Philosophy for the 21st Century
Fall 2015

Writing Exercise 1

Description of the Assignment

This first writing exercise is a straightforward summary of the argument presented in the essay by Susan James, “Narrative as the means to freedom: Spinoza on the uses of imagination”.

The essay is rather long, so you will have to read it carefully in order to fully articulate her argument.

The first step is to identify her thesis — what is it that she is trying to accomplish, to prove, or to demonstrate?

The next step is to identify the reasons and the evidence she gives to support her thesis.

Then you will need to arrange those reasons into a coherent and smoothly flowing argument.

This will not be easy, but do the best you can. And let me know if you have questions or would like further clarification before beginning your essay.

Requirements for the Essay

You will be evaluated on the form and content of your work. Be sure to pay close attention to details.

Your essay should be approximately 2 pages, double-spaced with one-inch margins, and with page citations where it is appropriate.

Please submit the essay to me by email as a PDF attachment.

If you need additional instructions or have questions, see me in advance.

Your essays are due by 4:00pm, 28 September 2015.

Late work will not be accepted since it would defeat the purpose of the exercise, which is to prepare for class discussion.