

1101 Formal Essay #2: Reflective Analysis

Topic: Evaluating and reflecting on sources and intent in order to contribute effectively to an analysis of a topic.

Assignment:

Your assignment is to read the assigned articles on the calendar, or read even more articles from the list on the other side of this page (the links are clickable), and to choose one to engage in argument-based discussion. Your goal is not to “win” the argument—it is to contribute something new to it given your evaluation and reflection on the points and accuracy the article is putting forth. It is still argument, but it is arguing a view on a topic.

To accomplish this task, you will need to evaluate the articles points, argument, research and sources, author’s background, the publication of the article, its potential intended audience, and any political, economic, or social leanings (which is not an excuse to discount the articles points).

Hence, you are not here to prove a point—you are here to expand discussion, which is the first step in arguing to solve or understand rather than arguing to win.

SO, you will read the assigned articles, engage them. You will formulate a thesis that adds to the discussion—was there something they missed or overlooked? Does their point have further applications or implications they are not considering? Are they simply wrong about something? If so, engage their words honestly and counter them, do not simply write assertions? Do they offer assertions with no evidence? Is their evidence flawed? If so, offer counter evidence, but acknowledge where they have valid points. Is their tone incorrect (overly sarcastic, flippant, and dismissive of other viewpoints)? Remember, it is not what one says, it is ALSO how one says it, and how one informs oneself with evidence.

The articles all address issues that relate to the current young generation (Millennials, Gen Z, The Plurals, or the Shallows)—you are living this, and if you are not of that generation, you are still experiencing it somehow (via kids, younger siblings, employees, even classmates). Are you contributing to discussion?

1. Read and Engage an assigned article (list is on the back, but be sure to read the articles on the calendar for class discussion—really look into how they construct their argument)
2. Evaluate and formulate a contribution to their discussion—using clear points and a thesis, but one based on a topic that stems from the article you engaged
3. **RESEARCH—you must have at least 2 sources from credible print or library database sources. Once you have met that minimum, you may turn to using internet-based articles as well if you wish. However, you will need to demonstrate that you have evaluated those sources for credibility and research as well.**
4. **Do not dismiss an article based on political party or bias alone.** Calling something “fake news” because you disagree with something is being just as fake. Anyone can play with semantics and manipulate perception. It takes integrity, patience, and informational literacy to argue honestly and fairly in order to understand or solve.

Your paper should:

Be 500-800 words long.

Remember, 3 is the magic number—assertion, evidence, importance.

You will have to research your topic to find evidence that helps you argue your cause. ***Let me be clear—this part of the assignment is non-negotiable: papers without PROPER research or citations will earn a failing grade.*** You have access to the PROPER resources to help you find evidence to make your arguments. You will cite your sources and quotes in MLA citation format. As a result, you must have a works cited page at the end of your paper. **You need at least 2 sources from credible print or library database sources. Simple Google searches or internet web pages will not be accepted (no Wikipedia whatsoever ☹).**

List of Articles:

Neil Gaiman's "Why Defend the Freedom of Icky Speech"

<http://journal.neilgaiman.com/2008/12/why-defend-freedom-of-icky-speech.html>

David Foster Wallace's Kenyon Commencement Speech "This is Water"

<https://web.ics.purdue.edu/~drkelly/DFWKenyonAddress2005.pdf>

Deresiewicz, William. "The Disadvantages of an Elite Education"

<https://theamericanscholar.org/the-disadvantages-of-an-elite-education/#.V8UQiigrLRZ>

Carr, Nicholas. "Is Google Making Us Stupid?" <https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B42GGwVtPSh-MGZ1U0QzWGd2M1k/edit>

Wampole, Christy. "How to Live Without Irony." http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/11/17/how-to-live-without-irony/?_r=0

Wampole, Christy. "How to Live Without Irony (for Real, This Time)."

<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/19/opinion/how-to-live-without-irony-for-real-this-time.html?mcubz=0>

Lukianoff, Greg and Jonathan Haidt. "The Coddling of the American Mind."

<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/09/the-coddling-of-the-americanmind/399356/>

Jason Nazar, "20 Things 20 Year-Olds Don't Get"

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/jasonnazar/2013/07/23/20-things-20-year-olds-dont-get/#7e39dce9726d>

Goodman, Mickey. "Are We Raising a Generation of Helpless Kids?"

https://www.huffingtonpost.com/Mickey-goodman/are-we-raising-a-generati_b_1249706.html

Friedman, Thomas. "Thank You for Being Late--Global Economy and Trade" (45 min video

presentation from C-SPAN) <https://www.c-span.org/video/?419212-5/thomas-friedman-discusses-thank-late>

Worthen, Molly. "Lecture Me. Really." https://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/18/opinion/sunday/lecture-me-really.html?smid=fb-nytimes&smtyp=cur&_r=0