

Assignment I: Narrative/Essay Writing

(suggested time—70 minutes)

Assignment

What makes a leader effective? Write either a narrative or an essay about **how a leader can influence others**. You may write about yourself or other people, real or fictional. You may set your writing in the past, present, or future.

Ideas

The following material may give you ideas for your writing. **You do not have to refer directly to any of it.** Consider the knowledge and experience you have gained from reading, listening, viewing, discussing, thinking, or imagining.

A leader is best
When people barely know that he exists,
Not so good when people obey and acclaim him,
Worst when they despise him.
'Fail to honor people,
They fail to honor you;'
But of a good leader, who talks little,
When his work is done, his aim fulfilled,
They will all say, 'We did this ourselves.'

—from *The Way of Life According to Lao Tzu*

Are you a leader?
Look behind and see if anyone is following.
He who thinks he is leading
and no one is following
is only taking a walk.

—from *Stories for the Heart: 110 Stories to Encourage Your Soul*

Leadership is the lifting
of a man's vision to
higher sights, the
raising of a man's
performance to a higher
standard, the building
of a man's personality beyond
its normal limitations.

—from *Management: Tasks, Responsibilities, Practices*



Bynner, Witter, trans. *The Way of Life According to Lao Tzu: An American Version*. New York: A Perigee Book, 1986.
Gray, Alice, comp. *Stories for the Heart: 110 Stories to Encourage Your Soul*. Sisters, Oregon: Multnomah Books, 1996.
Drucker, Peter F. *Management: Tasks, Responsibilities, Practices*. New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1985.

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Under incredibly adverse circumstances, Sir Ernest Shackleton, an Antarctic explorer in the early 20th century, was able to lead his entire crew of 27 men to safety after their ship became stuck in the Antarctic ice.

Shackleton made his men want to follow him; he did not force them to do so. In the process, he changed the way his crewmen saw themselves and the world. His work continued to inspire them for as long as they lived, and to inspire others around the world long after that. There is no greater tribute to a leader. His tools were humor, generosity, intelligence, strength, and compassion.

—from *Shackleton's Way: Leadership Lessons from the Great Antarctic Explorer*

I have had some reports of vandalism in the locker room. The class respects you and listens to you. Please keep an eye on things in there.



When writing, **be sure to**

- **consider** your **audience**
- **focus** on your **purpose** and **point of view**
- **organize** your **thoughts** appropriately in sentences and paragraphs
- **use vocabulary** that is interesting and effective
- **edit** your **work** directly on your writing
- **budget** your **time**