

ADVICE FROM THE PAST

Suggestions on How to Do Well, from Previous Students

The best way to do well in this English class is to be going to class and doing the assignments. At the beginning of the semester the assignments can be frustrating, but it is important to do them—for the daily grade and also to help improve your writing skills. Have peer reviews and schedule conferences with Mr. White. Freewrites help improve your writing skills, and even when it seems like they will never end, keep persevering, because it is worth it!

—CB

- Come to class everyday
- Remember to cite your sources
- Don't be afraid to read out loud
- Make your freewrites interesting
- In you have any questions about anything, go ask Mr. White

—MG

Come to class!! Every free-write counts! Coming to class insures daily grades which ultimately have the potential to boost your grade a letter. When projects are assigned begin them immediately! Read the syllabus—know the syllabus—love the syllabus.

—BB

This class is almost self-taught, because writing is self-taught. You can only challenge yourself in this class. You are the only one writing. So you need to take the initiative.

—MR

I think that coming to class is very essential to your success in English 104 with Mr. White. I know my grade would have been fairly higher if I'd had perfect attendance, but things happen. I'd also say do your homework and take advantage of the meetings with Mr. White.

—LP

Do your very best on every paper. Each paper counts a lot and doing well on each paper should be a priority. Read your papers out loud, you will catch errors you might not have seen otherwise.

—SK

Writing is a skill, it will take time to develop. The more you write the easier it will get. Read your paper out loud to yourself, you will find errors on the page you didn't know about.

—EM

No matter how late you are, come to class. It's worth it.

—CE

1. Attend every class.
2. Listen to what Mr. White wants in the papers.
3. Be sure to argue and defend your thesis with secondary sources and quotations.
4. Make sure your papers are fun to read.

—AD

If you have trouble with your papers don't hesitate to ask Mr. White for help. Even if you are not good at writing papers, by the end of the semester you will be. There are lots of assignments at first but don't worry they get better. This class is awesome, you will enjoy it.

—VB

Go to class...you'll get a prize. Express yourself. Write in your own style. If you don't know what to write about or argue, just pick something and go with it.. Write passionately. Freewrites are fun. Don't be afraid to ask questions. Turn the phone on vibrate or silent

—KH

Come to class every day with unique thoughts. Mr. White likes it when you think outside the box.

—ND

Go into class with an open mind, and positive as well. It will make the class so much more enjoyable. Your thoughts are just as important as anyone else's in the room. Get to know Mr. White—he is there to help you—emails—appointments to talk with him—anything helps.

—HA

- Go to class! Prepared to write!

- Whenever you need help on an essay, set up an appointment with Mr. White or see him during office hours. He wants to help you succeed and gives very good pointers for a good essay.
 - Be on time to class.
 - Look over essays—read them out loud.
 - Be sure to cite your sources—include your works cited page.
 - Participate in class.
- AO
-

- Remember to cite your sources
 - Don't be afraid to read out loud in class
 - Make your freewrites interesting
- AZ
-

1. Meet w/Mr. White before your paper is due.
 2. Come to class—don't just attend. It is vital to learning but also each time you're absent your grade goes down.
 3. Try sitting in a different seat each class period—you can embrace a new perspective.
 4. Speak up in class—Mr. White likes voluntary responses to his questions.
 5. Don't fall asleep—Mr. White will wake you up!
 6. Don't look at the four writing assignments as homework, but as a growing experience. I actually learned way more than just “English” in this class.
- BLV
-

Mr. White's class can be fun and not too difficult if you show up for class and do all assignments. Take advantage of conferences and office hours, as they can help you to significantly improve your writing. Try to volunteer to read out loud—you may not want to, but Mr. White would like you to.

—DW

Step out of the box and make you freewrites FREE! That's what they're for. Also speak up....

—AA

- Even if you have no clue as to what your topic for your paper might be, write anyways—writing often gives off ideas.
 - Visit Mr. White in his office! He always has great advice, especially when you're lost or mind-blocked.
 - Write papers YOU would enjoy reading.
- AN

Try every technique Mr. White tells you, even though some of them may sound crazy. You'll be surprised how well they work!

—KR

Take the 22-Minute Drafts seriously. They will ultimately make it easier to write your paper.

—HB

Utilize your small group time, and don't let them be "nice."

—HH

Don't be boring. If you can slide something humorous and witty into your paper without diminishing its quality, do so.

—PFG

Take risks, make arguments, and share your opinions in class and in your writing.

—SP

Don't be afraid to speak up—sometimes other people are thinking the same thoughts you are.

—TE

You are an adult now. Don't be afraid to write about subjects they sheltered you from in high school.

—EG

To succeed in Mr. White's class, you have to care. You have to participate and give every assignment your all—even the ones you find boring or purposeless.

—BH

Whatever you do, no matter what, never put your pen (or pencil) down! It's what you write in these moments of supposed writer's block that could make a masterpiece!

—SC

Talk—give an opinion every once in awhile. It helps Mr. White get to know you.
—CS

Revise everything. Nothing you ever write is a finished piece, so don't ever stop coming up with good ideas. Mr. White likes to see your creative process and the more work you put into each assignment, the better writer you will become.
—EMG

Know every detail of your setting and the character's situation. Even if it's not in the story, knowing your characters will enhance your story.
—KM

Take advantage of Mr. White's extra office hours after each first draft and go talk to him about your story. He has good ideas and input and can help you before you turn in the final draft.
—KLM

Come to class and participate. You will benefit greatly. Some of the things you do may sound silly and at times feel like they have nothing to do with the story you are working on—but trust me, they help!
—LJ

Make friends with people in class who have different personalities than you do—let them influence you—you will learn a lot. Also, don't be afraid to be the "different" one—everybody likes originals.
—BC

If you ever get frustrated about how badly a story is going, just remember that there are at least 20 or so fellow maladjusted souls in your class who probably feel the same way you do.
—FD

Don't be afraid to read your writing out loud. Also, when you workshop your papers don't just tell people in your group that you like their story; give feedback or advice. You're not doing them a favor by saying, "Yeah, I like it." Help make the story better. That's what you're here for.
—SP

Show up to class on workshop days and tell the truth about people's stories.

—KC

If you have virgin ears, beware of the vocabulary that will sometimes be used in class.

—LM

Go talk to Mr. White! It's amazing what a teacher's advice can do to make a good paper. Make appointments, write emails...take advantage of this valuable resource. Few teachers are so readily available to help their students as Mr. White.

—EG

Try to incorporate the real world into your stories: it helps the reader connect to what's happening to your characters.

—AL

Take advantage of the writing exercises in class. (I ended up using some of them in my stories.) And give constructive criticism to classmates—don't be too harsh, but don't just tell them "good job," either.

—JM

Don't give up on your story—it can always get better.

—anonymous

Don't be afraid to put real experiences of things that have happened in your life into your stories. I figured this out too late, and I think that my first two stories suffered....

—KR

Mr. White likes to help you, and even if you think your writing sucks...HE won't!

—BC

Don't write crap—write something YOU like!

—KL

Don't follow everyone else's lead. Be true to yourself, and be humorous and risky—Mr. White does not want to read a boring story!

—BS

Just volunteer! Mr. White will call on you even if you're looking at the floor!

—NE

In order to succeed in this class, you must allow your inner being to come alive in your writing. Don't be afraid to experiment with different ideas.

—JW

It would behoove you to proof-read your assignments...multiple times....

—CW

- Even if you stare at the floor, Mr. White will call on you anyway. Be prepared to read your stuff out loud.
- Nothing can be wrong, so don't be afraid to say it out loud.
- See Mr. White before you start writing a story. He has tons of ideas and can really help you come up with something good.

—MM

- Don't make a half-assed effort. Your writing should be a reflection of you. You don't want some schmuck in a few years to read it and think, "What an idiot."
- There isn't any wrong answer. And don't be afraid to read out loud. No one is going to make fun of you—at least to your face.

—AM

During workshop, do not be afraid to critique and offer suggestions. Don't let yourself be intimidated in this class. Do not be afraid to write about anything: sex, drugs, or even the mundane.

—MJM

Challenge yourself. Take revision seriously. And don't be afraid to speak up.

—HH

Don't be shy in front of your fellow students. Don't be afraid to share your work—everyone is in the same boat you are.

—AG

Take advantage of the office hours Mr. White gives to go see him about whatever you are writing. It helps a lot! And come to class every day and do the activities, even though they are sometimes very odd. They help!

—LW

As of RIGHT NOW, begin noticing everything. Pay attention to your surroundings and draw information and inspiration from everything around you.

—RH

Don't write fake stuff. You know when it sucks, so don't make your classmates read it.

—LC

Make yourself known.

—RM

Work hard and never give up. Take your work seriously and try your best.

—TB

Take advantage of extra credit opportunities. Listen to Mr. White's comments when you discuss your paper and adjust your paper accordingly. Come to class.

—anonymous

- Talk to Mr. White. He likes to hear your stories even if they seem pointless.
- Stick with the smiley faces 😊
- Don't be scared when you have your 1-on-1 meetings. He really just wants to help you on your paper.
- Don't ever ask him the meaning of life.
- When he tells you to staple a paper ALWAYS staple the paper. He means it.

—DP

Do the extra credits, every little bit helps.
Don't be afraid to speak your mind, he really wants to hear what you think.
If you truly believe something, don't be afraid to argue.

—PM

Come to class—it's very rewarding.
Take advantage of your appointments with Mr. White. Ask him questions.
Talk voluntarily in class (and you won't be called on later).

—DS

The best advice I would give for this class would be to use the time in class to help make yourself a better writer. Every class we do little assignments or freewrites and if you take them seriously & try your hardest on them you will still have fun and it will help you in the long run.

—AP

- Go to extra credit opportunities, you'll learn more from them than you would have expected.
- Listen when Mr. White is talking, especially when he is writing on the board, because you won't be able to make out his writing.
- Never ask Mr. White the meaning of life.
- Creativity and uniqueness are rewarding.

—AF

- When it comes to answering questions in class, if you make eye-contact with Mr. White there is a 99.9% chance he will call on you.
- Always make sure you make it to class, no matter how tired, hungover, or lazy you are, because every class is a new learning experience.
- Take the 22-Minute Drafts seriously because in the end they will help you out a lot with writing your paper.

—CC

It's not difficult to succeed in this class at all—on the first day Mr. White gives you his expectations he has of you from the syllabus. Do your homework assignments, come to class, and Mr. White will make things easier for you. Don't be afraid to share your thoughts or opinions, even if they contradict what he says. This may not sound difficult, because it's not. Write to your best ability and take the advice that he gives you.

—JS

Speak up no matter what. Piss people off if you can. It's easy to do good in Mr. White's class: do your daily assignments, be interactive, and write your essays thoughtfully. But do more. Take what you learn, what you already know—everything—and do something with it.

—AR

Be unique and different—witty, funny. Be a loser, be the cool kid. Whatever. Just make sure YOU are in your writing.

—RR

Listen closely to what Mr. White says, because you will not be able to read his handwriting. Also go visit him during office hours. He has dim lighting that sets the mood for critical analysis.

—JN

English may not be your strongest subject but if you give everything you've got, everything will turn out all right. Hard work will work when wishing won't.

—anonymous

This is a great fun class. Mr. White is an interesting person and will always entertain you. But there are a few things you should keep in mind while in his class: 1) Do every assignment. 2) Don't take the freewrites too seriously. 3) Be creative.

—CG

- Speak up: the more Mr. White gets to know you, the more you get to know Mr. White.
- Go to the conferences, they can make the difference between a B and an A on a paper.
- When reading all the homework, try to think, "Why would he want me to read this?"
- Challenge Mr. White. Don't be afraid to say what you think. It's hard to offend him.
- The more open you are in class, the more open you are in your papers, because it's just like talking to Mr. White
- When he asks you to write down questions, ask him *anything*. If he doesn't know the answer he will find out.

—AP

- Always do the homework—it's fairly easy and doesn't take much time.
- Take advantage of the extra credit readings. Not only do they help your grade, they're very interesting.
- Come to class. Mr. White makes class fun.
- Stay awake or else.

—DB

This class is going to be one of the most interesting classes you will probably take. It might seem intimidating at first, but Mr. White will provide you with all the tools you need to go through this class easily. My main advice to you is to just enjoy the class and take advantage of every opportunity. Every chance you get to write is a way for you to improve. *Always* come to class!

—HA

- Always do the reading assignments, because if you don't you're going to sound retarded for a whole minute in front of the class!
- Always staple!
- Go to class, if you don't go you'll miss something important. And it isn't boring. It's actually very rewarding.

—KE

- When you get an idea, write it down! Put it in your blackberry! Grab a pen and a napkin! Whatever, just get it down before you forget it.
- Go to Mr. White's office hours. He has them for a reason and not every teacher is that generous. He cares about making you a better writer and will help you. Ask questions, come with full drafts at least once. He's taking a lot of time to help you, take advantage of it.
- Listen to his guidance. Re-write stories with his advice and revisions. You are not a professional or publish and he is. The hardest part of taking someone's advice is just that—taking it. But if you do, you will not only become a better writer, you may also get a better grade—or even get your work published.
- Come to class. It's a fun class and really engaging. Speak up and participate, you learn something every time you raise your hand. Take advantage of the smaller class size. Read before class.

—CS

This is not your average English class. Yes, there are papers and readings, but be prepared to open up and go in depth. Nothing is off limits in this class. If Mr. White tells you to write about steak burglars, and all you can think of is unicorns, go ahead! Write about unicorns! It's *your* creative writing, *your* creativity. This class is meant to help you fine tune your creativity so it can be the best it can be—but at the end of the day it belongs to you, not the class, not Mr. White, but you. Good luck!

—JN

-
- Don't miss class! The lectures are very helpful to your writing and are very interesting.
 - Go to any extra credit seminars. They will help you on writing your poems or simply improve your writing skills.
 - Don't wait until the last minute to write your paper! Trust me: besides producing poor papers, all-nighters make you age faster.
 - This class isn't tricky. Just follow the directions and have your rough drafts ready for workshop,

—JJS

-
- Take advantage of his office hours—they are very helpful and make your final touch-ups much easier.
 - Like Prof. White says, when the person who's grading your assignment tells you expectations or guideline, it's usually a good idea to follow them.
 - Make sure you staple your papers!

—RR

-
- Write a rough draft—get as much as possible done before workshopping because people will give you good ideas.
 - Go in during office hours and get help with your writing.
 - Don't use "as" or "while" in your writing.
 - Write about things you know and are familiar with, even if you don't think they are that exciting.

—anonymous

-
- 1) Don't be embarrassed to read what you have written in class. No one is going to judge you by what you write, but we all enjoy hearing your ideas.
 - 2) Speak up in class and discuss stories and writings with Mr. White. You can learn a lot more if everyone shares their ideas.
 - 3) Go meet with Mr. White during his office hours: he has very good advice that he can offer you to help improve your stories.

—KH

Talk to Mr. White, he's very approachable and when he says "Think outside of the box"—do it! The sky is the limit in this class. Also, if you're fluent in another language, use that in your writing sometimes....

—NG

Don't be too lazy to go to office hours. Mr. White is very willing to work with you if you are willing to show up. Speak up! This class is entirely too awkward when no one is willing to talk. Chances are that Mr. White will call on you anyway. Don't be afraid to be the only one with a certain viewpoint/opinion. If everyone agrees on something, then any writing done on that topic will become redundant and boring. Come to class! You will learn a lot just by showing up. This is not your high school English class.

—WR

- Make sure to come to class!!
- Don't be afraid to write anything that comes to mind. This is a class that definitely allows you to think outside the box, so take advantage of it!
- Ask questions! Mr. White is very helpful in answering questions and guiding you in your writing.
- Have fun with your writing! Don't care what others will think.
- Don't forget page numbers! And don't forget to staple you papers!

—MM

- Respond when he asks a question, or if you understand, at least nod your head vigorously.
- Folders with pockets. Not folders that just close, but folders with pockets for all assignments. If you forget, you may fail.
- Don't be afraid to read out loud in class. No matter how cruddy what you wrote may be, there is likely someone who is equally cruddy, at least in their own mind.
- Revision is your friend, as are office hours. If you ask, he will help.
- This class is not as hard as you think it is. Neither is poetry, for that matter. Try and ask for help and you will succeed.
- Mr. White likes strange, weird, morbid, and generally things that are off the beaten path. Remember this and your story will be memorable. And all you science fiction and fantasy people can write strange, morbid stories.
- Don't be afraid to say or write what is on your mind. You may offend a fellow student, but not Mr. White, and he is the one who counts.
- Whenever Mr. White says, "Pull out your syllabus," it means that someone is doing something stupid, and that whatever they should be doing is on the syllabus.

—JS

- Give poetry a chance—you may be better than you think.
- Do the reading response the day before it is due. You'll be less stressed.

- For the love of all that is writing, TALK during class discussions! It makes things go so much smoother if you do so.

—NP

Congratulations, you have a very good professor to teach you the finer points of creative writing. Now, I have some suggestions for you so that you will excel in this class. First, never be afraid to express your opinions, no matter how certain you are that others will disagree. It doesn't matter if no one else agrees with you. You are in a class of adults who will respect your opinion, and maybe you can enlighten someone else to a different way of thinking. Second, do all the homework and come to class. This will be immensely helpful for discussions and for helping you grow as a writer. We can only learn better techniques of writing by reading and discussing the works of those who have come before us, no matter how much you really hated that short story. Third, write as much as possible for the workshop. It allows other people to understand your story and help make it better. Also do not be afraid to critique the other person's story. They are just as lost and confused about the revision process as you are. And lastly, relax and enjoy the class. If you stress out too much about your comma placement, you will miss the wider picture and the purpose of the class. Good luck, and I hope you enjoy this class.

—SM

- Do what the syllabus says.
- Do not begin your paper the night before it is due.
- Use folders.
- STAPLE!
- Perfect attendance gets you a box of paperclips, saving you a couple of bucks.
- Just do the work. Don't let the amount of writing scare you away from this class; it gets broken up.
- Get help from Mr. White. He'll tell you exactly what you need to do for your papers.
- The extra credit opportunities are worth going to, and not just for the credit points....

—DT

- Attend class
- There are many extra credit opportunities—take them.
- If you have questions, ask.

—KK

- Don't complain about how your story is graded. Just turn your complaint into a poem.
- Speak up in class.
- Attend class.

- Ask questions to get Mr. White talking, it makes the time pass quickly.
—TS
-

The most important thing to keep in mind when taking this class is that you will write a lot. When you are writing, it is very important to do so seriously. No matter how well you write, if you go too far off into la-la land you won't get an A. Make sure to attend class and speak up! It will help you grown as a writer and let the prof know who you are—which is important in any class, because he's the one who grades your work. Make sure to set off enough time for revision of your stories and poems—you can take a mediocre story and make it something special. Plus, there's a lot of extra credit—do it!
—anonymous

- Don't be afraid to go to office hours. I know some people are scared to go, but don't be. I encourage it because Professor White helps you so much with your writing and because he has great insight.
- Don't be afraid to talk in class. Professor White is an awesome person to talk to and the advice he gives you is great!
- Always follow the syllabus!
- Don't procrastinate—it's not a good idea.
- You will have many memorable times in this class. Professor White is unlike most professors and actually care about his students and their writing and is always available in office hours.
—MP

1. Don't be intimidated by the syllabus. It looks like you're going to be reading and writing every time you turn around—but it's totally manageable.
 2. Don't wait until the last minute to write your drafts—you aren't giving your writing the time it deserves.
 3. Seriously: write about what you want. Say the F-word if you want. BUT—think how you will feel reading aloud to a small group. Reading a story you love to your self is way easier than saying it out loud.
 4. Be nice and up for meeting people. It would be so boring if you sat in here for three hours with no one to talk to during the breaks.
 5. Go see Mr. White!!!! He will only help your papers. He's not scary, he just gives you ideas on what to work on and what's great.
—RB
-

Always talk to Mr. White about whatever you are writing. Not only will it make your papers better but it will also boost your confidence.
—AR

This class may seem overwhelming and I bet a lot of you are considering dropping it. I am so happy I didn't because this class has really taught me more than I expected. My writing has improved immensely and also confidence. Professor White always says "Your life IS exciting." Everyone has something special to say, everyone has something worth writing about." The atmosphere in the class is welcoming. I actually looked forward to going to class. Some tips:

1. Carry around a notebook & write whatever pops into your head.
2. Don't hesitate to take advantage of Prof White's office hours, he is extremely helpful.
3. Write about what you know—if you know it you can write about it—
4. The reading isn't hard, so just do it.

This class can help you in so many ways. By far my favorite class ever!

—JP

When Mr White or someone else is talking, don't say a word, not even a whisper, because Prof White hears everything and will ask you, "What was that?" And then you'll look like an idiot saying, "Nothing."

—SC

To do well in this class, it is important to do the reading. It will give you plenty of examples of how to write the stories you are required to write and will expose you to a variety of styles. Pay close attention to Prof White's ideas and suggestions. Don't wait till the last day to write your paper.

—MP

Read all of the assignments. The more you read and familiarize yourself with different writing styles the easier it will be to develop your own. If you ever have spare time during the day, let your imagination run. It will help feed your stories.

—JA

- Actually show up to every class.
- Actually do the reading; don't just slam it.
- Go to the readings throughout the semester; they can be cool and entertaining
- Do the writing even if you can't think of anything; make stuff up
- Say random stuff out loud, just to see the teacher's response. Don't worry, he won't kill you.

—AS

First of all, I would like to welcome you to this wonderful class. Mr White is an amazing professor. It doesn't matter if you are a good writer or not, you are going to learn a tremendous amount of skills that will help you not only in this class but in your other

writing as well. To succeed in this class, make sure you attend class regularly. You might think it's long at first but it's very entertaining. Mr White will keep you entertained!

—anonymous