

AP Language and Composition Research Paper Assignment

The Rationale: Many college courses require you to submit a major research project, a term paper. Therefore, the knowledge of the research process and paper development can be an invaluable tool for success after high school. Furthermore research and citation processes may be addressed on the AP exam. In other words, even though you may be grumbling now, you will thank me for this one day!

The Assignment: You will demonstrate your understanding of the research process by submitting a research paper written in MLA format on a topic of your choice. You will adhere to the MLA style with proper citations and a "Works Cited" page. You will use Easybib to keep track of your sources and to create a works cited page for your paper. There is no requirement for length, but you should include a thorough analysis of at least six (6) sources.

Argument: You are required to choose a topic from the provided list. If you have a proposal for a topic that is not on the list, you should talk to me about it before you begin work. Some students achieve a great deal of success by going in to the assignment without making a decision about which position they will take, and then deciding on their opinion *after* they complete their research.

Supporting Your Ideas with Research: See the attached handout for how to find sources, how to keep track of them, how to share your bibliography with me and create a works cited page.

Organization: There are many ways you could organize your research paper, but below is a suggestion.

1) Introduction

- a) Catch the reader's attention
 - i) A brief anecdote that deals with the big idea of your argument
 - ii) An interesting or controversial idea
 - iii) Relevant background material
 - iv) An analogy or comparison
 - v) A definition or explanation that is important to your argument
- b) Thesis (Should include a concession and counterargument and at least three reasons for your opinion.)
- c) Connection to Universal Idea

2) Body Paragraphs (There may be several body paragraphs. Each one should follow the format below.

- a) Topic Sentence (Concession/counterargument or reason)
- b) At least two quote sandwiches that are based on two different sources.
- c) Quote Sandwich
 - i) Context
 - ii) Evidence (Include citation).
 - iii) Commentary/Analysis

3) Conclusion

- a) Remind reader of important claims
- b) Statement of significance (Answer at least two of the questions below.)
 - i) a suggestion for specific actions that the reader should take in light of the information provided
 - ii) a prediction about what will happen if the audience doesn't listen to you.
 - iii) a statement of why your opinion matters or is important
 - iv) a recommendation or solution to the problem
- c) Connect argument to Universal Idea

Possible Topics

- 1) Terrorism
- 2) Global Warming/Climate Change
- 3) Minimum Wage
- 4) Homelessness
- 5) Gas Prices/Gas Tax
- 6) Flat Tax
- 7) No Child Left Behind/Race to the Top
- 8) Standardized Testing
- 9) Affirmative Action
- 10) Charter Schools
- 11) Hunting Controversies
- 12) Russia/Crimea Conflict
- 13) Internet Privacy
- 14) US Foreign Policy
- 15) Voter ID Laws
- 16) Treatment of Foreign Detainees
- 17) Universal Healthcare in America
- 18) Obesity in America
- 19) Food Crisis/Shortages
- 20) Definition of Genocide
- 21) Factory Farming
- 22) Genetically Modified Foods
- 23) Monsanto Controversy
- 24) Organic Foods
- 25) Animal Rights
- 26) Stem Cell Research
- 27) Advertising and Body Image
- 28) Social Security and Retirement
- 29) Illiteracy
- 30) Modern Slavery
- 31) Government Welfare/Public Aid
- 32) Alternative Fuel Sources
- 33) Video Game Violence
- 34) Organic Food / Food Sources
- 35) Gender Roles and Stereotypes
- 36) Autism
- 37) Veterans Affairs
- 38) Same sex or interracial adoption
- 39) The electoral college
- 40) Term limits for politicians
- 41) Internet censorship
- 42) Campaign finance reform
- 43) Education reform
- 44) Plastic surgery
- 45) The role of the media in society
- 46) Racial profiling
- 47) The Equal Pay Act (Male/female wage gap)
- 48) Breastfeeding in public
- 49) Non-traditional families
- 50) Sexual assault scandals on college campuses
- 51) Paying college athletes

