

UNIT TWO: THE CURIOSITY REPORT

Before we talk about what's expected of you in Unit 2, we need to jump ahead a little bit and talk about Unit 3—because Unit 2 will help you prepare for Unit 3.

In Unit THREE you'll be writing a new document in a new genre—a genre you haven't written in before. For example, you might write a declaration, or other manifesto. You might write a speech about something you feel desperately needs to be addressed and changed (or you might make a video essay. You may even work in a totally different genre than we've seen yet this semester.)

You don't need to know what you're going to do in Unit 3 yet, but in Unit 2, you'll be doing two things that you'll need for Unit 3. These are:

1. Researching a question that you are truly curious about. You will use some of your research from Unit 2 when you write Unit 3.
2. Researching a variety of different genres. You will write in one of the genres you've studied in Unit 2 when you write Unit 3.

What you will need now, though, is a question that you **REALLY WANT** to investigate. This needs to be something you are truly curious about—something that came up as we discussed our “What, in 2019, is the Fourth of July?” readings. This doesn't have to be a question about American politics or slavery or reparations or the Declaration of Independence (though it certainly can be.) The **REQUIREMENT** is that you care. Go through your OpenLab and look through all the reader response exercises we did (KWL+ responses and difficulty papers.) Look at what you wrote about when I asked what issues you would put your life on the line for. We'll work together to come up with good questions.

So what **IS** a “curiosity report?” Basically, it's an investigation and report of findings (**NOT** a research paper) into your question. You are going to gather information from **FOUR** sources, evaluate that information and those sources, and report back on what you've found. One of these sources must be a legal document. Prof. Coughlin will help you determine what counts as a “legal” source, and how to find a legal source that relates to your question.

I know it sounds strange, but at this point, I am not looking for a thesis statement! I am looking for you to investigate, analyze, and report back on what you've found. You **MAY** come up with an answer to your question. You may also find that you have a lot more investigating to do.



Think of it this way: imagine you're working on your question with a team. You've been tasked with doing research and you need to bring your team back a formal report of what you've found in each of the documents. Your research needs to relate to your question (although if you find something off-topic that's wildly fascinating to you, you should mention that too.) I absolutely do not want a book report that sums up each article you read. Who cares? I can read those articles myself! What matters is how the documents relate to the question YOU are dying to answer. I can't stress this last part enough.

The analysis of each document should be at least 300 words, and much of that should be, not just an analysis of the content, but a rhetorical analysis, which we've been going over during this unit. You'll need to write it up in a way that would be interesting to your (imaginary) team members and in a way that would best reach them. It will be helpful for them to know, not only what the article says, but what discourse community it is trying to reach, what era it is from, what the historical context was, and so on.

The entire document, including analysis of the four sources and intro and conclusion, should be at least 1800 words. It will probably be more.

Keep in mind that while this is not a traditional essay, it is a formal assignment. This should look good! I want you to format this as you would a report to a team at a job. Add images, if appropriate. Cite sources. Proofread. Also—make sure your document has introduction and conclusion sections! We'll talk more in class about what those might contain. These will be the last part you write. You will begin by writing the analyses of each of your documents.

I know this might seem confusing, but it will make more sense as we go forward. Here are the steps:

1. Develop a question you are curious about. This should be something you actually want to research. Remember, you will not only be researching it in Unit Two, but you will be writing about some aspect of what you find (and in one of the genres of the documents you choose) in Unit Three!
2. Get the question approved by me. *This is required.* If you change your question, the new question must be approved. This is for your sake, not mine. I can help you find a question that you can research for a while. QUESTION DUE: OCTOBER 24th, You cannot change your question past OCTOBER 29th
3. Research begins! We will go to the library, and look for other sources. You will find many sources—but you will narrow it down to the four most interesting that you want to work with. (Remember that one must be a legal source!) These MUST be from three different genres. No exceptions.
4. Read and annotate these sources with your question in mind. Do a SOAPSTONE worksheet for each source. Write some notes: what did you learn from the article?
5. Now it's time to write your report. I think the easiest move might be to write the report on each source, and then write the intro and conclusion. Make sure you leave yourself some time to format this so it looks good! Make sure you leave yourself some time to proofread—you want this to sound interesting and readable.



WHAT WILL I GET GRADED ON?

1. **Content.** Is your document readable and informative? Does it teach us about what you've learned, as it relates to your initial question? Does it teach us, not only about the content of the sources you've chosen, but also the rhetorical situation surrounding those sources? At least 1500 words.

2. **Research .** Did you do good research here? One of the main goals of this assignment is to help you learn something new about your topic—and to help you learn to find information about whatever topics you want to investigate after this class is over. If your three documents are the first three google hits, that's not digging deep at all!

3. **Genre.** It's a requirement of this assignment that you find sources that are three different genres. You can analyze a video or television show or comic book for one of your sources if you like!

4. **Presentation.** Make sure it looks good, that you've proofread and that you cite your sources. **NO SLOPPY WORK!**

5. **Language.** You might decide the "team" you're writing for is a group of teens in Brooklyn and you want to write about your documents in Brooklyn slang. That is FINE with me. No matter what language you choose, it needs to be consistent and it needs to be the right language to reach your audience. You should be able to explain to me why you've chosen the language you have (EVEN IF it's "English paper English.")

6. **Citation .** Cite your sources!

