The Student Writing Process & AI

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NULab Spring Conference 2023
Interdisciplinary Advanced Writing: Student Perspectives

- Tested out of First Year Writing
- Interested in courses for major, not humanities courses
- A waste of time — won’t be needed in future career
- Have more important classwork to do
Cheating and Writing Reluctance

- Insecurity in writing skills
- Time constraints
- Getting graded on something you’re struggling with
- Irrelevant skill set

The same struggles that lead to cheating can also lead to students disliking writing courses; students may continue to see writing as irrelevant and shy away from other writing courses.
Writing De-Emphasis: Business Administration Degree

Testing out of First Year Writing: “Many students assume that First-Year Writing will be similar to their high school literature or AP English courses. However, it is quite different.”

Writing-Intensive Course: Organizational Behavior

Advanced Writing in the Business Administration Professions: Taken in final year at Northeastern, post co-op
Uses for AI

Brainstorming
Thesis Development
Learning College-Level Writing
Brainstorming with AI

Certainly! Here are some possible ideas for an essay analyzing Moby Dick:

1. The theme of obsession: One of the most prominent themes in Moby Dick is the destructive power of obsession. Write an essay exploring the ways in which Ahab's obsessive pursuit of the white whale leads to his downfall, and the larger commentary on the dangers of single-minded pursuit of a goal.
2. The symbolism of the whale: The white whale is a powerful symbol in the novel, representing both nature and the unknowable mysteries of the universe. Write an essay exploring the various ways in which the whale is used as a symbol throughout the book and what it represents.
3. The language of Moby Dick: Melville's writing style is known for its complexity and richness. Write an essay analyzing the language of Moby Dick, and the ways in which Melville's use of metaphor, symbolism, and imagery contribute to the novel's themes and meaning.
4. The representation of race: Moby Dick has been criticized for its portrayal of non-white characters, particularly the character of Queequeg. Write an essay exploring the representation of race in the novel, and the ways in which Melville grapples with issues of identity and otherness.
5. The structure of the novel: Moby Dick is a sprawling, complex work that blends elements of narrative, philosophy, and poetry. Write an essay exploring the structure of the novel, and the ways in which Melville's experimentation with form contributes to the book's meaning and impact.

Here are some ideas for an essay about The Raven by Edgar Allen Poe:

- The poem's structure and style. The Raven is a short poem, but it is very carefully structured. The poem is divided into 18 stanzas, each of which has 10 lines. The rhyme scheme is AABA CDCD EFED GG. The poem is also written in iambic pentameter, which means that each line has 10 syllables, with each syllable being either unstressed or stressed. This regular rhythm and rhyme scheme create a sense of order and control, which is in contrast to the poem's dark and unsettling subject matter.
- The poem's themes. The Raven is a poem about grief, loss, and the nature of memory. The poem's speaker is mourning the death of his love, Lenore. The raven's appearance only serves to deepen the speaker's grief, as it reminds him of his loss. The poem also explores the nature of memory. The speaker is haunted by memories of Lenore, and the raven seems to be a manifestation of those memories. The raven's constant repetition of the word "Nevermore" only serves to reinforce the speaker's sense of loss and despair.
- The poem's symbolism. The raven is a central symbol in the poem. The raven is often seen as a creature of darkness and mystery. It is also associated with death and the underworld. In the poem, the raven represents the speaker's grief and despair. It is a reminder of his loss and a harbinger of death.
- The poem's historical context. The Raven was published in 1845, a time of great social and political change in the United States. The poem can be seen as a reflection of the anxiety and uncertainty of the time. The poem's dark and unsettling tone can be seen as a response to the social and political turmoil of the time.

Responses tend to be generic and repetitive, but give direction to those unfamiliar with literary analysis.
Benefits of Brainstorming with AI

Direction to create a unique argument, narrow down ideas

“When you ask [ChatGPT] for ideas, it really does take creativity to turn those ideas into actually feasible ideas, because every time I’ve asked it for ideas, the original ones are terrible”

Less time brainstorming

More time writing, editing, and formatting

“I think AI helps with the division of labor when it comes to writing a paper”
Help me clarify this thesis: To the survivors of a plague, such as the original audience of King Lear, this injustice and unproductive closure is what makes this play feel realistic. By examining the role that justice plays throughout King Lear, the importance of the play in understanding a pandemic becomes clear.

This thesis suggests that the original audience of King Lear, who were survivors of a plague, found the play's portrayal of injustice and unproductive closure to be realistic and relatable. By examining the role of justice in King Lear, the thesis argues that the play is important in understanding a pandemic. In other words, the thesis suggests that the play's themes resonate with the experience of surviving a plague and can provide insight into the human condition during times of crisis.
Even when specifically prompted for college-level writing, programs like ChatGPT cannot produce thoughtful, college-level essays on their own.

If students use AI to help them write, they also need the skills to take the generated text and edit it to become higher-level academic writing.
Embracing AI

“My professors have all said not to use AI, but I consistently am like ‘Hey, write something for me’ and I’ll just take the concepts... They can never tell if that idea was in my head to begin with or if I went and read some article or I read what ChatGPT wrote.”