Reminders for SSW Entries

1. Regarding format: please double space
2. Put your name, the SSW # and the date on each SSW entry
3. Titles of books are underlined (when hand-writing) or italicized when word processing; a general rule: longer literary works are italicized; titles of short stories, poems (the exception is epic length works like *The Odyssey*) songs are put is quotes. Titles of book series and TV series are italicized; individual song titles on an album or episodes in a TV series are put in quotations.
4. In the SSW entries, use first person: I, me, -- these are your ideas/your perspectives. Don’t generalize – so don’t use “we” or “they” or “you” or “us.” We can’t know others’ perspectives – so use first person.
5. On the subject of pronouns – no, there isn’t a good option for 3rd person singular unless you use he/she or himself/herself. When you can, to avoid the problem, make the subject plural. Often you are actually using a plural subject, for example: students, so use “they,” “them.” Try to avoid the singular nouns – as in saying “A student…” – when you use “a” or “the” you are in the setup for a singular pronoun.
6. When writing about literature we use present tense verbs – the point is that “literature lives” – is in the present.
7. Another challenge – misplaced modifiers/dangling participles – when the modifying or descriptive phrase isn’t followed by the noun/subject it’s describing, that phrase is “dangling” or “misplaced.” Some examples, “As a teacher, reading…” -- **As a teacher** describes “you” or a person; Or “Growing up, writing…” **Growing up** is describing a person
8. Unless you know an author personally, use the author’s last name. For example, in talking about the Sue Ellen Bridgers’ foreword, you would say use Bridgers. I do know her personally, and when I do a model book talk on her might refer to her as Sue Ellen.
9. Please avoid overused words or words that generalize. My “list” of words to avoid includes “**society**” (a vague generalizing word), **“interesting,” “relatable**,” (this isn’t a word that should be used in writing -- it’s also overused in oral English);
10. Another word that is problematic (and a cliché) **“modern”** – as in “the modern world” or “today’s modern society” (a MAJOR cliché) – we are in the “contemporary” time; modern or modernism refers to the mid-1900s or mid-20th century. (You probably are well aware of this if you’ve taken ENGL 101 and know about “post-modernism” or are in ENGL 70 or have taken it).
11. English – as the name of a language is always capitalized – as are words “Black” “White” when referencing race or ethnicity
12. Your SSW entries should be a full page of writing – You generally will have more than enough content to discuss and you should use the time allotted to develop your ideas solidly.
13. I do look first for “quality” of ideas – many of the other items I’ve listed above may seem like “just errors” – but all of you are in the field of English and handling the language well and correctly is important. For those of you who are planning on being teachers, you need to be able to model for your students that you know and use English competently. Your “grade” on SSW entries will never be based solely on the more “surface errors” – but when I signal these and when you follow this list, you should be able to avoid these.
14. The 10% of your overall course grade that comes from SSW is determined by your scores on the total number of entries over the entire semester. There will be **9** SSW submissions coming from the following class dates: 8/26, 9/9, 9/16, 9/23, 930, 10/7 OR 10/21, 10/28, 11/18, 12/2 & 12/9 (**one entry from these two dates**)
15. Some citation helps for your literary analysis and book-to-film papers:
16. Use MLA documentation style. That means that when you quote, immediately following what you have quoted you put a parenthesis ( ) that has the number of the page where you located the quote. Here’s an example from *A Girl Named Disaster*,

“She was close to the spirit world, and everyone respected her for it” (3).

The period follows the citation if you are going on with the text. IF you are using the long quote format, though because you have a longer quotation, you will indent your text 10 spaces from each margin; you will not use quotation marks since the indentation is the sign of the quote; and the citation will follow the period. Longer quotations are generally over two lines of text.

1. For the literary analysis papers in this class, you should be “staying with the novel” and not going to outside sources. Immediately following your first quotation, you should put the following:

**(#, this and all other quotations in this paper are taken from *After the First Death* by Robert Cormier)**

1. After you’ve made this full reference, all you need in the parenthesis is a number. You **do not** put p. or pp.