

Dr. Cothran  
CRTW Paper 1

For this assignment, you will need to write an essay that shows your ability to explore all eight of the Elements of Reasoning (pictured on page 51 of LTTT). I will be grading you on a) how thoughtfully you address each element and b) how well you incorporate all of your ideas into a coherent essay.

Specifically, this essay should be **4-6 pages** in length, typed, double-spaced, in 12 point Times New Roman font.

Topic:

Look back at a bad decision you have made. (You bought a car you couldn't afford, or you took a job that wasn't right for you, or you took a 400-level Spanish course as a freshman, or you just picked a minor at random, or you were cruel to someone who didn't deserve it, or you bought a pet before you were ready to take care of one, or you planned your future around another person instead of around your own needs/wishes.... You get the picture!) Using all eight of the elements, think about your thinking. Explore the thought processes that led you to make that mistake. You might also think about the questions you *should* have asked, or consequences you *should* have considered, but didn't. Then write a thesis-driven essay that "goes around the circle." As you conclude (or begin) the essay, make a few statements about potential *alternatives* you may or may not have considered, as well as the *context* within which you made your bad decision. You also might mention any impediments you may have had (that affected your decision-making).

Side note: Each time you introduce a new element for discussion, put that element in bold. For example, if you are writing a paragraph on your particular Question at Issue ("Should I buy this pair of jeans?" "Can I find a similar pair for less money?" "What should I wear on my date tonight?" "Can I pay for them with my dad's credit card?" "How can I manipulate my parents so that they will give me more money?" "Am I acting irresponsibly – like my sister tells me I do?" "Am I materialistic or just a girl with good fashion sense?" "What does God want me to do?"), somewhere in that paragraph you should acknowledge that you are exploring your specific Question at Issue and put that term in a bold font.