

Open Response Papers:

Open response papers will typically be in response to a cluster of texts that surround an issue. The goal is to respond to this rhetorical situation in a way that places you in the context or debate. While the issue is inevitably argumentative, connecting yourself to that argument or context can be done in many ways. Most of the writing we do this semester will be explicitly argumentative. We will emphasize genres such as the academic article, reflective essay, dialogue/debate, analytical essay, feature article, manifesto, or commentary.

But there are many other genres addressed in the book: speech, brochure, memo, guidelines, personal essay, interview, letter to the editor, online post, proposal, report, cover letter, review, web page. For the open responses you are encouraged to look these up in the genre glossary and experiment with them. The only stipulation is that you write at least in the neighborhood of 350 words and you use one of these genres to situate yourself with the issue.

For example:

1. With respect to copyright, you might write a review of a CD or a blog post that comments on a recent article in the Post or Times about copyright issues.
2. With respect to place, you might write a short personal essay that discusses the importance of the place you grew up or a set of guidelines for preserving a subculture you participate in.
3. With respect to work, you might write a memo to your boss, interview a co-worker or friend, or write a proposal for changing some aspect of your workplace.

These are just some initial possibilities. The open responses will be graded on a 1-5 scale towards participation, but be a little creative coming up with ways to connect yourself to the issues at hand.