

American Studies Research Paper

Introduction

Throughout the course of the year, we have looked at a variety of topics that might be of more interest to you than others. Well-conducted research and writing helps us connect to learning topics that interest us personally. This assignment allows you to pursue one of those topics while developing writing skills that will be critical to you in college.

Format

Details:

Length: 8-10 pages

Font: Size 11 or 12, Arial or Times New Roman

Margins: 1-inch

Citation style: MLA format

References: A minimum of (8) sources (4 primary and 4 secondary).

Topics

For the subject of your paper, you are free to choose any topic in one of the following areas:

American Art

American Music

American Literature

American Dance

American Theater

American Cinema

Innovations in Science or Technology

Changes in Politics

Whatever topic you choose, you must clearly connect to American history in your proposal and the final paper.

Graded Components (and due dates for each)

Proposal (Topics): September 5th

Working Bibliography: September 18th

Thesis Statement and Outline: October 2nd

First Draft: October 23rd

Rough Draft: November 6th

Final Paper: December 4th

Proposal

For your proposal, you will produce a 1-2 page MLA formatted explanation of your topic, how it connects to American History, and why it is of scholarly interest. For the practice of writing formal research proposals, this should be in *3rd person*. Your topic must be approved by your teacher(s) before you begin writing. Your proposal **must** contain a working thesis for your research paper, or no points will be awarded.

Working Bibliography

A bibliography refers to all works consulted during research. The Works Cited page included as the final page of your paper should include all works cited (or credited) in your final paper. Your works cited page and final paper should include at least eight sources, **four of which should be primary sources**.

Thesis Statement and Outline

For your thesis statement and outline, you will clearly state your revised thesis as you plan for it to appear in your final paper. This will be followed by a detailed outline of how you intend to construct your paper (see example for clarification). It should be clear from the thesis and outline what your paper is about and how it will develop. The thesis and outline should be in proper MLA format, like all components.

First Draft

The first draft of your paper does not have to be complete, but it should include at least the first 2-3 pages of the overall paper. The more complete and correctly formatted it is, the better feedback your teachers can provide to ensure you are doing your paper correctly. This review will improve the rough draft and final paper and improve your grade.

Rough Draft

Your rough draft should have the basic form of your finished paper. It will be assessed on the clarity of your thesis and how well you have supported it in the body of your paper. Your citations should also be in place, and your intended purpose as the paper's author should be clear.

Final Paper

After you have received your rough draft back from your teacher(s), you will make corrections as necessary to ensure that your final paper is clear, precise, and without errors in grammar and usage.

Addendum 1—Thesis and Outline Format

Thesis: Type your complete thesis out here

Sample Outline

Notice that no correct number of letters or numbers exists; the only determining factor is the number of points you need to make for the required length of your paper; however, if you have a 1, you must have a 2 (An A must have a B, etc).

I. Introduction

- A. Background information connecting the reader to the subject
- B. Thesis statement

II. First Main Point

- A. First subpoint
 - 1. Supporting example or detail—either your insight or a critic’s comment
paraphrased or directly quoted
Never start a sentence with a quotation that you have not introduced.
 - a) First comment on support
 - b) Second comment on support
 - 2. Supporting example or detail (your comment on supporting detail from a critic)
 - a) First comment
 - b) Second comment
- B. Second subpoint
 - 1. Supporting example or detail
 - 2. Supporting example or detail
- C. Third subpoint (same as A, B above)

At this point continue with D, E... if needed

III. Second Main Point

A. First subpoint—Comment on subpoint (only one comment on this detail)

*As in the above example, use a **dash** after a point if it is followed by **only one** detail or comment.*

B. Second sub point

1. Supporting example—only one comment on this example: hence use the dash, not an *a* by itself

2. Supporting example

a) Comment

b) Comment

Continue with the same sequence alternating numerals and letters until you have completed outlining all of your material.

V. Conclusion

Affirm that the thesis has been proven

Addendum 2—Sample Reference/Works Cited Page

Works Cited

- An Inconvenient Truth*. Dir. Davis Guggenheim. Perf. Al Gore, Billy West. Paramount, 2006. DVD.
- "Blueprint Lays Out Clear Path for Climate Action." *Environmental Defense Fund*. Environmental Defense Fund, 8 May 2007. Web. 24 May 2009.
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- Dean, Cornelia. "Executive on a Mission: Saving the Planet." *New York Times*. New York Times, 22 May 2007. Web. 25 May 2009.
- Ebert, Roger. "An Inconvenient Truth." Rev. of *An Inconvenient Truth*, dir. Davis Guggenheim. *rogerebert.com*. Sun-Times News Group, 2 June 2006. Web. 24 May 2009.
- GlobalWarming.org*. Cooler Heads Coalition, 2007. Web. 24 May 2009.
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- Leroux, Marcel. *Global Warming: Myth Or Reality?: The Erring Ways of Climatology*. New York: Springer, 2005. Print.
- Milken, Michael, Gary Becker, Myron Scholes, and Daniel Kahneman. "On Global Warming and Financial Imbalances." *New Perspectives Quarterly* 23.4 (2006): 63. Print.
- Nordhaus, William D. "After Kyoto: Alternative Mechanisms to Control Global Warming." *American Economic Review* 96.2 (2006): 31-34. Print.
- . "Global Warming Economics." *Science* 9 Nov. 2001: 1283-84. *Science Online*. Web. 24 May 2009.