

ESSAY ONE GUIDELINES

EPIC ENGL 1102

Essay 1: Summary and Response (20%)

Assignment Guidelines

Length: 3 pages minimum (750-1000 words)

Purpose:

The writer will develop his/her information literacy skills by demonstrating the ability to a) fairly introduce an issue or controversy, b) accurately summarize one source text, its position and main claims on the issue or controversy, and its relative authoritativeness, and c) respond intellectually to that author's position with an original argument of his/her own. Specifically, the writer will practice critical reading skills, in-depth summary, presenting a clear and precise argument in the thesis statement, supporting the thesis with effective paragraphs, and incorporating sources with proper citation.

Goals:

- The writer will introduce a specific conversation within an issue or controversy and fairly present both sides.
- The writer will provide a detailed, accurate summary of the main ideas, claims, and overall argument of one source text that takes a position on the issue or controversy. This summary will be in original language, using minimal quotes to highlight key terms or phrases that cannot be summarized or paraphrased in different words.
- The writer will demonstrate satisfactory critical reading skills and understanding of both the larger issue and the source text and its key positions.
- The writer will present a thesis statement that offers a critical, engaged reader's response to one facet of the argument outlined in the summary.
- The writer will develop and sustain a clear, convincing, and logically sound argument in support of the thesis through effective body paragraphs (driven by a clear claim/topic sentence with supporting analysis and discussion of evidence from the text).
- The writer will, ultimately, explain how his/her position connects to the larger issue or controversy presented.
- The writer will present an argument and summary that is entirely original. (No outside or additional research/sources to be used beyond the original summarized text.)
- The writer will demonstrate an understanding of grammatical and stylistic conventions in writing through use of standard grammar, varied syntax, context-appropriate tone, and otherwise readable prose.
- The writer will follow MLA format and reference the primary source through both a works cited page and in-text citations.

Criteria for Success

1. **Introduction:** The introductory paragraph should briefly summarize the specific controversy/issue you selected being fair to both sides. It will also position the source text you selected in relation to the larger controversy and briefly summarize the source text's main argument in a clear and accurate manner. Finally, the introduction will culminate in an argumentative thesis statement that presents your critically informed response.
2. **Thesis Statement:** Your thesis statement should clearly articulate your position on the issue you selected, in direct response to your source text's main argument.
3. **Supporting Argument/Body:** The body of your essay will prove and support your thesis—your position on the issue at large via your response to your source text's claims—using persuasive, logically sound prose. Each of these body paragraph should include 1) a clear mini-claim (argumentative topic sentence) that advances your thesis; 2) evidence that supports your mini-claim (examples from the source text you are discussing and/or relevant counter points); and analysis that shows your reader how the evidence offered supports your point. Keep in mind as you draft that you are building your position in direct response to select, key claims and examples from your source text; thus, that author's points should be threaded throughout your essay. While it is not required, you are welcome to include supporting evidence for your position from other relevant research, should you choose, if you find that helpful in proving your thesis statement.
4. **Conclusion:** Open the conclusion by reminding readers of your position on the selected issue—your thesis statement—in fresh, original language. It should then concisely 1) reflect on how your response adds to or complicates that of your source text; and 2) connect your individual response meaningfully to the larger issue in question. In sum, it should show the reader why this topic is important beyond the scope of your own response.
5. **MLA Format:** The paper should follow current MLA style guidelines. Be sure to include in-text citations for direct quotations and paraphrases from your source as well as a Works Cited page. NOTE: The Purdue OWL website is an excellent resource for MLA guidelines, including formatting in-text citations and your Works Cited page.

No outside research should be conducted or used for this essay. Your research should be conducted using the precured packet of course materials, and your response must be to a source text found therein.