

Reading and Research Essay Anchor Assignment

Once you finish reading/annotating your choice book, you will compose a well-organized essay that relates topics covered in your book to real-world research. You may choose to focus on one specific topic or tackle several in this essay—the structure, content, and purpose of the essay is entirely up to you! We will discuss possible ways of completing this task as we go, but you will ultimately be able to decide how you do it.

Some sample topics:

1. Identify and explain the similarities between what the events or setting of your historical fiction novel and the actual time period in which it takes place. Discuss the effect of this similarity on the reader.
2. Identify real events and/or people who appear in your novel. Research and discuss the accuracy (or artistic license) used by the author of your book. Analyze his/her choices here.
3. Identify how the character(s)—or a real person, if you are reading a memoir/biography—of your book are affected by the experiences they encounter. Research how similar experiences impact real people and compare/contrast to the character/person in your book. (example: how children respond to abuse and trauma—*The Secret Life of Bees*)
4. Identify a unique topic that runs throughout your novel. Focus your research on this particular element of the book to see how accurately the author chooses to portray it. Analyze the effect of these decisions on the reader. (example: mythological creatures in *Percy Jackson*; beekeeping in *The Secret Life of Bees*)
5. Identify subtopics in your nonfiction book and “expand” them to include more information than your book would naturally cover. Research this expanded idea to give you greater context in which to see the information presented in your book. (example: If you’re reading a book about Jim Harbaugh coming to U of M, you may be able to research other coaches who’ve left careers at the professional level to take jobs at colleges/universities.)
6. Consider any other elements of your book that could be researched. Then decide how you might use that research to inform a discussion of your book. If you are feeling ambitious, you may also consider reading two (or more) titles that have something in common.

****Many different topics are acceptable. If you need help to determine whether or not a topic will work for this assignment, please see Mrs. Spaman.****

How to Format Your MLA Paper:

- _____ Name, teacher’s name, course title, and date in the UL corner
- _____ Your last name and page number in the UR corner
- _____ Title centered, just under the date line, **not** in bold or underlined
- _____ All lines double spaced—no additional spaces between any sections
- _____ One-inch margins all the way around the page
- _____ All font is 12 pt. size, Times New Roman or Calibri

Smith 1

Joe Smith
Mrs. Spaman
English 9
1 October 2014

The Title of My Paper

Be sure to indent as you normally would at the start of a new paragraph. Every line of text on the page should be double-spaced, but do not include additional spaces between any part of the text. Use 12 pt. font for all text, including your title. Choose either Times New Roman or Calibri for your font style.

This essay will be 5 paragraphs in length (minimum) and must include:

Introduction

- An opening that is engaging and relevant
- The book title (italicized) and author's name
- A clearly stated thesis statement that introduces the purpose of the essay

Body

- Topic sentences/claims that support the main idea(s) introduced in the thesis
- Textual evidence in the form of paraphrasing, summarizing or direct quotes from your book as well as reliable online sources.
- Explanations and commentary—each quote should be thoroughly introduced and explained
- Parenthetical citations—references in proper MLA format should reflect entries on the works cited page

Conclusion

- The thesis is restated in a different way from the introduction
- The “so what”—how does this claim fit into the bigger picture? What is important about this information to readers today? How does this information allow the reader to understand the book on a deeper level?

Works Cited page

- Page is labeled and set up properly
- Hanging indentations are used
- Citations are in alphabetical order
- Citations correctly reference only credible sources
- All citations are used in the essay
- There are a minimum of 4 citations (one for your book, at least one for a database source, and two for other reliable sources)

Now that you understand the essay's requirements, use the space below to brainstorm possible topics, thesis statements, and organizational ideas.