

## The American Civil War Summer Enrichment Program

# Research Paper

The goals of this assignment are to help you:

- become more knowledgeable about finding and using varied research sources
- further develop your critical thinking skills and back up your points with evidence.
- become more adept at synthesizing information and developing informed views.
- discipline yourself to follow a scholarly research format to document in-text sources and a reference page (bibliography).
- compose a well organized, clear, concise, research paper to expand your knowledge on your subject matter.

### **YOUR RESEARCH PAPER SHOULD BE YOUR OWN WORK!**

**Topic:** Your research paper begins with a question on any issue about the American Civil War. After you brainstorm about possible topics and then select one, narrow your topic down to a manageable issue. Investigate possible approaches to your chosen topic and map out your strategy. Your final product will be judged on how well you succeed in producing a well thought out, clear paper which shows you can interpret and intelligently discuss the issue and how well you can support your findings with evidence.

**Approach:** Find 7 to 10 sources - including professional journal articles and professional publications, Internet sources, and books. Your paper must include evidence and knowledge on a particular topic, narrow it down to a particular focus and show that you can synthesize the information and make some intelligent, insightful observations about the subject. What I don't want is just a regurgitation of information strung together. **YOU MUST GET YOUR 7-10 SOURCES APPROVED BY YOUR INSTRUCTORS!**

Your paper should contain these parts:

**Introduction:** Your introduction should set up your topic for your audience. Briefly summarize your findings on the subject. Give background information about the Civil War and the significance of your topic in relation to the broader event of the American Civil War. Your introduction should be one paragraph long. Your thesis should come at the end of your introductory material. State your thesis in one sentence. Your thesis should be a brief statement, in your own words, that points out the major claim that you are making about your topic. This claim will be supported with evidence throughout the rest of your paper.

**Body of Paper:** Use subheadings, where appropriate, to separate different aspects of your paper that support your main claim (your thesis). The body of your paper should provide supporting evidence to support your thesis, in a logical, fully developed manner. For each new topic which supports your overall thesis, provide a topic sentence or two which is, in effect, the thesis for that sub-topic. Your supporting sub-topics should address these issues: How is this

knowledge significant? What is the major impact of your topic? How did they affect people? What are the benefits? What disadvantages did your topic contribute to the Civil War?

A writer of a research paper should synthesize the information gained from sources and weave them into a well ordered conversation, using the sources as evidence to support key points. A paper which is just a string of quotes shows that the author made no attempt to come to grips with the subject and is relying on the sources to speak for her or him.

**Conclusion:** Your conclusion should make some "wrap up" statements about what you learned about your chosen topic and the possible impact of your findings on people and perhaps society in general. Next, be sure to include a parallel between your chosen topic and a modern day example or similarity in the world today. You can end your research paper with these unanswered questions as you are trying to analyze the legacy and significance of your chosen topic in society today. I am looking for a thoughtful look at your chosen topic, sharing of the major significance of this issue, and any unanswered questions, if any, you are still dealing with.

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**Audience:** Your paper should be understood by a broader audience than scholars in your field - for example, your classmates. You will have to explain your topic well and not expect your audience to understand concepts that you had to learn through this class or your own research. You must provide background information and context to make your points clear and easy to understand. Furthermore, you must use academic vocabulary and a scholarly tone. Don't write like you're texting or talking to a buddy.

**Length -** Individual research papers should be 2-3 pages long and group research papers should be 5 to 7 double spaced pages of text (not including graphics, cover page, or reference page).

**Margins -** 1 inch top, bottom, left, right

**Font-** Times New Roman 12 pt font

**Cover Page -** in MLA style (see website)

**Pagination:** Put page numbers in top right hand corner of each page, including the cover page. Also include your last name : Gonzalez 2

**Sources:** Use a minimum of 7 sources. Cite your evidence in your paper by using the MLA format. Please check the MLA website with OWL Purdue (posted on the class website). Your paper must be 40% evidence and 60% your own analysis. You cannot simply have evidence after evidence. Your paper is not centered on evidence only. Your paper is a conversation, a discussion, or a scholarly speech about your topic that happens to have evidence to back it up.

Below are some examples of how to cite your evidence in the text, using MLA formatting.

**Direct Quote with the author's name in the sentence:** Wordsworth stated that Romantic poetry was marked by a "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" (263).

**Direct quote without the author's name in the sentence:** Romantic poetry is characterized by the "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" (Wordsworth 263).

Paraphrasing Wordsworth extensively explored the role of emotion in the creative process (263).

Your bibliography or works cited page must also be in the MLA Format. You will see an example of a Works Cited page on the following page.

## Works Cited

- "Blueprint Lays Out Clear Path for Climate Action." *Environmental Defense Fund*. Environmental Defense Fund, 8 May 2007. Web. 24 May 2009.
- Clinton, Bill. Interview by Andrew C. Revkin. "Clinton on Climate Change." *New York Times*. New York Times, May 2007. Web. 25 May 2009.
- Dean, Cornelia. "Executive on a Mission: Saving the Planet." *New York Times*. New York Times, 22 May 2007. Web. 25 May 2009.
- Ebert, Roger. "An Inconvenient Truth." Rev. of *An Inconvenient Truth*, dir. Davis Guggenheim. *Rogerebert.com*. Sun-Times News Group, 2 June 2006. Web. 24 May 2009.
- GlobalWarming.org*. Cooler Heads Coalition, 2007. Web. 24 May 2009.
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- Leroux, Marcel. *Global Warming: Myth Or Reality?: The Erring Ways of Climatology*. New York: Springer, 2005. Print.
- Milken, Michael, Gary Becker, Myron Scholes, and Daniel Kahneman. "On Global Warming and Financial Imbalances." *New Perspectives Quarterly* 23.4 (2006): 63. Print.
- Nordhaus, William D. "After Kyoto: Alternative Mechanisms to Control Global Warming." *American Economic Review* 96.2 (2006): 31-34. Print.
- . "Global Warming Economics." *Science* 9 Nov. 2001: 1283-84. *Science Online*. Web. 24 May 2009.

Shulte, Bret. "Putting a Price on Pollution." *Usnews.com. US News & World Rept.*, 6 May 2007.

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Uzawa, Hirofumi. *Economic Theory and Global Warming*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003.

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