New York City College of Technology/CUNY

Department of English

Spring 2020

English 1121

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**Unit 2 – Inquiry-Based Research Using a Non-Fictional Text:**

**Rhetorical Situation:**

**Think about the following:** Which issues in the discourse community of either **Alfred Schenker’s Secret War Diary 1941-43** or **Greta Thunberg’s 2019 UN Speech** are being addressed by the authors? Which ones are still issues for society today? How can they be remedied with urgent action? Which segments of society – political, religious, economic, etc., - influence those issues, how, and why? What do they gain? Is there a moral aspect or a moral dilemma to the issues in either text? Explain.

Start by doing some research about:

1. The diarist’s background, the names and places he mentions in the diary, his personality, social circle, culture, religion, interests, audience, issues/problems he discussed, and the historical context of the time (WWII), and any relevance to today.

**OR**

B. The speaker’s background, motivation, goals, audience, identity, any oppositional forces, contexts (economic, nature, ignorance, resistance, disbelief, her youth), historical and/or scientific information, and any relevance to today.

**Assignment:**

**Choose one of the following:**

1. **Write a proposal of 6-8 pages**: A proposal is an action-based document that exists in the academy, in research institutions, in business, in the public sector, and in government. Identify a **problem**, and propose a **solution** to that problem via an argument that uses persuasive, practical, and creative evidence to make a case for the viability of your solution. Use essay format as your basis for writing a proposal (ideas, explanations, and examples). Connect the material in one of the texts to how your proposal to remedy the situation would work today.
2. **Identify how attempting to solve the problem(s) would affect different groups and society as a whole**
3. **Introduction:** State your position clearly (Why you are identifying the issue as a problem and why you want to solve it in a specific way). Identify your audience (Supporters, Opposition, Groups at national, state, local levels, Fate, the Universe, G-d, your peers, etc.). State why your proposal is significant. What is the urgency of addressing this issue in the world right here, right now?
4. **Definition of the Problem:** Explain the rhetorical situation and the specifics. Why has this not been successfully addressed before? Give the historical and current contexts. Why did other solutions fall short? Which discourse communities are involved, and who has the power? Has this issue changed over time at all, and how? Whom have you talked to for your research or what research have you done, and which resources are you using to support your position?
5. **Explanation of the Proposed Solution:** Explain your solution, what it consists of, and why it should work. Your research should show the means by which your inquiry led you to the solution you are proposing. Why does it make sense? Whom would it help? Who is your audience and who needs to be convinced? What is the basis of your argument? (This may involve figuring out who is behind the financial aspects or who must authorize money for such a proposal) Who will benefit? How does your solution improve upon previous efforts to address this problem?
6. **Conclusion:** State why your proposal is significant and valuable in terms of your solution. How will it improve things, on the whole? How will it benefit society, Fate, the Universe, etc.? Will it also address any additional, related future issues?

**OR**

1. **Write a research paper of 6 pages or more**: This is an academic, essay-based analysis of one of the texts in which you state a position using the information in that text clearly to support your argument.
2. **Analyze the overall theme, and sub-themes of the text you choose and make a case for your argument (Whatever that is) using it as evidence.**
3. **Introduction:** State your position/idea/overall theme clearly as it relates to or is rooted in the text you choose. What do you want to argue or prove from a theoretical standpoint? Explain your position briefly.
4. **Use the text:** Using all possible examples and ideas from the text, support your argument in the order in which the “action” of the text appears. Add historical and/or contextual support from additional sources which relate to that text. Give credit to all of your sources each time. Some sources might be:Historical, Psychological, Social, Religious, Similar authors and narratives – similar diaries or speeches for a comparison or contrast, Current examples of the issues that are discussed in that text.
5. **Conclusion:** Reiterate your overall theme/position in larger terms – how does it reflect upon the author/speaker, Fate, society, the future, etc.

**OR**

1. **Write a speech of 6 pages or more:** This is a composition or an essay-based assignment in which you will address an audience directly regarding the issues you find in either text (the diary or the speech).
2. **Define your audience:** Who are you addressing and why? Is your audience friendly or hostile, and why? What do you have to convince them of?
3. **Use the text:** Which evidence from either text will you use to convince your audience in the speech?
4. **Relevance:** What is the relevance of the issues in either text to society, various groups, etc., today?
5. **Other sources:** Will you use quotations from other, similar speeches about either text? How do they fit in with your position?
6. **What is your goal?**

**Guidelines and Paper Format**

The paper follows MLA format and documentation-style sheet, with in-text citations and a Works Cited page. Explain the ideas behind the text using the words from it and what he/she means by them - to write your paper as if your reader is *not* familiar with it. Use secondary sources to shed light on what the author was saying.

**In-Text Citations**:

Short quotes should be referred to in the body of your assignment using parenthetical citations.  Include the quote in your paragraph (note the different ways of citing the author’s last name in the following paragraph).Quotes should lead effectively from your interpretation and be incorporated smoothly into your writing.

**Works Cited Page**

Complete bibliographic information (author, title(s), publication information, should be listed on a separate “Works Cited” page.  This must be organized in alphabetical order by the author’s last name.  This appears *after* the conclusion of your essay.  For example:

Works Cited

Chopin, Kate. “The Story of an Hour,” *Literature for Composition*

Bruce Beiderwell, Jeffrey M. Wheeler, 2nd ed.Boston: Cenage, 2016. Print, pp. 783-785

**Assignment Development:** We will work on putting this together in class, using the handouts (articles) and fill-in sheets, and your research for a rough, hand written draft. Then you will add to it, fix it, and revise it, for a typed First Draft, and then a typed Second Draft.

**Learning Outcomes:**This assignment fulfills the following learning outcomes, as per the English Department:

1. Read and listen critically and analytically in a variety of genres and rhetorical situations: Identify and evaluate exigencies, purposes, claims, supporting evidence, and underlying assumptions in a variety of texts, genres, and media.
2. Adapt to and compose in a variety of genres: Adapt writing conventions in ways that are suitable to different exigencies and purposes in a variety of contexts, including academic, workplace, and civic audiences. When appropriate, repurpose prior work to new genres, audiences, and media by adjusting delivery, design, tone, organization, and language.
3. Use research as a process of inquiry and engagement with multiple perspectives: Learn to focus on a topic and develop research questions that lead to propositions and claims that can be supported with well-reasoned arguments. Persuasively communicate and repurpose research projects across a variety of contexts, purposes, audiences, and media. Demonstrate research skills through attributions and citation gathering, evaluation, and synthesizing both primary and secondary sources. Learn how to use appropriate citation styles depending on disciplinary and situational requirements (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc.)
4. Demonstrate the social and ethical responsibilities and consequences of writing: Recognize that first-year writing includes academic, workplace, and civic contexts, all of which require careful deliberation concerning the ethical and social ramifications concerning fairness, inclusivity, and respect for diversity. Write and revise for academic and broader, public audiences accordingly.

**Due:** The First Draft is due on April 6th. The Second, Revised Draft is due on April 20th.

**Assignment’s Length and Format**: 6 pages, double-spaced, typed, one-inch margins all around, New Times Roman in 12 point font or Calibri in 11 point font. Minimum of 1200 words.