

**ESSAY 1: YOUR CONSUMER LIFE**

**Writing Exercise 3**

**Due:** Tues, 9/11

Reading: Fred Davis, "Blue Jeans" (SoL 101-108)

Writing Exercise:

Observe students on the SJSU campus (or large groups of people at some other location) congregating in a public place and note the predominant fashion styles. What are the trends that you observe? What cultural or social significance is being conveyed? Are the trends limited to particular gender, ethnic or racial groups? Takes notes on 3 people in particular.

For this writing exercise, you will write two parts:

- I. Description: Describe 3 fashion styles that you have witnessed. A description provides a snapshot of something—explaining what it looks like at a particular moment. Use the following points to clarify your written description:
  - Consider your perspective on the item you want to describe. From what angle are you observing it? Share this point of view with readers.
  - Record the most distinctive features and details, those that will enable readers to visualize what you are describing. In most types of writing, your goal is to convey an accurate *impression* of what you have seen, be it person, thing, or even idea.
  - Written descriptions depend heavily on modifiers—words that specify shape, size, color, smell, and so on. Modifiers should be chosen very deliberately—and used sparingly.
- II. After you have written your descriptions, **analyze** the fashions. Ask yourself why every detail is arranged in its specific place. For instance, why wear particular colors? What particular footwear was observed? What is the story behind the choice in fashion? Write an explanation (a theorizing) for each of the 3 fashion styles. Use small details from your descriptions to support your explanations. Be creative in making your connections.

Page Length: 600 words (minimum)

Administrative Notes:

- ▶ This assignment needs to be typed, double-spaced with one inch margins.
- ▶ Type your name, the date and Writing Exercise 3, Essay 1 on your written assignment.
- ▶ Type your name and the page number in the upper right corner of every page.
- ▶ Give this exercise an original title (of your creation).
- ▶ Staple the pages together. (DO NOT FOLD OR PAPERCLIP YOUR PAGES.)
- ▶ Proofread everything before you turn it in. There should be no spelling or typographical errors.

**Writing Tips**

- ▶ Balance your descriptions with small and large details.
- ▶ Include enough information for your reader to visualize.
- ▶ Avoid a judgment or critique of styles or people.
- ▶ Your job is to analyze, not hand out fashion police citations.