

- Introduction to Literature Research Paper Requirement

The research paper for this course requires you to investigate an aspect of the life or works of an author of literary merit. You must choose an author whose work is contained in the text The Seagull Reader: Literature (the text includes short stories, poetry, or drama). Be sure to narrow your topic adequately to address your topic appropriately. For example, a paper seeking to discuss the entire life or works of an author is too broad. However, addressing a specific period in the life of an author would likely be more realistic, or addressing a specific work by an author would be acceptable. See the examples below:

F. Scott Fitzgerald – the influence of the mid-west in Fitzgerald's fiction

F. Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald – their life in Paris

Ernest Hemingway – the role of the Spanish Civil War in Hemingway's life

The Stories of Flannery O'Connor – theories of the grotesque in her writing

Flannery O'Connor – how O'Connor represents Southern Gothic fiction in two of her stories

James Baldwin – the influence of Baldwin's non-fiction essays on the civil rights movement

Kate Chopin – the critical reviews of The Awakening following its publication

Edgar Allen Poe – the role of the newspaper in the publication of Poe's fiction

The research paper differs significantly from prior assignments of analyzing short stories. In research papers, you are seeking to learn from the research conducted by experts; your opinions are not to be included. Focus on what the critics have documented about your topic.

Format Guidelines

Length: 3.5 to 5 pages, exclusive of cover and citation pages

Use plain white, 11.5 by 8 inch sized paper; Use 12 point font size, Times New Roman

For guidance on citation format, go to Literacy Education On-line (LEO) – <http://leo.stcloudstate.edu>

Use 3-4 varied sources of information, including books, literary journals, websites, etc.

Cover page: center the title in the middle of the page; include your name, the course title, and the date in the lower right hand corner of the page.

RESEARCH PAPER CHECKLIST

1. The cover page identifies the title of the paper and the title is centered in the middle of the page in 12 point font. The name of the student, the class name and number are identified in the lower right-hand corner.
2. The paper's title reflects a unique perspective of the student toward the topic. Appropriate rules of capitalization are used for the title.
3. If poetry is the topic of the paper, the two poems selected/analyzed are included after the title page. (This does NOT count toward the total number of pages required.)
4. The introduction is fully developed, identifying the topic of the paper, the authors and the specifics works by the writer that will be addressed. The thesis is clearly stated.
5. The body of the paper is divided into clear paragraphs, each of which builds on the paper's thesis. There are effective transitional words or sentences to bring the reader from one paragraph to the next.
6. The conclusion (last paragraph) repeats the thesis, summarizing some of the points provided in the paper that prove the thesis.
7. Quotes from sources are used throughout the paper. Sources include a) the literary work or works that are the subject of the paper, OR b) critical analyses from literary critics about that author's work. Appropriate citations are used in the paper. Quotes are correctly formatted.
8. Attention is paid to correct grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, and word usage.
9. A citations page at the end offers detailed information on the sources quoted..
10. The paper is from 4 to 6 pages in length (at least) NOT including the cover page and the citations page. The paper is formatted on 8 by 11.5 plain white paper with 12 point font, and double spaced.
11. Use the following website if you have any questions about the items listed above:
<http://leostcloudstate.edu> (Literacy Education On-line)

have a cover page with the title and name on the left hand side when writing stand at the middle top and the middle

Library/Computer Lab Resources

1. Identify ONE book that you reviewed for potential contribution to your research project. Include title, author, and publication date.

Title: _____

Author: _____

Publication Date: _____

What were you hoping to find in this source?

Was it useful – Why or why not?

2. Identify TWO on-line resources that you reviewed for potential contribution to your research project. Identify the web-page.

Website #1

Website #2

What were you hoping to find in these sources?

Was it useful – Why or why not?

3. Identify TWO periodical sources that you reviewed for potential contribution to your research project. Identify the name of the periodical, the article you investigated, and the publication date of the periodical.

Periodical #1:

Title:

Article:

Publication Date:

ONLINE WRITING RESOURCES

The following resources provide sound guidance for developing your writing and researching literary topics:

1. A Guide for Writing Research Papers Based on Modern Language Association (MLA) Documentation – <http://owl.english.purdue.edu>

2. Literacy Education Online (LEO) – <http://leo.stcloudstate.edu>

St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, Minnesota

Topics include the following:

The Research Paper

Grammar

Punctuation

Modes of Essay Development