Midterm In-Class Essay Information Sheet

Your Midterm Exam (in-class essay) will consist of a coherent, well-supported essay of approximately 500 words (roughly four handwritten pages, give or take) in which you provide a clear, coherent, and well-supported assessment and analysis of two NY Times articles using the critical thinking process of “Evaluating Around the Circle” (Nosich 155 – 156).

Assignment Topic:

After carefully reading and analyzing Kate Murphy’s NY Times article “We Want Privacy, but Can’t Stop Sharing” and Peggy Orenstein’s NY Times article “I Tweet, Therefore I Am,” construct a coherent, well-supported and fully-amplified essay of approximately 500 words (approximately four hand-written pages) in which you analyze and assess each author’s claims through a process of “Evaluating Around the Circle” and then come to a conclusion about the persuasiveness, logic, and/or implications of the authors’ claims. Assess and analyze these authors’ claims from the perspective of critical thinking. Given what you know about the intellectual process of critical thinking, how might our use of technology affect our ability to think critically? How is our use of technology, perhaps, changing our basic assumptions about what it means to be human, about privacy, about our relationships with others?

In a well-supported and coherent essay, summarize some of the main arguments presented by both writers, and then evaluate their claims based on what you know about critical thinking. Forward a unique thesis that both responds to these articles and presents your own unique stance on the topic of technology and its effects on our lives, our intellectual capacities, our relationships, our ability to think critically, etc.

Refer to and quote both articles in your response, forwarding a unique thesis statement which evaluates their views using the Standards and presents your own ideas on the topic. You may also quote Nosich if you wish, but you are not required to quote him. Please follow the instructions for “Evaluating Around the Circle” on pages 155 – 156 of Nosich in your analysis and assessment of the authors’ claims. I will look for evidence that you are using critical thinking concepts (Elements, Standards, Impediments, etc.) in your response.

Essay Components:

- In your introduction, briefly summarize both authors’ claims and forward a unique, narrow, specific, and “risky” thesis statement.
- In the essay’s body, provide concrete examples from the texts and from your own life. Spend some time explaining quotations and unpacking and supporting your claims.
- In the concluding paragraph, sum up your main points and restate your thesis.
- Provide a clear organizational pattern to the essay.
- Include at least five of the seven Standards in your analysis and assessment.
- Provide fully-amplified paragraphs and transitional sentences or phrases between ideas.
- Include in-text citations if the signal phrase does not include the author’s name.
- You will not need to include a Works Cited page or page numbers in the parenthetical citations.

For the midterm exam, you may bring with you to class a written thesis statement and a one-page outline. Please bring with you to class blue books or loose-leaf paper, pencils or pens, your copies of the class handout, and your copy of Nosich. This is an open book, open note exam.