

Discussion about how to  
improve our writing, based on  
assignment A1

- “Andromache clearly puts her own feelings and desires over the wellbeing of the city. She is acting selfishly by wanting Hector to stay with his family instead of fighting for Troy.”
- Is it a good idea to judge Andromache here? Can a similar idea be phrased in a more detached way?
- See WrAn p44, “The Judgment Reflex”
- And this also relates to the very first rule of “notice and focus” (WrAn p24): NOT “what do you think?” ... BUT “what do you find interesting/strange/revealing”.

- “Throughout history women are considered to be inferior...”
- Is this statement true?
- Even if it is true, can it be restated in a less sweeping, more defensible way?
- WrAn calls this “overgeneralization”. See item 10 on p204, and also the discussion at the bottom of p261.

- ‘Andromache, on the other hand, is characterized slightly differently which points out an irony that occurs while following the masculine warrior code. As opposed to Hecuba, who holds back on her compassion out of the need to help her son do what he must, Andromache is full of love, concern and desperation for Hector and she doesn’t hold back. When she sees Hector she comes “running up to meet him,” she stands “close to him, shedding tears, clinging to his arm,” she does all of this in one last desperate act to persuade her husband to stay within the walls and stay alive (123-124). *Unlike Hecuba, Andromache doesn’t understand the warrior code.*’
- What evidence do we have that Andromache doesn’t understand the warrior code?
- Always try to say exactly what you mean, and provide evidence whenever reasonably possible.

- “It is almost pointless to argue whether the initial decision is just or not, Pericles makes it clear that once the people agree to fight, they should fight until the end.”
- A sentence can only have *one* independent clause, but this one has two independent clauses.
- WrAn calls this a “comma splice”; another similar problem is the “run-on sentence”. See WrAn p427ff.

- Pericles uses language in conjunction with commonly held views and self favouring arguments in an attempt illustrate why, not only the war and his position in power are just, but to reestablish a sense of motivation and fear of defeat into the Athenians. Pericles uses the subtlety of language, as well as these commonly held beliefs to manipulate the general public and place himself on a pedestal. Throughout he constantly mentions the shortcomings of Athens and her people, only to compare it either to the nostalgia of Athenian past or to his own behaviour. This pattern is repeated over the course of this speech first in his description of the shame of loss, then towards the actions of his fellow Athenians. Although when critically analyzed his technique seems harsh, the information is presented softly and in a form reminiscent of a dialogue; speaking from his own perspective and incorporation views of the people.
- This conclusion makes some good points, but it would be even better if it made an argument that looked deeper and drew some surprising or non-obvious conclusions.
- WrAn pushes you to reformulate and dig deeper with several different approaches, including “So What?” (p33), “Paraphrase x 3” (p36), moves 4 and 5 in Ch3 (pp62-66), “Analysis versus Summary” p75.