CRITICAL READING / EDITING ACTIVITY
Humanities 1, Sections 21/23/25, fall 2009 – Week 2

Instructions: This activity should be completed in one sitting of 90 minutes or less. Keep track of your start and stop times so you can report the total time you spent on this activity; space for that information is provided on the final page.

“Paper #1” is a draft of an essay by an anonymous author. Your assignment is to read the essay and answer a set of editing questions about it. Your aim in answering these questions is to provide the paper’s author with frank but constructive criticism on which to base a revision of the paper.

While you are reading and contemplating the essay, feel free to make notes and/or changes directly on the manuscript itself. However, your marks on the manuscript will not be considered part of your formal response to the author, so concentrate on thoughtful and complete answers to the editing questions.

This assignment is due at the beginning of class on Wednesday, September 9. You will turn in:

- your copy of “Paper #1,”
- your responses to the editing questions,
- and
- a record of the total time (not to exceed 90 minutes!) you spent on this activity.
After thoughtfully reading “Paper #1,” answer the following seven editing questions about it. Finally, in the space provided, report the total time you spent on this activity.

1. Can you see what the writer’s purpose is? Does the paper fulfill that purpose?

2. What is the thesis of the paper? Is it revealed at an appropriate time in the development of the paper? Is it stated clearly and concisely, in a way that accurately conveys the main thrust of the paper?
3. Can you follow the structure of the paper? Does the structure make the paper clear and help it to achieve the writer’s purpose?

4. Does the writer present evidence in support of the thesis, and only the thesis? Is there a good balance between the writer’s own ideas and quotes/summaries of others’ ideas? Is the evidence well integrated into the essay? Are citations used appropriately?
5. In terms of style and mechanics, is the prose easy to read and follow logically? Are terms defined adequately? Are there spelling, punctuation or usage errors? Is there a pattern to these errors?

6. What are at least two things you think are particularly strong in this draft?
7. What are at least two specific suggestions for changes you’d like to see in the next draft?

I spent a total of ____________ minutes on this activity (reading the paper, reflecting, and answering the editing questions).

Name:____________________________________