

FYSE 1280: Fall 2025
Breaking The Code: The Enigma of Alan Turing

Assignment 2

For Monday, September 15

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M I N D

A QUARTERLY REVIEW

OF

PSYCHOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY

I.—COMPUTING MACHINERY AND
INTELLIGENCE

By A. M. TURING

Reading

Complete a first reading of Alan Turing's seminal paper "Computing Machinery and Intelligence." You can find a link to the paper in the *Additional Reading* section of our website. There is also a copy on pages 441–464 of *The Essential Turing* with a useful introduction by Jack Copeland on pages 433–440. There is some technical material in sections 4 and 5 of Turing's paper which you can skim over on this reading. We will return to the paper again later in the semester.

There will be a Library Workshop on Wednesday, September 17 where you and a partner will search for published responses to Turing's paper in a particular decade.

Writing

Complete and submit your first essay. It should be double-spaced, printed, and hand in at Monday's morning session.

Maggie Wong, our writing tutor, has made a number of excellent suggestions in regard to this paper, based on her past experiences working with students. I've incorporated them in the following points (which continue on the back of this sheet):

- A) Start with a clear thesis statement. Maggie reports that many of the students she has tutored struggled with narrowing down and writing strong thesis statements. She suggests that having concrete examples of effective and ineffective thesis statements can make it easier for students to understand what makes a thesis clear, arguable, and focused.

Here are some AI generated examples of good and poor thesis statements for an assignment asking students to prepare a personal reflection about Middlebury:

Good Personal Reflection Thesis Statements

1. **"My time at Middlebury has taught me that education extends far beyond the classroom, as the relationships I formed with peers and professors shaped my confidence and sense of purpose."**
 Clear, personal, and sets up a reflective essay.
2. **"Arriving at Middlebury, I expected rigorous academics, but I did not anticipate how the outdoor culture of Vermont would transform the way I think about balance in my life."**
 Specific and reflective; points to a story and personal growth.
3. **"Middlebury's language programs challenged me to embrace discomfort, and through that challenge, I discovered resilience and a deeper appreciation for global perspectives."**
 Personal but still analytical; makes a claim about growth.

Poor Personal Reflection Thesis Statements

1. **"Middlebury College is very pretty and I like being here."**
 Too shallow, doesn't show reflection.
2. **"This essay will describe my experience at Middlebury College."**
 Just announces the essay, no insight or argument.
3. **"Middlebury is the best college and I am glad I go here."**
 Generic, doesn't offer depth or reflection.

4.

- **Generated by ChatGPT**

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- B) This assignment is a reflection exercise about your experiences, good or bad, honest or not, with AI. There is no penalty for frank and honest answers. Without your permission for wider distribution, your essay will only be seen by me and our writing tutor. If you used AI to assist you in preparing this essay, in what ways did it help or hinder you?
- C) If you have no direct experience with AI, reflect on how you have seen AI change the world around you. You might consider how AI is introduced and portrayed in the medial and popular culture.