer-comment guidelines on BlackBoard. The University Writing Center has this assignment on file and can help you complete it successfully.

C. How does this series of short, linked assignments compare to A & B?
   • For 9/9: Choose a statement from the list on the syllabus. In about 250 words, explain why you agree or disagree (e.g., “Every nation should participate in reducing the causes of global warming.”)
   • For 10/9: Refer to the syllabus and choose 2 articles from the class list that relate to the topic you chose on 9/4. In 500 words, summarize each article and critique it (i.e., explain how each adds to, contradicts, or expresses a different perspective from yours). Document and cite in APA style. Study the student example on our class website.
   • For 10/28: On your own, find 3 print or Internet articles that deal with the topic you chose. In 600-700 words, briefly summarize and critique each. Explain why you think each article balances fact and informed opinion, supported by reliable evidence. Then evaluate which of the three seems most convincing to you. Attach print copies of the articles to your critique. Before I collect your work, two classmates will comment on your critique and check your use of APA documentation. I’ll use the rubric on the syllabus to grade your work.
   • For 11/17: Turn in a 900 to 1,000-word reflection on how you have a more informed opinion of your topic. Cite how all 5 sources influenced you, and use APA style. Address the following questions: Why has your opinion changed—or remained the same? What specific information from your reading affected your opinion—and why? How do you know this information is reliable? What questions or doubts do you still have about this topic? How would you respond reasonably to people who disagree with your opinion? NOTE: I may ask you to revise if your reflection is incomplete, poorly written, or incorrectly documented. Once again, I will use the rubric on the syllabus to grade your reflection. Consider going to the University Writing Center, and show the tutor this assignment.

Effective assignments address these elements:

- Content & scope
- Organization & development
- Audience & communication
- Engagement & choice

KEEP IN MIND:

☑ Fall-Spring Workshops on Writing Across the Curriculum
☑ May Workshop on Designing a Writing-Infused Course

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http://www.niu.edu/wac/index.shtml
http://www.niu.edu/uwc/