

ENGLISH 1109:11

Research Essay: Due November 23, 2017

Length: Approximately 1,500 words

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- ① Three of the selections we are currently reading from the Dawkins collection of modern science essays have to do with the "sea around us" and the diversity of life. In keeping with this theme, write an essay in which you explore the controversy surrounding Rachael Carson's campaign against the use of pesticides, in particular DDT. Her landmark book *Silent Spring* (1962) awakened America to the dangers of pesticides and ignited the environmental movement. As a result of her work, DDT was banned throughout the world. Because of the ban, industry stood to lose billions, but Rachael Carson insisted on the human and environmental price of the use of toxins.
- ② The controversy over Carson's work continues. In your research identify key issues and argue whether or not DDT should remain banned or re-introduced as a protection for crops. Critically analyse the credibility and validity of your sources. Select and organize relevant information to support your point of view. Always distinguish between opinion and fact.
- ③ Here is a more general topic if you prefer not to write about the Carson controversy: Carson's dedication to revealing the risks of pesticides and fertilizers was inspired by her philosophy that nothing exists in and for itself. Each creature depends on another in the web of life. Taking this philosophy into account, write an essay in which you explore the implications of Colony Collapse Disorder or genetic modification.
- ④ ^{shaped the paper} Identify the angle you want to pursue. Once you have figured out your position, you can turn it into a thesis that will guide the development of the essay. Your task is to support your thesis and articulate a conclusion by critically evaluating the evidence you have gathered.

Do not hide the main focus until later in the paper and resist the temptation to generalize. Always cite your sources and **steer away from general websites** such as Wikipedia and ask.com. Also **avoid weasel words** such as *it is thought that*, *many scientists say*, *people think that*, *people believe this*, *obviously*, *on a regular basis*, *we as humans*, *to begin*, *in conclusion*.

In the conclusion stay focused on the thesis set up in the introduction. You may want to summarize the implications and limitations of the evidence and perhaps give a future perspective on the work. Whatever emphases you choose **remember to base your discussion on evidence not opinion, belief or wishful thinking**. Critical evaluation of the evidence gives your work authority.

In the evaluation of the paper I shall take the following into account:

Topic selection

Thesis statement

Topic research and development

Focus and clarity

Effective organization

Grammar and mechanics

Please follow the MLA method of documenting research papers. The guidelines were distributed in class and are available on the CBU website through the Writing Centre. Please consult at least three scholarly sources.