English 101
In-class essay

Bring: Paper, pens, Writing with Style, and the Logical Fallacies sheet I handed out.

The questions: Of the six questions below, I will select three, and from those you will choose one to write about.

The essay: Your essay will introduce a clear thesis in response to the question, and will develop the thesis in PIE paragraphs.

1. Which of Trimble’s recommendations for good writing does Mencken follow in “Literature and the Schoolma’m”? Which does he not?
2. What are the characteristics of the elite writing class (above teachers of writing and writing students) that Mencken proposes? Do you think this class of writers really exists?
3. Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of “Literature and the Schoolma’m”: What are the faults of the essay? What are the valid points? Overall, what’s your conclusion about the validity of this essay?
4. In what ways does Mencken persuade his audience?
5. Mencken argues that clarity is very important. How does he define clarity, what does he say about it, and why is it important?
6. Compare Mencken’s “Literature and the Schoolma’m” with Jolene Shirley’s essay at the end of the chapter: After reading both arguments, do you think that writing and thinking can be taught? Why or why not?