

Literary Research Essay Guidelines

For this final essay you should focus your analysis on ONE of the novels: *The Ballad of Black Tom*, *Annihilation*, or *Station Eleven*. You are expected to provide an arguable thesis supported by textual analysis and historical and/or theoretical research, utilizing at least 5-7 secondary sources from peer-reviewed, scholarly journals or books. Your analysis of the text should clearly engage with a significant literary-critical trend or interpretative framework (such as gender, African American, or ethnic studies, a post-colonial or ecocritical approach) and include consideration of any relevant socio-historical, cultural, or political contexts. I also expect you to take a clear organizational writing approach. The essay must be a **minimum of 1,800 words** (approx. 6-7 pages) and demonstrate correct use of MLA style guidelines. Essays are **due on Thursday 4/29, submitted to the Pilot dropbox by 6 pm**. Be sure to review the handouts, “Writing About Fiction” and “Writing Literary Research Essays.”

Library Resources: <https://guides.libraries.wright.edu/c.php?g=421688&p=2880412>

This link provides a great resource for doing research for a literary analysis paper. Links include helpful advice for finding and accessing scholarly articles, using available databases, and correctly citing sources.

Research Proposal Guidelines

You will first need to submit a research proposal for your essay, worth 50 points (5% of the research essay grade), and due any time on Thursday 4/22 (submitted to the research paper dropbox). The paper proposal is an opportunity for you to receive feedback from me on your ideas for the paper and to ensure you are on the right track with your approach and/or thesis. Proposals can also help you begin drafting the introduction to your paper and get started with your research of secondary sources.

Your proposal should be about 1-2 pages and offer a summary and description of the paper that you plan to write. Your proposal should include the following components:

- A *working title* that reflects the general topic or focus of your paper, including primary text;
- A brief *introduction* that identifies the topic you are examining, its significance, your specific angle or theoretical framework, and a *clear arguable thesis*, or, *research question* with one or more hypotheses;
- An *outline* that clearly shows how you will organize your paper, identified by major sections and subsections indicating the key issues related to your topic/thesis and how each of these will be addressed in your analysis;
- And a list of secondary sources that you have found and may plan to include in your paper as part of your research; be sure this is formatted the same way you would a Works Cited page.

Evaluation Criteria for Research Proposal (50, 30 or 10 points)

50 = Demonstrates solid critical thinking skills and familiarity with readings and other course content; provides interesting illustrations and examples. Includes all components of the research proposal. Writing is coherent, concise, easy to follow, and *nearly* free of basic errors.

30 = Demonstrates basic understanding of the readings and other course content and can provide a good summary of material but only provides superficial analysis and support for issues raised. Writing is coherent and easy to follow but wordy, repetitious and/or marred by numerous errors. Missing 1-2 components of the research proposal.

10 = Demonstrates minimal understanding of readings and course content; ideas are vague or not supported by any analysis and shows overall lack of effort. Missing most of the required components for the research proposal. Writing lacks general coherence and shows little to no command of the English language.

ENG 3060 Research Essay Guidelines & Rubric

Essay Rubric:	A: 18-20	B: 16-17	C: 14-15	D: 12-13	F: 0-11
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1. Depth of Subject: _____/20

Provides a clear subject/thesis and develops an argument with adequate support and evidence by examples. Demonstrates understanding of major concepts of text(s) and/or significant issues/contexts. Avoids lengthy explications or synopses of plot (if writing a literary analysis). Expresses originality of thought and sustains objective level of critical analysis.

2. Organization: _____/20

Analysis is precise, pertinent, and well supported. Provides a logical conceptual approach. Clearly links interpretive points to subject and/or argument. Avoids repetition, reductive arguments, or any tangential material that detracts from central focus. Provides clear transitions between and within sections of paper. Paragraphs and sentences are clearly structured and coherently and adequately develop their main topic.

3. Completeness & Accuracy: _____/20

Remains focused on exploring all elements of the stated thesis as fully as possible. Interpretation is appropriate and grounded within the text(s) and/or evidence from secondary sources. The paper adheres to and fulfills the requirements of the assignment, including the minimum word count and secondary sources.

4. Clarity of Expression: _____/20

Sentences are clear, concise, varied, and logical. Vocabulary and terminology are appropriate to the subject, purpose, and audience, and adhere to the standards of academic style. Subjects agree with verbs. Elements are parallel. References and word order are clear. Spelling, grammar, punctuation, mechanics, etc., are correct. Manuscript has been proofread and is free of typographical errors.

5. Style & Documentation: _____/20

Paper is formatted according to style guidelines. Does not heavily rely on quotations from secondary sources; paraphrases and summaries are in own words; phrasing and original wording is correctly quoted; documentation is provided for all quotations, summaries and paraphrases; makes effective use of signal phrases when quoting. Language, tone and verb tense correctly follow MLA guidelines. All references to primary and secondary sources are cited correctly and consistently according to style guidelines, including punctuation. Works Cited Page is correctly and consistently formatted. All in-text citations are included in Works Cited and vice versa.

Total Points: _____/100 x 2 = _____/200 (20% of Final Grade) Letter Grade: _____
