Unit 2 - Reflective Annotated Bibliography

In order to explain **Unit 2**, I have to talk about Units 2 + 3 together first, because you'll use the research you do now in Unit 2 for your project in Unit 3, so you're going to have to use some foresight in the research decisions you make!

In **Unit 3** (the **NEXT** unit) you'll be making a new document in a new genre, one you haven't written in before, about the question you've decided to research in **Unit 2**. For example, in Unit 3, you might write a science article for the readers of *Scientific American,* or a political article for the readers of *Teen Vogue* (It's actually very political these days!). You might create a how-to manual, a manifesto, a short story, a TED Talk, or a comic book. Whatever you write in Unit 3 will be based on the research you do in Unit 2. You don't need to know exactly what you're going to be doing in Unit 3 yet, but it will be useful to have this in the back of your mind.

In Unit 2, (**THIS** unit) you will be writing something called an "annotated bibliography." This is something people write when researching: a list of sources (articles, interviews, etc…) about a specific topic. Generally, for each source, there is a summary of that source as well as other important notes. Annotated bibliographies are very helpful tools for research because they help us keep track of multiple sources and ideas so we can use them later in larger projects. They also help us get a broad understanding of the topic or question we are researching. People use them in all kinds of academic research--but people also use documents like this in almost every field to make sense of their research for their future selves, their professors, their bosses, and the committees and groups they work with.

You will be writing a "*reflective* annotated bibliography." That means, for each of your three sources, you will write entries that are a little bit longer than a person would in a usual annotated bibliography. That's why this is the whole assignment instead of just one step in a research paper. Doing it this way will help you learn more about your topic and sources and more about doing research in general.

In each entry, you'll write about, not just what the writer said, but how they said it, why they said it and what you think about it. I know this sounds a bit confusing right now, but don't worry. I'll explain it as we go!

What you need to do now:

We need to start by finding a question or topic that really makes you curious--something you really want to learn more about. We've done some work looking for these questions in the Guardian article "Schools are Killing Curiosity" and in Baldwin's "A Talk to Teachers." We will work together to narrow this down into a question you can research.

This is not a traditional research essay. It does not begin with a thesis. Real research, as we'll discuss, is all about asking questions that you don't already have the answers to. Doing research to support a position you already have is a persuasive essay, but not the kind of research we do in real life (most of the time). Most of the time, we do research to find out something we don't already know! So you'll start with questions and then follow whatever interesting side roads you discover, informing the class (and yourself) about what you found.

An overview of the process and finished product:

We will spend the next few weeks researching and writing. An annotated bibliography is something you write as you research (though of course you will spruce it up for final submission).

Your reflective annotated bibliography will have the following. Don't worry. We'll go over all these ingredients in detail as we do them:

- **An introduction** in which you introduce your question, why this question intrigues you, and what you expect to find in your research. (At least 300 words.)
- **THREE sources (at least 400 words each),** each with a corresponding bibliography entry which includes:
    - A bibliographic entry in MLA format (see the "RAB Road Map" below for more info).
    - A summary, in your own words, of the source's content–not just what the text means, but what it means to *you!*
    - A rhetorical analysis (an evaluation of the author's credentials, writing style, and purpose, and why you think the author is credible or not). You will also include your *opinion* of what you've read.
    - You will also probably want to include a couple of key quotes here that you might want to use later--these don't count toward your word count!
- Each of these three sources will need to be a **different genre**. ("Genre" is the French word for "type") What this means is you need to look at different types of sources. You

can't have four magazine articles or four YouTube videos. You must, however, have **AT LEAST ONE ACADEMIC, PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLE THAT YOU LOCATE IN THE LIBRARY.** We'll discuss this in class.

- **A conclusion**, in which you summarize what you found, and explain what surprised you and how your thinking on your question deepened or changed. You will also explain why you think what you learned is important, and who you think should hear about it (at least 400 words).
- Just FYI: this whole thing adds up to at least 1900 words. Usually, people write more.

What you'll be graded on:

1. **Content:** Is it readable and informative? Does it teach us about the topic? Do we learn how YOU feel about the topic? Do you provide a substantive rhetorical analysis that considers purpose, audience, author, language, and more? Is it at least 1900 words long?

2. **Research**: Did you dig deep--meaning, did you look for sources that don't just agree with what you thought you would find? Were you open to being surprised and contradicted? Did you look further than the first three hits on Google?

3. **Genre**: Remember that your three sources must each be a different genre! One must be a peer-reviewed article obtained through the library.

4. **Presentation**: Basically, can someone who is not you make sense of this, both visually and intellectually? Are there subheads and other things that would help a reader make sense of your document? Is it organized? Is it done with evident care and clearly shows that you've proofread your work?

6. **Citation**: If you quote something in your Intro or Conclusion that's from one or more of your sources, be sure to cite it. We will go over citation rules in class.

Annotated Bibliography Road Map
This document is important-- it will help you understand all the moving parts. But these are also meant as guidelines to help you understand where to go next. These are not strict rules.

Intro (at least 300 words)

- Introduce your question.
- Explain how you got interested in your question and why you are interested.
- Explain what you expect to find in your research and why you expect to find that (a hypothesis). It's totally okay if you get this wrong! Be open to being surprised.

- Write this in paragraph format (2-3 paragraphs).

Source Entries (<u>at least</u> 400 words each). You need <u>three!</u>

Notes:
- *You will have 3 sources.*
- *You will have a "Source Entry" for each source.*
- *Each source will be a different genre.*
- *At least 400 words each.*
- *Each entry will have all four parts.*

How do I write a source entry?

Part 1: Bibliographic Entry
The first part of your entry will be the "bibliographic entry." This entry gives the publication information, author, date, title and so forth. There are many websites (like easybib.com) that can help you do this. Here is one example:

Fitzgerald, Jill. "Research on Revision in Writing" ***Review of Educational Research.*** **57.4 (Winter 1987): 481-506.**

Part 2: Summary (1-2 substantial paragraphs)

In the second part of your entry, you will write a summary. This will be useful to you later because it will give you the rundown of what you've read (just in case you forgot.) Your summary should capture the most important points the author makes *relating to your research question*, quoting directly if possible. It's also a good time to make note of what data, facts and evidence the author uses to support their claims, and *how* they use this evidence to arrive at their conclusions.

It might be tempting to use ChatGPT here, but don't do it! Even though you're not giving us your strong opinion (yet,) YOU are choosing which parts of the text to focus on. You can show arguments that don't quite fit with the current research, or direct readers to points that relate to your question. Also remember–ChatGPT makes things up!

Part 3: Opinion and Rhetorical Analysis (2-3 paragraphs)

In the third part of your entry, you will respond to the text you've read. This is where *your* voice comes in. Avoid simply agreeing or disagreeing with the author; explain your full reaction. If you could say something to this author, what would you say? Do you think they have a good point, but they take too long to get there? Do you think they sound good, but actually are way

off base? And, most importantly, what, if anything, did you learn from reading? Remember–you **do not** have to agree with the author!!

In this section, quote particular sentences to which you are responding. Make note of questions you still have (this can help direct you to further research).

Also consider rhetorical factors here like the genre of the writing, the author's credentials, and the publication venue. How do you feel the author's writing style, awareness of audience and purpose (reason for writing), and choice of genre affect the meaning and credibility of the document? This is called a "rhetorical analysis" and we'll talk about it more in class.

Part 4: Quotables

This last part doesn't count toward your word count, but it will help you in Unit 3. Here, you will make note of at least one direct quote from the author made that you feel really exemplifies the document's claims or interpretations. Or you might want to choose a sentence that you really agree with (or really DIS-agree with) that you want to refer back to later. You don't need to repeat something you've quoted earlier-- this is just a place to take note of quotations you feel you may want to use later. Put it in quotes--and don't forget the page number (if applicable).

Conclusion (at least 400 words):
- You will summarize what you found in your research.
- You will tell readers what surprised you, or how your understanding of your question deepened or changed. (Spoiler: if the answer is "not at all", you did not do enough research.)
- You will explain why what you learned is important.
- You will explain who you think needs to know about it and why. (Another spoiler: be specific! The answer cannot be "everyone." That is too big of an audience. Narrow it down to who needs to hear about it *first!)*

So, to clarify, your finished product will have:
- Intro
- Source Entry 1
- Source Entry 2
- Source Entry 3
- Conclusion