

ENG1100 (Sexton)

Research Assignment

Note: This assignment works in conjunction with the final essay. You will need to pick a topic first.

This assignment is compulsory and is worth 10% of your total grade. It is due on October 27. The goal of this assignment is to investigate and familiarize yourself with the body of existing knowledge on the topic you will write about for your research essay.

Before beginning this assignment, you will need to choose a topic for your research essay (the final essay). You should then develop a tentative thesis so that your research has direction (do this as precisely as possible before beginning research). Research your topic (using the library catalogue and databases) and pick three print-based sources (i.e., scholarly articles or chapters in books). Be sure to choose credible, relevant sources that you have ascertained are among the best available. Internet sources are not acceptable for this assignment. You must then write a research narrative for each of the three sources. You must submit 1-1½ double-spaced pages for each of your three sources (the total page count will therefore be between 3 and 4½ double-spaced pages). Write in complete sentences and coherent paragraphs: note form is not acceptable.

Writing Your Research Narratives

After finding three print-based sources on your topic, read them critically and answer the following questions for each. Answer each question as rigorously as you can. Your purpose here is to put the articles into dialogue with each other and with your own ideas. This is a focused and active way to take notes for your research essay. You do not have to answer these questions one by one, but pay particular attention to the underlined questions. Combine the answers to these questions into a coherent narrative.

- Where does this author seem to fit in the field he or she is writing about here? (e.g., is this author the main authority in the field, one of several respected figures, or someone from a different field commenting on this field?)
- What is the author's main point?
- What kinds of evidence or appeals does the author use to support this point?
- How does the author's article relate to your tentative thesis?
- How does the author's article relate to each of the other articles you've read?
- How has your thinking changed after reading this article?

Presenting the Assignment

At the top of the first page, state your topic and your tentative thesis. Then create a heading for the first source you are writing about using the author's name and the title of the article. Write the narrative itself under the heading. Do the same for the other two narratives. You do not need to start each narrative on a new page. On the last page, present a Works Cited page giving the full bibliographic information for each source. You can use the sample research assignment as a model for the format.