Reminder

Assignment 4.30.a—Final Draft of Your Creative Nonfiction Essay

Due on Thursday, Dec. 13, at 12 Noon. Email your final draft via Messages.

See Lesson 4.24 for the topics and requirements for this final essay of the semester. This final essay should bring the word count for your polished writing for the class to 5000 or more words, the minimum required for Eng 100.

Lesson 4.30: Punctuation and Style Test

Due on Thursday, Dec. 13, at 12 Noon, at Assignments.

Part A. Edit for Unparallel Phrasing (4 points)

Editing the following four sentences so that the phrasing in them is in parallel structure. (See Lesson 4.29.)

1. At the Olympic Games the spectators cheered their favorites to victory, attended sacrifices to the gods, and they feasted on the meat not burned in offerings.
2. The athletes competed less to achieve great wealth than for gaining honor both for themselves and their cities.
3. Of course, exceptional athletes received financial support from patrons, poems and statues by admiring artists, and they even got lavish living quarters from their sponsoring cities.
4. With the medal counts and flag ceremonies, today's Olympians often seem not so much to be demonstrating individual talent as to prove their countries' superiority.

Part B. Punctuation and Style (18 points)

Listed below are sentences from Gretel Ehrlich's "Solace of Open Spaces," using various punctuation marks. Do the following for each sentence illustrating each of the punctuation marks:

1. Rewrite the sentence without the punctuation mark(s). (You may use a different mark. You may keep or change the words or wording of the original sentence, but be sure to keep the original meaning while following the standard rules of grammar and punctuation. You may end up with more than one sentence.)
2. Explain which version is stylistically more appealing to you — the original or your rewrite? Why?

Note: For samples of how to rewrite sentences without a particular punctuation mark and how to explain why one version of a sentence might be preferrable than another, see my comments on your submissions on punctuation and style in Lessons 4.24, 4.26, 4.27, and 4.28. Also, see the sample response below. To review what each punctuation mark is used for, see our punctuation pdf.

Sample response:
A sentence from Jamaica Kincaid's "Alien Soil," using parentheses:

One family had an indoor kitchen and place for bathing (no indoor toilet, though).

1. The sentence could be revised without the parentheses, using just a comma:

   One family had an indoor kitchen and place for bathing, but no indoor toilet.

2. The parentheses draws attention to the fact that although the family had two amenities (indoor kitchen and bath), the house didn't have what modern communities consider essential for comfort: an indoor toilet. The revision draws less attention to the phrase "no indoor toilet" and so is less effective. A mark that would give the phrase more direct and obvious emphasis would be the dash:

   One family had an indoor kitchen and place for bathing—but no indoor toilet.

I like the parentheses better: they are more subtle, as if the author is trying to understate the irony, without getting into the reader's face, while still making her point: the family might have been considered well-off in a poor Antiguan community, but it would not be considered well-off by American readers.

In her collection of essays, The Solace of Open Spaces, Gretel Ehrlich writes about her experiences living in rural Wyoming. A filmmaker from California, she went there to make a movie and ending up staying there. As she explains in her preface:

   Friends asked when I was going to stop "hiding out" in Wyoming. What appeared to them as a landscape of lunar desolation and intellectual backwardness was luxurious to me. For the first time I was able to take up resident on earth with no alibis, no self-promoting schemes.

The following sentences are from her collection:

Semicolon
1. The sudden changes in my life brought on the usual zany dreams: road blocks were set up where I walked barefoot with a big suitcase; national boundaries changed overnight and I was forced to take a long, arbitrary detour. The detour, of course, became the actual path; the digressions in my writing, the narrative.

Colon
1. Language, so compressed, becomes metaphorical. A rancher ended a relationship with one remark: “You’re a bad check,” meaning bouncing in and out was intolerable, and even coming back would be no good.
Parenthesis
1. Water in such an arid place (the average annual rainfall where I live is less than eight inches) is like blood. It festoons drab land with green veins; a line of cottonwoods following a stream; a strip of alfalfa; and, on ditch banks, wild asparagus growing.

Dash
(\textbf{Note on Typing a Dash}: A dash may produced by typing two hyphens [-] or by typing a dash [—] (option + shift + hyphen). Note that the dash is longer than a hyphen.)
1. Seventy-five years ago, when travel was by buckboard or horseback, cowboys who were temporarily out of work rode the grub line--drifting from ranch to ranch, mending fences or milking cows, and receiving in exchange a bed and meals.

Quotation Marks
1. Friends asked when I was going to stop "hiding out" in Wyoming.
2. As Jim Bridger is reported to have said, "I wasn't lost, I just didn't know where I was for a few weeks."

Italics
1. We Americans are great on fillers, as if what we have, what we are, is not enough. We have a cultural tendency toward denial, but, being affluent, we strangle ourselves with what we can buy. We have only to look at the houses we build to see how we build \textit{against} space, the way we drink \textit{against} pain and loneliness. We fill up space as if it were a pie shell, with things whose opacity further obstructs our ability to see what is already there.

Apostrophe
1. Territorial Wyoming was a boy’s world.

Hyphen (\textbf{Note}: In your rewrite of the following sentence, replace the hyphenated words with a unhyphenated \textit{synonym} or a phrase, then while discussing sentence style, also indicate how close you think the meanings of the replacements are to the original hyphenated words.)
1. Tisdale’s death, the second such cold-blooded murder, kicked off the Johnson County cattle war, which was no simple good-guy-bad-guy-shoot-out but a complicated class struggle between landed gentry and less affluent settlers—a shocking reminder that the West was not an egalitarian sanctuary after all.