I wrote this short 10 point assignment for an upcoming section of Global Experience (GST110). It is one of three assignments for the course with a similar format. My aim is that students not only learn more about economic activity and climate change in the arctic, but also effectively occupy different perspectives about whether a venture is sustainable in the arctic and compatible with the well-being of indigenous people and their environment. Each student has a partner. The two partners read the same assigned selection from the course anthology. One student defends the author's position while the other student criticizes that position. They then post a response to each other's position paper before class on Tuesday. In class, their work is peer-reviewed by another pair of students who have the same assignment. Students use that peer review to revise and resubmit their position paper and response by midnight that Tuesday for grading. I use a rubric designed for this assignment to grade the work.

The assignment is designed to take students out of their personal perspective on arctic issues and to authentically consider the merits of other perspectives. The students also provide and make use of informed peer-review of their work. Rhetorically, the partners must effectively address each other and their peer-reviewers before the instructor evaluates their writing.

The assignment prepares them for the final project: participation in a classroom meeting of the Arctic Council. Unlike the United Nations (simulated by Model U.N.), the Arctic Council consists of 8 member states (arctic nations), permanent participants (organizations of indigenous peoples of the arctic), and working groups. The permanent participants (e.g., the Aleut International Association) have full consultation rights in connection with the Council’s negotiations and decisions. The Working Groups do the real council work. There are also 12 states with observer (non-voting) status such as India and China. Students' ability to understand circumpolar issues from different points of view is essential for this project.
The Assignment I Distribute to Students
GST 110 – The Global Experience
Position Paper and Response Exercise

Focus and Connection to Course Goals
For this exercise, you and your partner study a selection from Arctic Voices: Resistance at the Tipping Point by Subhankar Banerjee (2012). One of you defends the author's position on the selection's problem or issue. Your partner criticizes the author's position about that current problem in the Arctic. This exercise addresses these course goals for GST110-L1:

1. Understand how rapid and unprecedented changes in the arctic environment such as climate change and oil and natural gas extraction affect the Arctic's indigenous people and natural environment.

2. Evaluate whether specific economic development of the Arctic is compatible with the well-being of its indigenous people and their environment.

Learning Objective
The objective of this exercise is to learn about an author's position on an arctic issue and to think critically about how it is justified and how it is open to criticism. One of you writes a 300 word position paper defending that position, and the other writes a 300 word position paper criticizing that position. You then both write a 300 word essay responding to each other's position papers. Another pair of students has the same assignment.

Process
1. For Tuesday, you and your partner will read an assigned essay in the anthology Arctic Voices: Resistance at the Tipping Point by Subhankar Banerjee (2012). Another pair of students will also be reading and writing about the assigned essay.

2. You and your partner decide who will defend the author's position and who will criticize that position.

3. State whether you're defending or criticizing the author's position.

4. Whether you defend or criticize, clearly state the problem in the arctic which concerns the author and accurately state the author's position on that problem.

5. Defend or criticize the author's position. If you defend the author's position, do not just rehash what the author said. Include reasons or know facts which make the author's position stronger, distinguishing your claims from those of the author.
6. If you criticize the author's position, represent that position fairly and accurately. Write from the point of view of an interested outsider who claims a right to be active in the arctic. State what kind of outsider you are imagining. Some possibilities: someone searching for oil or natural gas, a political leader (specify which country) making territorial claims, a tourist agency, or an environmental group. *The Future History of the Arctic* and *Arctic Offshore Engineering* provide information to support your defense or criticism, but you may use other sources.

7. Post your position paper on our Moodle forum by 12:00 pm noon on Monday.

8. Respond to your partner's position paper on Moodle Forum before midnight on Monday.

9. In class on Tuesday, team up with two other students working on the same selection from the anthology. Peer-review each other's position papers and responses by using the class guidelines for peer-review.

10. Post your revised position paper and response on Moodle Forum by midnight on Tuesday.

**Criteria**

Whether you defend or criticize, your position paper and your response should satisfy these criteria:

1. Your position paper and response adopts the perspective of the author or critic convincingly and states the author's position accurately.

2. Your writing is clear, concise, and well-argued, providing reasons and evidence which are relevant and sufficient to support your conclusion. Both documents should be accurate about the selection and the facts you cite.

3. Your response acknowledges the merits of the position paper to which you respond and effectively addresses its claims.

**Grading**

Your position paper is worth 5 points. Your response is worth 5 points.

**Rubric for Position Paper / Response Assignments**

1. Your writing for both position paper and response is clear, concise, and well-argued. You provide good reasons and factual evidence which support your conclusion.

   4    3    2    1
2. If you defend the author's position, you state it accurately and strengthen the author's position, distinguishing your claims from those of the author. If you criticize the author's position, you represent that position fairly and accurately, from the point of view of an interested outsider who claims a right to be active in the arctic.

3 2 1

3. Your response acknowledges the merits of the position paper to which you respond and effectively addresses each of its claims.

3 2 1

Score _________/ 10 points