Your Penultimate Assignment¹

Your assignment: Imagine that you have been asked to return to your high school to teach a seminar on either Roman or American circus related entertainment, or both. You must select two readings and one assignment/activity from the course to share with the high school students. Whether you choose to focus on Roman or American circus or both will depend on the readings you choose. These readings and assignment/activity should reflect what you believe to be the most important lessons learned over the course of your studies in Circus Maximus.

Or, in other words:

1) Select two readings. What have you learned from these readings, and why do you think that others should also read them?

2) What assignment/activity would you share with your future students? Why? (Your response cannot be simply that the activity was fun/awesome, though this may form part of your response).

Due Date/Details: Please email me your response by 11 am on Wednesday, Dec. 4. Your comments will be counted as a daily comment. Be prepared to discuss your responses to these questions in class on Wednesday, Dec. 4.

STEP 1

Review the readings: The best way to do this is to briefly review what we’ve read over the course of the semester. The best place to find these readings is under readings on the course website. There are two strategies for tackling this step. First, identify your two favorite readings. And then consider what you’ve learned and why these readings were your favorites. Alternatively, you could first identify what you think is most important for high school students to learn. Then select readings that are appropriate for these learning goals.

STEP 2

Review the assignments/activities: See the next page for a list of assignments/activities. Generally, there are two reasons for picking an activity/assignment: it was fun or you learned something. Your explanation cannot simply be that it was fun! You must also explain how the activity/assignment helped you understand the material, engage with the material critically…

STEP 3

Have fun: This is your opportunity to reflect on everything you’ve learned this semester. Enjoy it! And know that it will help you prepare for your final paper in this class!

¹ This means that it is the second to last assignment of the semester. Your last assignment will be your final paper. Details about the final assignments can be found under ‘assignments’ on the course website. We will be discussing paper ideas in class on Wednesday, December 4. Your final paper will be due by 11.59 pm on Friday, December 13.
Assignments/Activities: Details of assignments can be found under assignments or announcements on the course website. You may also want to review your class notes/handouts/website.

**Assignment 1:** How can we use Fagan, and Kyle to explain the pairing of violence and entertainment in Ancient Rome? Is there evidence for this phenomenon today?

**Step One:** Come to class with a detailed outline/rough draft. You will be working in pairs to identify and discuss possible arguments and evidence.

**Step Two:** Hand in draft.

**Step Three:** Introduction/Conclusion Activity (see the first announcement posted on the class website for more details).

**Step Four:** Hand in the final draft.

**Assignment 2:** Imagine you are a gladiator, actor, prostitute, fan, opponent, funder in Rome writing a letter home to a family member, who has asked you to describe a day in your life. Be sure to include the following: a visual description of your work place, your fears, complaints, small joys (if there are any), hopes for the future, and the dynamics between you and your trainer, fans, pimp, fellow prostitutes. Be sure to include details!

**Step One:** Assignment Two Prep, library visit/ask a question/locate a peer reviewed journal article and one book

**Step Two:** Trade letters in class. Evaluate a peer’s letter and writing process narrative. Respond to peer's comments by indicating how you will take into consideration the evaluation.

**Step Three:** Submit final draft.

**Filibuster (Debate prep):** How to ask a good question/public speaking.

**Debate (Assignment 3 prep):** Collect evidence (quotes/references) from both primary and secondary sources in either support of or against the games in Ancient Rome. In class you will be assigned a position.

**Assignment 3:** Let’s pretend that there were op-ed sections of newspapers in Ancient Rome. Imagine that you are an educated elite member of Roman society who has a clear understanding of the social structure of Ancient Rome, but whose opinions of the games do not necessarily reflect those of more famous elites who were opponents of the games (although they may, depending on which position you take). Would you support the tradition of arena and circus events, or would you argue that they should be discontinued. Why?

**Other Events/Assignments:**

* Student led discussions/activities
* Gladiator viewing/pizza
* Gladiator extra credit assignment/readings
* PBS ‘Circus: Episode One’ writing prompt
* Rob Mermin, class lecture
* Clowning around photo/writing prompt
* Writing mentor meeting/identifying writing strengths and weaknesses

**General Activities:**

* Slides/lectures (Gladiators/Charioteers/Venues)
* Group Work
* Class Discussions
* Daily Comments