

## **ENG 101 Diagnostic Assignment A:**

### **Reading and Writing About Nancy Sommers' "I Stand Here Writing"**

Your instructor has asked you to complete this assignment in order to gain a better understanding of your ability to read and write and ultimately, to succeed in ENG 101. Based on your performance on this assignment, your instructor may require that you register for ENG 199, Writers Studio; that you use the tutoring services available in the Writing Center; or that you complete different or additional assignments.

This assignment has 3 parts. Please do each part to the best of your ability.

#### **1. Reading**

Nancy Sommers, the author of "I Stand Here Writing," directs the writing program at Harvard University. She has done important research on students' writing practices and has published several essays on writing. Her title is taken from an essay by Tillie Olsen, "I Stand Here Ironing," which talks about the tensions between her personal life and her goals as a writer. As you read this essay, consider the relationship between Sommers' family life and her life as a writer, teacher, and scholar.

#### **2. Summarizing**

Write a one-paragraph summary of "I Stand Here Writing." Note that the essay has five main parts; your summary should describe the content of all five parts and show how they relate: what is Sommers' main idea? You may need to read the essay again; feel free to print it out, make notes on it, and refer to it as much as you need to.

#### **3. Writing**

Write a 500-750 word essay in which you compare one or two of your own most significant educational experiences with Sommers' discussion of her education and of teaching writing. What are the most significant points of contact between your experience and the experiences of Sommers? What are the most significant differences or gaps or separations between your experiences and those of Sommers? In your paper, also reflect on what you have learned from examining your experience in relation to Sommers' experiences.