

Bryn Mawr College, Emily Balch Seminar
Poverty, Affluence, and American Culture

“Getting Started” Writing Assignment
Required but Not Graded

- **2 double-spaced pages, bring to class Thursday, September 3** for discussion
- Same version, **upload to Moodle before class**
- (You can upload to Moodle right after class if you want – but do **not** revise it – this is ungraded, and I just want to see what your writing looks like)

Assignment Prompt: Choose one statement, saying, idea, or theme from Benjamin Franklin’s “The Way to Wealth.” Explain what you think that saying, idea, or theme is about, and what you think it might tell us about American life or culture.

How to Approach This Assignment:

- Try to focus on one element of the essay. That can be a single sentence, an idea that shows up in different forms in more than one place, or a theme or concept that you think runs throughout the reading.
- Do **not** summarize the entire reading in detail. Summarize only what is necessary for your reader to be able to understand what you are talking about. This will probably include quoting something directly from the reading.
- You can assume your reader has heard of Benjamin Franklin – but do **not** assume your reader has ever read “The Way to Wealth.”
- This does not have to be a formal essay or have a formal thesis statement (although you are free to include one). You can reference your own experience and ideas. But it should still be clear and organized – your goal is to enable your reader to understand what you are trying to say.
- Please include your name, the course name, and the date in the upper-left corner of the first page; and you should number your pages. No citations required.

Main Goals of This Assignment:

- Get used to “thinking through writing”
- Focus on explaining and responding to an author’s ideas