

Introduction to Analytical Literary Reading and Writing:
The Unsung Hero Project:

Introduction to the Project: During your junior year in English, you will be required to produce a literary analysis paper, which is a new requirement for your senior year portfolio. This assignment is designed to introduce you to this type of writing now; to introduce you to its purpose in examining literary issues addressed by assigned, and self-chosen, readings; and as a way to analyze our reading of *An Enemy of the People* this semester.

The following project is one you will work on during the beginning to the end of our *An Enemy of the People* reading unit. You will have 3 weeks to work on the following project, the final product being a research/analytical report paper. There are three parts to this project – a one-paragraph proposal (worth 50 pts, homework grade), a research component (a completed bibliography worth 50 pts), and the final paper with the previous bibliography included (worth 100 pts. test grade).

Part 1 – Topic proposal with a guiding research question,

Due _____ :

Directions: Read the following project requirements and check off each item to ensure you fulfilled this part of the assignment correctly. These are things you must consider in-depth before you begin the research and analytical component of the assignment:

_____ **First, select a person of your choice who you believe is a hero for standing up for what they believed was morally right. The hero that you select must have been an unpopular figure in his/her time, and in some quarter of the population, for the morally correct stance he/she took. i.e. Abraham Lincoln was vilified in the southern US, and in some northern states, for his willingness to abolish slavery at any cost, yet we know today he was morally right for the stance he took.**

_____ **You must decide before writing your paper that you will be able to rationalize in your paper why you believe the hero/heroine you choose was morally correct in their stance, and you must logically demonstrate in your paper why his/her stance made them unpopular with particular groups of people. This is what you are required to write about in your proposal. Your written proposal will:**

- ✓ **Who:** identify the person about whom you are researching and writing.
 - ✓ Briefly summarize **what** this person did.
 - ✓ **When** the events took place.
 - ✓ **Where** the events took place.
 - ✓ **Why** your hero did what he/she did.
 - ✓ **How**, in your opinion, your hero/heroine's actions were moral and
 - ✓ **How** his/her actions made your hero/heroine unpopular.
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_____ **Then, pose a guiding research question worth exploring.** Your assignment give you free reign to research the topic of your choice, but you need to refine the question by answering the following prompts about your research question. Your question needs to explore a specific question that focuses on an interesting and little-discussed aspect of the topic you are exploring. Your question also needs to be debatable; your answer should be arguable.

Your research question: _____

Is the question too broad to be covered in a 2-3 page essay using 3 research sources, or is it appropriately narrow enough? What makes you believe so?

What makes your question challenging, original, and controversial rather than being bland and boring?

In what facts is your question initially grounded? Make sure your question is rooted in facts of which you are already aware and is not based in questions of belief or morality

Part 2 – Research of your guiding research question

Although your final essay will reference three research sources, you are going to find and cite for your annotated bibliography 4 sources. Consider the following for your research:

_____ **Research your hero/heroine using 2 different sources that are not encyclopedias and internet.**

This is not to say you cannot use encyclopedias or the internet – you should to help you get started especially – but they will not count as your four formal sources. *For example, you can begin your initial research on Martin Luther King Jr. by using internet sources, but a formal source for your bibliography could be A Letter from a Birmingham Jail.*

_____ Establish an appropriate search strategy: Briefly detail how you are going to go about researching your topic based on the advice given to you on pages 334-335 of your Conducting Research handout. You do not need a specific plan. Just provide a general plan that addresses the advice offered to you in this section.

_____ Refining keyword searched in databases and search engines (pg. 338): Provide below four (4) potential research terms you may use when conducting research on the EBSCO and Google Scholar databases.

_____ To locate other sources using a variety of online tools: Using the information provided in this section of your Conducting Research handout (pgs. 341-344), provide two (2) other research resources you might consult other than EBSCO and Google Scholar.

Part 3 – The Annotated Bibliography

An annotated bibliography is a list of citations to books, articles, and documents. Each citation is followed by a brief (usually about 150 words) descriptive and evaluative paragraph, the annotation. The purpose of the annotation is to inform the reader of the relevance, accuracy, and quality of the sources cited. Through this process, you are being asked to give very careful consideration to each source. You need to know if the source is a quality one. You need to know how it fits into the overall context of the debate at hand so you can utilize the source effectively and correctly. And, you need to analyze to figure out precisely the position and purpose of the source so again you can utilize it efficiently and correctly.

So, to demonstrate that you actually dedicated quality time in research, you will produce an annotated bibliography documenting four (4) independently researched sources on the topic at hand.

CHOOSING THE CORRECT FORMAT FOR THE CITATIONS

Is MLA for this course.

Writing an Annotation

Your annotation should begin with a complete bibliographic citation using MLA. This is followed by the annotation. In general, the contents of the annotation should answer the questions listed below. They are of two types, general description and critical comment. However, the relevance of particular questions will vary somewhat depending on the topic and other parameters your instructor sets for the bibliography.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION The information required to answer these questions should be found in the item itself with careful reading of some parts you probably usually disregard, such as prefatory remarks, introductions, etc. Be sure, also, to scan the Table of Contents for a special section with information about the authors/contributors of multi-authored works. In the case of periodical articles, it may be necessary to consult an entire issue to answer some questions.

1. What kind of work is it? Book? Chapter? Essay? Popular magazine article? Scholarly journal article? Webpage?
2. Who is/are the author(s)? Consider background, position, qualifications. If there are many, as there might be with a webpage, how would you characterize them as a group?
3. What was the author's stated purpose or motivation in writing the article or book, or in doing the research, or in contributing to the webpage?
4. Who is the intended audience? This includes scholars in a discipline, the general public, workers in an industry, professionals in a field, people with a shared passion/interest or of a certain age group or political persuasion.
5. Who is the publisher or sponsor? This is especially relevant if the information source is related to an organization of some sort. Find out something about them. Find their webpage, mission statement, purpose.

CRITICAL COMMENT Answering these questions will require some critical thinking on your part. Comparing the different sources of information you have found on the same topic usually helps.

1. Can you detect any biases in the arguments or conclusions presented? What are they?
2. Is anything clearly lacking? Do you feel like you have questions about what is or is NOT stated?
3. How effectively is the information presented? Are you left feeling confused? Are there gaps or holes?

4. How does this particular information source compare with or relate to the others you have read on the topic?
5. How useful was this work to you in your research? What role did it play?

The Anatomy of a Solid Annotated Bibliography Entry (a typical periodical entry):

**Last Name, First Name of Author. "Title of Article." Title of Periodical Vol. #,
Issue #**

(Date of Publication): Pg #-Pg #.

First, Briefly Summarize the Source: Some annotations merely summarize the source. What are the main arguments? What is the point of this book or article? What topics are covered? If someone asked what this article/book is about, what would you say? The length of your annotations will determine how detailed your summary is.

Then Critically Assess the Source: After summarizing a source, it may be helpful to evaluate it. Is it a useful source? How does it compare with other sources in your bibliography? Is the information reliable? Is this source biased or objective? What is the goal of this source?

Finally, Reflect on the Source: Once you have summarized and assessed a source, you need to ask how it fits into your research. Was this source helpful to you? How does it help you shape your argument? How can you use this source in your research project? Has it changed how you think about your topic?

EACH ANNOTATION SHOULD BE NO MORE THAN ONE DEVELOPED PARAGRAPH THAT ENCOMPASSES ALL THREE COMPONENTS – Summary, Assessment, & Reflection.

I WILL PROVIDE TO YOU A FULL EXAMPLE OF AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY ONCE WE REACH STAGE 3!