

Welcome to your final assignment! For this, we ask that you go back through what you wrote for assignments 1-5. Open each assignment and reread it. As you begin to do this, have a blank Word document open or a piece of paper handy.

As you read, copy or write down your favorite lines. Then step back and take a look at them. Read them out loud to yourself, or say them aloud in your mind, and notice what strikes you about your own collected work: repeated images? Rhymes or line patterns? Do you like the way a monologue builds a character or a dialogue grows from conversation to conflict?

In past assignments, we've asked you to write about a social issue that is important to you, and we've asked you to examine a cultural tradition that has shaped your life. Now we ask you to use your sharpest tools, the skills you see before you in your past assignments, to write a piece that makes a demand of your audience.

This piece can be very direct: a poem or a dramatic monologue that asks your audience to hear you and to respond. For example, you might ask your audience a question, and you might tell them that you want them to stand up and answer you. You might envision your piece telling an audience to stand up and follow you down the street. You might write, in your piece, the answers they say to your question; or you might describe what you imagine it would be like for them to follow you, where you would lead them, what would happen there. Or you might leave a space for their responses, to allow the reader to think about what they would say or do and to imagine what it would be like to insert their response into your writing.

This piece can also work less directly: you could write a dialogue or a poem with multiple voices, in which one speaker convinces another to act, or in which two speakers try to encourage one another to act, or in which two or three or more speakers debate the wisdom and the ethics of saying yes or no or maybe. You could write a poem or a scene that does not literally ask anyone to speak or act: perhaps the urgency and clarity of your writing will simply ask the reader to see and to understand the urgency and clarity of the issue you are writing about.

As you write, look back at your collection of favorite lines from your past assignments. You can re-use those lines, of course. You may find that you want to revise some of them to use in this assignment, and that is fine.

Whether you re-use anything or not, be inspired by yourself. Be inspired by the dedication and care and skill with which you have written about topics that are important to you. Let this final assignment be a celebration of your voice.