LSC –University Park
Assignment Guide – ENGL 1301/Fall 2013

Explanatory Synthesis Essay

Assignment Summary: The purpose of an explanatory synthesis is to present facts without judgment. The purpose is to inform readers, not to persuade them. This essay uses two sources: (1) one of the articles from your textbook, Writing and Reading across the Curriculum; (2) a peer reviewed or authoritative article that is on the same topic. The essay you will write is a report of the different ideas presented about this same topic, but done without having a bias for one side or the other. You are to find the common topics within the larger topic that the two sources have in common. Peer-reviewed, authoritative articles can be found within research databases located in LSCS Libraries.

This paper is to be a minimum of 750 words (and no more than 900 words), which is approximately three pages, plus a works cited page. This paper is to follow MLA guidelines. Please refer to the assignment document Professor Mignerey has previously provided for full details on your explanatory synthesis essay.

A Word about Keywords

Read thoughtfully the article you selected from the textbook. Good reading will help you produce good writing. Examine the written text for keywords about the topic discussed in the article. You will use these keywords within the research databases to find related material. If the article is about parenting consider other words, synonyms, that might be used and add those synonyms to your keyword listing. What about related phrases, such as, “permissive parenting”?

Library Resources

University Park library is digital. You can request books or resources from other libraries through the catalog. Digital resources are available 24/7 with the library bar code number found on the back of your student ID card. Navigate to the LSCS libraries from LSCS home page to find these resources. EBooks can be downloaded or read online within seconds of your selection. Research databases contain scholarly, authoritative and peer-reviewed articles from magazines, journals, videos, images and more.

You can:
(1) Click here to begin your information search. The Research Databases page that opens organizes the 80+ databases by subject area. Each subject area listed is a hyperlink. Based on the nature of the textbook essays you will be selecting, we suggest you click on the Current Issues link. .....OR.....
(2) For this assignment you can skip these steps and access database resources from the links found on the following section of this guide.
Research Databases

- **Academic Search Complete** – contains full text of articles from journals, magazines and newspapers, plus image collections.
- **Issues & Controversies** - Full-text articles from different points of view on important issues in today's news, plus statistics and images.
- **Opposing Viewpoints** - Full text on controversial social issues from books, statistical reports, and news publications.

Research Tips

- Bring your keywords with you to **Academic Search Complete**. Place those keywords in the search boxes connected by Boolean operators **and, or, not**. You will find that the databases default to **and** if you don’t make another selection. **Ask** your professors and librarians about the usefulness of Boolean operators!!!
- You will be able to browse content in **Issues & Controversies and Opposing Viewpoints**. Note a search box is present for your keywords and is the most efficient way to find content if you have selected keywords or a research topic.
- Read the title of the articles to assess if the article will be helpful to your research. Select the article to read an abstract, find other keywords and assess the content further.
- Once you have selected an article (PDF or HTML)... read it carefully. Note that each article will have a bibliography where you can find additional content. Buried treasure for the researcher!
- Databases have tools to help you cite, email, print, download, etc. Look for these tools. MLA citations can be copied and pasted into your Works Cited page! Check for accuracy.
- **ASK** a librarian for help!

MLA Citations

University Park library (building 12, 8th floor) has printed guides to MLA, APA, and Chicago styles, or you can use the [online MLA guide].

Need Help?

Contact the librarians!
If you can’t come to the library:

- ☎ Call: 281-401-5390

- Email: UPLibrary-ref@lonestar.edu

- CHAT (during regular library hours)