

## Observation Essay

Earlier in this book we looked at **critical thinking**—the process of asking questions about the material we read and about things we take for granted in everyday life.

In preparation for the writing that follows, you are asked to keep an **Observation Journal**. As a part of your journal writing this week, observe habits, behaviors, and beliefs that you, or people you know, seem to take for granted. Think of things you have always wondered about, or things that seem odd that you never bothered to question before.

Here are some things you may want to pay attention to:

- **Stereotypical remarks about groups of people**
- **Things that people assume to be true without questioning**
- **The way people behave in certain social situations (like on dates)**
- **Crowd mentality**
- **Laws and regulations**
- **Attitudes about attractiveness and desirability**
- **Sensational news**
- **Attitudes about age**
- **Peer pressure and rejection**

After you have kept an observation journal for a full week, recording conversations, observations, and questions, choose one of your observations to expand into an essay.

**Write an essay in which you explain a behavior or attitude that leaves you questioning. Why do you think this behavior or attitude exists? Do you believe it is beneficial for society? What would happen if more people began to question or resist this behavior or attitude?**

Here is a format to guide you if you need more direction:

**Introduction**     Explain the behavior or attitude you have observed.

**Body**             Give multiple examples of this behavior or attitude.  
                          Discuss how it affects you or those you know.  
                          Discuss whether or not it is beneficial for society.

**Conclusion**      If things were to change . . .

**Try to write 2-3 pages typed double-spaced**