

It's *Not* About You!: The GRAD-itude Project

The very first unit you participated in English 12 was called, “It’s All About You.” You were asked to do a bit of navel-gazing in order to unearth a fabulous personal statement. Now, it is time to turn that gaze outward. It is time to look around you and think of the many people along your path who may the walk toward the podium not necessarily easier, but worthy, and meaningful (If s/he ease the path, bonus!) Nobody got here alone. Each of you had a safety net of people watching you walk that tight rope to graduation. A GRAD-itude Project are a series of assignments that lead up to a tribute speech written to show thanks or respect to ONE of those people who stood by you; who cheered you on; gave you a second chance; or quietly supported you.

The PURPOSE of this type of speech is express gratitude while encouraging a deep sense of admiration and respect for your subject.

Assignment #1—The First Response DUE: April 29-30

Before you consult with any one else. Sit down and draft a response to the question:

- **Who helped you along your path?**

Consider experiences, choices you made, opportunities you seized, AND the people who have influenced you towards those experiences, choices, and opportunities. Conclude this draft with a brief summation of the one-three people of whom you are most grateful.

How long should this be? I haven’t a clue. Some will be short; some will be long—the important thing is that you get it all out.

How much does this count? Papers will be worth 25 pts and graded on the following criteria:

- Thoroughly answers the question, “**Who helped you along your path?**”
- Provides ample concrete evidence to support claims

Assignment #2—The Letters DUE: May 13-14

Now it’s time to offer specific thanks. Write individual letters (brief or long) to your team of mentors:

1. Family member or close family friend (someone who’s watched you grow up)
2. A high school friend (someone who’s seen you in action at school)
3. A non-high school friend or acquaintance (consider neighbors, coaches, employers, co-workers, etc. Someone who knows you from outside the school realm)

Please handwrite your letters in pen to give them a personal touch. Tailor your letters to fit the recipient, but you may want to think about these questions:

1. What specific memory do you have of this person’s support of you?
2. Why is the world a better place because of that person?
3. What is a tangible gift this person gave you? What intangible (lesson, maybe) gift?
4. What is the nicest thing this person has ever done for you?
5. What are/will you be able to do because of this person’s guidance/help?
6. How did this person motivate you?

How much does this count? Each letter is worth 10 pts and graded on the following criteria:

-Proofread/clean, handwritten letter -At least one specific example of how recipient guided you.

Assignment #3--The Invitation DUE May 15-16

Choose one of the three mentors to invite to your final. We will be sending these on May 15-16th, but you may want to check with your mentor ahead of time whether s/he might be able to make it.

Assignment #4: The *Final* Presentation

DUE: Draft due 5/19 and Final

Sign Ups will be Monday, April 28th

Models will be reviewed on May 15-16. Then, it is time to incorporate the previous assignments into a 2-4 minute presentation. During your final, you will deliver a graduation and gratitude speech

How long should this be? 2-4 minutes when presented (that's about 2 typed pages)

How much does this count? Presentations will be worth 5% of your semester grade.

Rubric is below. Follows the basic guidelines for an extemporaneous speech:

1. The introduction and conclusion should be the only memorized parts of your speech.
2. You should deliver your speech in an extemporaneous manner using speaking notes.
3. You may use note cards, no larger than 3 x 5, but you may use both sides of the card. You may not "micro-write" your speech onto card because you should be speaking from your outline.

When is this due?

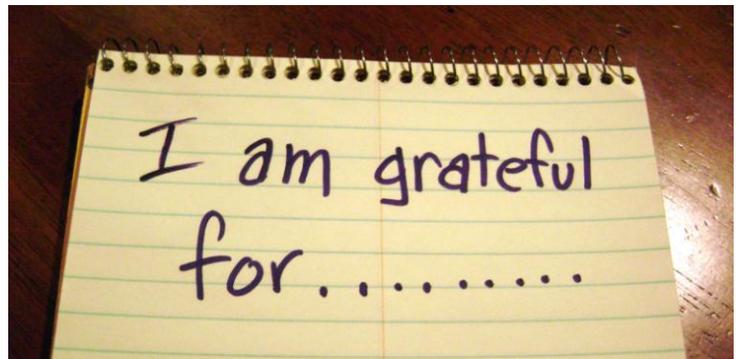
Typed draft of the speech is due Monday, May 19

Speech is due--Period 2: May 22 and 27

Period 4: May 22 and 29

Period 5: May 27

Period 3: May 28



The Structure and Outline of the GRADitude Speech

- **Your Opener** - the opening, ice-breaker or attention grabber. Consider relaying a story about a time when the person supported you.
- **Introduction** - Tell your audience about who the subject of your speech is and why you have chosen them.
- **ROADMAP** – Give the audience a one-sentence overview of the reasons why you are grateful to this person.
- **Body of Speech** - convey information and reasons as to why you are grateful to this person-- Make it clear the difference that the person has made to you.
- **Confirmation & Significance** - Confirm and repeat the key points emphasizing the significance of the person's contribution to your life.
- **Conclusion** - Try to end with a memorable punch line or positive statement as to why the person deserves tribute.

Rhetorical Flourishes

For full credit, infuse at least 3 rhetorical flourishes.

✓ all that you put into your speech

___an **analogy** (expanding a simile...e.g. Like a raging buffalo, Ms. Maxson focuses on demolishing anyone who stands in her way of teaching. Her fierce determination snorts in the face of her fearful students!)

___a string (at least 3) of **rhetorical questions**

___**anaphora**: the repetition of a key word or phrase—at least three times—to create a theme.

___**parallel sentence structure** (e.g. He came. He saw. He ran away.)

___**antithesis** –parallel structure defining something by contrast (e.g. He is not fierce;

he is not brave, but he is really good on the banjo.)

___a conclusion that **“steps down”** — uses 3 parallel and graduated sentences(e.g. I am grateful that Evan makes me laugh nearly every day. I am grateful that Evan is in my class. I am grateful for Evan.)

___infuse some **asides in parentheses**—off the cuff commentary for the audience (e.g. I am grateful that Evan makes me laugh nearly every day. I am grateful that Evan is in my class. [Ok, now YOU need to stop laughing—I'm serious!]. I am grateful for Evan.)

It's Not About You: Grad-itude Speech Performance Rubric

30 pts Met requirements: time (2-4 mins), structure, and “extemp” style with notes

Exceptional

Adequate

Needs Work

10 pts Captures the audience’s attention in the introduction

Exceptional

Adequate

Needs Work

10 pts Demonstrates the strengths and avoids the weaknesses of the model speeches discussed in class.

Exceptional

Adequate

Needs Work

20 pts Infused rhetorical flourishes into the speech

Exceptional

Adequate

Needs Work

20 pts Delivered with Polish: Poise Eye-contact Gesture Voice

Exceptional

Adequate

Needs Work

10 pts Concludes strongly

Exceptional

Adequate

Needs Work

Comments:

Total

/100