

English 4
Distance Learning Assignments
Week #5 (May 18- May 22)

Teacher: Mrs. Sprecksel

Student Office Hours

Zoom Meeting: Monday-Friday, 2:15 p.m. – 2:45 p.m. Zoom meetings may be scheduled by appointment as needed.

Email and/or phone appointments: Monday-Friday, 2:45 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.

Directions:

- Complete each assignment listed below.
- Assignments are listed by day, but you may work ahead if you choose.
- Assignments should take no more than 30 minutes per day.
- If you are able to participate in the Zoom meetings, please have the work for the assigned day completed prior to our meeting time, that way I can better help you with any questions you may have about the work.
- Assignments are graded and worth 6 lessons each (**30 lessons total**).
- You must earn at least 60% on each assignment in order to receive the lesson credits.
- Write neatly.
- Please staple all work together.

This week we will begin writing an Informative/ Explanatory Essay about an author.

Monday 5/11

Read Informative/ Explanatory Essay Introduction
Complete W.S.

Tuesday 5/12

Read and annotate student model

Wednesday 5/13

Fill in The Blank W.S.

Thursday 5/14

Journal: How difficult/ easy will it be for you to write this essay?

Friday 5/15

Brainstorm

Informative/ Explanatory Essay Writing Introduction

Introduction

Extended Writing Project Prompt and Directions:

Choose one author from this unit whom you'd like to know more about. Conduct a research project and write a formal research paper in which you provide information about the author's life or the time period in which he or she lived, and the literary movement with which he or she is associated. Then explain how the author's text from the unit is representative of the time period and literary movement as a whole.

Your essay should include:

- an introduction with a clear thesis
- body paragraphs with relevant evidence from credible sources and thorough analysis to support your thesis
- a conclusion paragraph that effectively wraps up your essay

Introduction to informative/explanatory writing:

Informative/explanatory writing examines a topic and conveys ideas and information through comparisons, description, analysis, and explanation. One purpose of informative or explanatory writing is to convey accurate information to the reader. In addition, informative writing serves to increase readers' knowledge of a subject, to help readers better understand processes, and to enhance readers' comprehension of a certain concept. **Informative research papers**, one form of informative/explanatory writing, achieve these goals by including and analyzing factual information from credible sources. In other words, research papers use textual evidence, including facts, statistics, examples, and details from reliable sources, to supply information about a topic and to support analysis of complex ideas.

Outside research using a variety of resources is absolutely necessary to a research paper. Research enables writers to not only discover and confirm facts, but also to draw new conclusions about a topic. A strong research paper will use both primary and secondary sources to support the points the writer makes. **Primary sources** are original documents, such as letters, diaries, speeches, or works of fiction. **Secondary sources** examine or offer commentary on primary sources. Secondary sources include textbooks, encyclopedias, and works of criticism. For example, Jane Austen's novel *Pride and Prejudice* is a primary source, and a scholarly article written about the novel is a secondary source. All information taken from primary and secondary sources, including both direct quotations and paraphrases, require accurate and thorough **citations**—that is, all sources should be referenced and identified using specific guidelines, such as the MLA (Modern Language Association) style guide.

However, informational research papers are not just a collection of quotations and paraphrases. Strong informative research papers are based on the writer's own ideas on a topic, which are expressed in a formal thesis statement. The writer then develops his or her thesis, or central idea, with supporting details from his or her research. Writers must analyze the supporting details found in the sources and explain how those details support the thesis. In a research paper, information, ideas, and examples are organized so that each new element builds on what precedes it in order to create a piece that is unified and whole. The writing stays focused on the central idea, using transition words and phrases to help create flow and make clear connections between supporting details. Although informative writing draws a conclusion to support the thesis, the writing is always objective, unbiased, and free of opinion.

Main features of informative research papers include:

- an introduction with a clear thesis statement
- information from credible research sources with formal citations
- relevant facts, supporting details, and quotations used to develop the topic
- analysis of the details to explain how they support the thesis
- a clear and logical organizational structure
- precise language and domain-specific vocabulary
- a formal and objective style
- a concluding statement that supports the thesis and summarizes the topic
- a works cited page

As you continue with this Extended Writing Project, you will receive more instructions and practice to help you craft each of the elements of your own informative research paper. You will also learn more techniques for incorporating research into your paper to develop and support complex ideas.

Informative/ Explanatory Essay W.S.

Directions: Fill in the blanks with the information you read from the introduction.

One purpose of informative research papers is

Informative research papers use

A strong research paper will use both

Primary sources are _____

Secondary sources _____

Strong informative research papers are based on

Informative writing is always _____

List nine features of informative research papers

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

Informative Explanatory Essay Student Model

Directions: Read the student model below. Use the annotation guide to mark the text.

Annotation Guide

1. Highlight at least two sentences or passages that you have questions about. Enter your questions as annotations.
2. Highlight at least two key quotes, examples, or details presented in the student model and explain why you think the writer included them.
3. Highlight any unfamiliar vocabulary. Analyze context clues to determine the meaning of these unfamiliar terms.
4. Highlight the sentence or sentences that you think best express the author's main idea. Annotate to explain why you think this sentence or these sentences express the author's main idea.
5. Highlight the sentence or sentences in final paragraph that you think best summarize what the author has tried to inform or explain about in this research paper. Explain why you think this sentence or these sentences summarize what the author has tried to inform or explain about in this research paper.

The Making of *Pride and Prejudice* : The Life and Times of Jane Austen

Pride and Prejudice is among the best-loved works of British literature. Written not long after the birth of the British novel, Jane Austen's text examines themes relating to marriage, family relationships, class, and self-knowledge. Austen's keen wit and nuanced depictions of human behavior have won the book generations of admirers. But why do readers love the book so much? A look at Austen's biography and a short overview of literary realism provide helpful context for better understanding this novel.

Jane Austen was born in 1775 and grew up in Steventon, a remote village to the west of London. Her father was the minister of the village church. He also owned a small farm and used his home as a boarding school for several boys (Tomalin 19-20). Jane had six brothers and a sister. Austen's mother wrote humorous poetry, and both parents encouraged their children to spend a great deal of time reading and writing (Tomalin 25). Austen was twice sent to boarding schools, for less than a year in each case. The curricula were not rigorous and consisted mainly of spelling, French, needlework, and dancing (Tomalin 42). Women were not allowed to attend universities at the time (Shields 22). Austen, however, proved to be self-sufficient. Most of her education took place at home; her father had a large library (Tomalin 39). Reading novels was an especially popular pastime in Austen's family. The novel was a relatively new literary form in the late 1700s, and the British especially enjoyed romance novels and adventure novels. Although Austen read many romance novels, the novel that made the greatest impression on her was Samuel Richardson's *The History of Sir Charles Grandison*. This seven-volume work focused on the history of a marriage and was full of scandalous behavior and interesting characters (27). No doubt this book inspired her interest in marriage as a literary subject.

Austen likely found inspiration in her family, too. Austen's only sister, Cassandra, was her best friend. Cassandra was three years older and enjoyed art; she drew the only known portrait of Jane. Cassandra and Jane were so close that Cassandra considered Jane "part of myself" (Tomalin 194). The Bennet family in *Pride and Prejudice*, made up of five daughters, perhaps reflects Austen's bond with her own sister.

During her late teens, like other young women of her social class, Austen attended balls and other social events in her community. And like the Bennet girls, her own family's lack of wealth impeded her chances of finding a suitable suitor. When Austen began to spend time with a young man named Tom Lefroy, his family did not approve of the match. The Lefroy family left the area, and Austen never saw Tom again (Shields 54). She would never marry and would instead spend her life writing about the social conditions that affected matrimony.

The literary scene was in a state of transition at this time and influenced the genre and realistic style that Austen would choose to explore her ideas and characters. Nineteenth-century Romanticism stressed emotion over reason and offered up improbable stories as a way to inventively pique the imagination of readers (Reuben). Realism, on the other hand, is the exact opposite. Authors of realism aimed to give readers a realistic, "slice of life" look at the world in which they lived ("The 19th Century"). According to experts, events taking place in nineteenth-century England may have caused this literary shift: "Realism came into being when the romantic view, with its idealized concept of nature, found itself incapable of coming to terms with a new urban reality. Realism portrayed an individual in a changing world confronting personal and communal crises" (Lehan 251). At the turn of the nineteenth century, Great Britain was enjoying an era of prosperity. The onset of the Industrial Revolution saw the weaving industry in Britain growing rapidly, supported by raw materials from India and America. London was one of the world's major centers of trade and industry (Gilbert).

Despite the novel's realism, however, one key element of the real world is missing in *Pride and Prejudice*. During this time England was in the middle of a long war with France, but this conflict does not seem to affect Mrs. Bennet, whose "poor nerves" are rattled only by the idea that her husband will not extend a greeting to their new neighbor (Austen). But that might just be Austen's attempt to keep her novel realistic: "In the days when wars were fought by small professional armies the impact of the fighting on the daily life of people living in small country towns was negligible, and it would have been unrealistic as well as artistically inappropriate for Jane Austen to have expanded her horizon to include discussions of world affairs which were not relevant to the situations she was presenting" (Daiches 745). Instead, Austen focuses on realistic domestic topics that everyone in her audience could relate to: marriage and relationships among family members.

Austen wastes no time in discussing the topic of marriage. In Chapter 1, Mrs. Bennet's focus is on getting her daughters married. She values superficial qualities, such as her daughter Jane's attractiveness and her daughter Lydia's good humor. Mr. Bennet is partial to daughter Lizzy because of her intelligence. This, too, is a marker of realism. Both Mr. and Mrs. Bennet are concerned with their own realities. Pam Morris writes that realism's "emphasis upon the individual apprehension of reality marks a shift from the classical concern with universal truth to a notion of particularity" (77). Yet, Austen's novel presents one tongue-in-cheek "universal truth" in its first line: "It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife" (Austen). This opening remark tells us that, even though the novel is a reflection of realism's focus on the individual, Austen is doing more than just giving readers a realistic depiction of their own world: she is commenting on it as well.

Today, readers can pick up a copy of *Pride and Prejudice* and get a feel for what it was like to live in Jane Austen's England (at least as a member of the upper middle class). We can enjoy the novel for its wit and satire, and we might just see a bit of our own lives in the Bennets' struggles. A large family and life in a small village gave Jane Austen the raw material she needed to write the Bennets' story, and the rise of literary realism helped her turn that story into a masterpiece for all time.

Works Cited

Austen, Jane. "From *Pride and Prejudice* ." StudySync. BookheadEd Learning, LLC, 2015. Web. 14

Nov 2014.

Daiches, David. *A Critical History of English Literature*. New York: Ronald Press, 1960. Print.

Gilbert, Bentley Brinkerhoff. "United Kingdom: History." *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Encyclopædia

Britannica, Inc, 17 Nov. 2014. Web. 14 Nov 2014.

Lehan, Richard. *Realism and Naturalism: The Novel in an Age of Transition*. Madison: U of

Wisconsin P, 2005. Print.

Morris, Pam. *Realism*. London: Routledge, 2003. Print.

Reuben, Paul P. "Chapter 3: Early Nineteenth Century and Romanticism—A Brief Introduction."

PAL: Perspectives in American Literature—A Research and Reference Guide. CSU

Stanislaus, 21 June 2014. Web. 14 Nov 2014.

Informative/ Explanatory Essay Student Model W.S.

Directions: Reread the student model and fill in the blank with the best answer.

1. The central idea is _____

The sentence that most clearly states this main idea is _____

2. The writer says that the novel is still popular because _____

This information is relevant to the main idea of the essay because _____

3. *Pride and Prejudice* is a good example of literary Realism because _____

This supports the thesis statement because _____

4. An idea I have for my own essay is (Refer to the prompt at the top of the student model if you need to) _____

Selections and resources I would use are _____

5. Some literary movements I have learned about include _____

Some characteristics of these movements include _____

Informative/ Explanatory Essay
Journal

Directions: Respond to the prompt below with at least one half page of writing.

How difficult/ easy will it be for you to write this essay? What are some of your concerns? What are some of your strengths as a writer?

Informative/ Explanatory Essay
Brainstorm

Name Class Date

Graphic Organizer

Extended Writing Project: Prewrite

Directions: Beside the web below, write the name of an author and text from the unit that you would like to research. In the smaller circles, write research questions about the author's life, time period, and the literary movement with which he or she is associated. Under each question, write the type of source that you will use to find the answer. In the large center circle, write at least one research question that links the text from the unit to the author's life, time period, and/or literary movement. Under this question, write a quotation from the text that helps you make this connection.

