

Assignment: For this assignment, students will pretend that they write an advice column for novice writers.

Part 1: (In Class)

Read and analyze a sample of advice columns that are available online. While these examples may differ in content, what do these advice columns (both the questions and the answers) have in common? Have students consider the style, tone, diction, etc. Basically, look at advice columns as a genre of writing, and as a class, establish the elements of that genre.

Part 2: (In Class)

Have students write a question to an advice column that expresses a problem they are having regarding writing. The letter should begin “Dear Fellow Writer” and should end with some sort of catchy pseudonym (so that the letters are anonymous). Then, take up the questions and redistribute them to the class. Make sure nobody gets the letter they wrote.

Part 3: (At Home)

Students will answer the question they received in class on a discussion board in Blackboard. Encourage students to consider the tone that other advice columnists adopt when answering anonymous questions in their columns, and try to use that same tone in their answers.

Discussion Board Directions:

1. In 150 to 300 words, answer the question that you received in class. Your answer should be written in your own words, and you should cite any references that you consulted to find the answer.
2. Type the question exactly as your classmate has written it, and put the question in italics. Your answer should not be in italics.
3. Feel free to link any videos or helpful websites with further advice to answer the question.
4. Depending on the type of question that you received, your answers may need to be very straightforward, or there may be some room for creativity in your answer. You may also offer more than one suggestion or piece of advice.

Note: This assignment will be graded on how fully and correctly you answer the question, as well as your creativity and style. In addition, your answer will be public, so all of your classmates will be able to read your advice.