

Sense of Place Essay

Samuel Brody defines a sense of place as “a collection of meanings, beliefs, and feelings individuals or groups associate with a particular locality.” According to Dr. Thomas Woods, “people develop a 'sense of place' through experience and knowledge of a particular area. A sense of place emerges through knowledge of the **history, geography and geology** of an area, its **flora and fauna**, the **legends** of a place, and a growing sense of the land and its **history** after living there for a time.” We might add to that the **cultural aspects** that are often integrated within the legends and history, like foods and music, and how they add to, or impact our sense of place.

In this essay, you will begin to explore *sense of place* as it affects your life and experiences, and how it will affect your future choices. For this **1200-1400** word essay, you will bring in research from course readings and/or peer-reviewed literature for evidence to support your thesis.

Prompt

In a **1200–1400** word essay, consider where you personally experience a “sense of place,” a place where at least a few of the elements (history, geography, geology, flora and fauna, and legends) combine to inform your sense of well-being when you are in that place. How has that sense of place informed your life choices? What does the connection to that place mean to you? How does sense of place relate to sustainability?

Essay Content

- Develop a clear claim that demonstrates an understanding of the impact that “sense of place” has had on you.
- Provide specific examples and stories as evidence to support your thesis as you reflect on the topic. Avoid general statements, e.g. “where I grew up has made me the person I am today.” Note: you do not need to answer every question listed in the prompt, but focus on the ones that will best inform your paper.
- Be descriptive in your writing; allow the reader to share your experience.

Essay Format

- Your essay should be **1200 – 1400 words**; include total word count at the end of your paper.
- Use a **minimum of 4 credible sources** (from course texts and/or peer reviewed research). More than the minimum number of sources is acceptable.
- Make sure to cite each source in the body of your essay and include a Works Cited page at the end of your essay, formatted appropriately.
- Use **MLA/APA** style formatting, and if necessary, use it for your citations and Works Cited.
- You must submit your paper electronically on Canvas by the deadline outlined in the syllabus and in Canvas. Your paper will automatically be submitted to www.turnitin.com through Canvas.

Grading Rubric

Your essay will be graded based on the rubric posted on Canvas. It includes the following elements: thesis development and essay organization, critical thinking, providing supporting evidence and meeting course objectives, inclusion of personal connection and sense of place, creativity and originality, and writing mechanics.

Tips to consider as you write...

- **Be sure you have a clear claim** that you can defend with specific examples and supporting evidence from your own experiences and credible sources.
- The articulation of your claim is the most important dimension of the essay because it sets the stage for the assignment and organizes your supporting evidence and ideas. **It is more than a summary**; it is the central idea you are presenting and supporting with evidence; however, it need not always be directly stated, as you might do in a research paper.
- Think of the claim as the spine of your essay. Every paragraph should be designed to support, extend, or illustrate it in some way.
- Sometimes your overriding theme or claim will not be clear until the end of your paper, after you have revised and narrowed your topic.
- Be detailed and descriptive of your sense of place and the personal experiences that help support your thesis.