**Assignment example from The OWL and Student Feedback:**

*Follow the directions in the OWL's Prewriting section entitled* [*"Time to Write"*](http://owl.excelsior.edu/writing-process/prewriting-strategies/prewriting-strategies-time-to-write/) *. In your blog post, which should be 250-300 words, share your results with me.*

*Here are the directions from "Time to Write":*

***Time to Write***

*If you have never tried out some of these prewriting strategies, it’s a good idea to give them a try, especially if you have writer’s block or feel your current prewriting strategies don’t work well for you. Using your own assignment, spend some time trying out at least two of the prewriting activities described in this area of The Writing Process.*

***What are your results? What information can you use as you progress with your essay? Which prewriting strategy worked best for you?***

*You should put the notes you develop from your prewriting activities in a journal or some place that will be handy for you. You can type or handwrite your prewriting, but even after you finish reviewing your notes initially, keep them around, as you may need to come back to them later if an idea you have from the beginning doesn’t work out.*

*Be sure to share your results with someone, such as a classmate or your professor. Talking about your ideas, especially in this early stage, can really help you develop your ideas in your mind and can help you develop new ideas as well.*

**Student Feedback for Assignment:**

***Student 1 at Week 2***: I feel that my academic process is off to a great start. With being out of school for over 10 years I had a feeling that it would be difficult starting back up. I feel now that I can handle this and have gained an excitement to learn and do my best each day. Taking TRS 105 was the right choice for me. I have a place where I can be open with my current level of knowledge and get the most out of what is needed to progress in Eng 101. Excelsior Owl is a wonderful interactive tool that I for sure will use throughout my entire college experience! Using Blackboard is a great way to have everything at my fingertips and make me stay on top of all material and assignments. These first two weeks I have accomplished a lot and proven to myself that if i can stay ahead and keep everything organized that my time management will be on par. I have great professors and classmates everyone seems nice and respectful to everyone. I know that as the semester progresses it may get challenging at times to juggle all 5 courses that I am taking. I feel that if I continue instilling goals and continue to stay on top of my studies that there will be no problem succeeding this semester. I know that I will be excited each week for this blog entry as I feel it is a great way to express myself and reflect on it.

***Student 1 at Week 4:*** This was a great activity because it makes the mind work. coming up with the topic was the hard part but using the different pre writing techniques was the easy part. I came up with the topic anxiety. Which is a disorder I have been diagnosed with. I started out with free writing. Basically putting my story on paper in almost a timeline. Once I had a good amount of information I mapped out different topics/events I had wrote about. These techniques just make your ideas and main points more clear and you are able to gather more ideas along the way for what your about to write. I believe the ultimate goal here by using multiple pre writing strategies is to come up with an outline for an essay or piece of writing. Brainstorming was another avenue I took because I had brainstormed ideas/examples I could write about before I started my free writing. I feel that when I really challenge my brain to work I can get more of whats in my mind on paper which makes me a better writer at times. I am enjoying the use of the OWL it is a wonderful tool that is engineered to make writing enjoyable. I plan to use most of these pre writing strategies as I prepare for this coming up essay and feel that I will write a great piece in result of using them. I enjoyed doing this.

**End of Semester Reflections**

*Prompt: Describe how your critical thinking has grown and what tools you will take with you.*

**Student 2: End of Semester Reflection (excerpted)**

My skills as a critical thinker have improved as I now see things differently. I think differently and see things from many different perspectives as opposed to being biased. I was more biased than I thought. My reading abilities have improved, as I have added more words to my vocabulary. I also read differently. Now, I am trying to figure out what the author is truly trying to say instead of just reading the text. In other words, I am trying to absorb the meaning woven between the lines. I must say that my writing abilities have improved quite a bit. I am noticing grammar errors that I would not have otherwise. I have also learned new phrases; for example, I never knew there was something called a “Dangling Modifier.” I also learned what a “Dropped Quotation” is. I have also learned that writing is more complex that I had imagined. Periods, commas, semicolons, etc. There is an entire world within the world of words. It is amazing and fascinating

**Student 3: End of Semester Reflection (excerpted)**

I grew by being open minded to new ideas and concepts which were brought from this class. I remember all the quizzes you would make us take together in class like the comma quiz and the summary quiz. This made my critical thinking lens grow by adding more answers on how to do these things like citing or summarizing. You've also taught us on what articles we should use based on the layout of them, the person who wrote it, the website it was on etc. And this made my critical thinking grow since now I look at articles differently for example I now know what are reliable articles and I check the author's background and the website which its on to see if its any good. We all want to use the right articles with good sources so my critical thinking grew by understanding what to look for.

My reading abilities have expanded from the start of this class to now. Basic literary elements which I thought I knew you went over and refurbished them. I now understand there/their/and they're, I understand punctuation more and why they're used where they are.