

Text Set Assignment

Dear Students,

For this assignment, you will be drawing from your knowledge in many different areas to create a “set” of texts that address a central question or theme.

What is the central question or theme? You will decide.

What are the texts you will use to address it? You will decide.

We will work through this assignment together in class, but please come see me outside of class if you would like additional help.

Today is: _____

Presentation week is: _____

STEP 1: Write your essential question.

To help you out a bit, here are some examples of essential questions:

To what extent does a social hierarchy exist today?

Is power earned or are people somehow born into it?

To what extent and in what circumstances is it “worth it” to act in a way that isn’t genuinely “you”?

The essential question should be a “thinking” question; in other words, it should not have a yes/no answer, and should be something about which people have many different opinions. I would recommend choosing something that is extremely relevant and interesting to you – something you actually wonder that affects your life in some way.

STEP 2: Plan your search.

It is quite ineffective to type paragraphs or long questions into a Google or Bing search box. So, you must develop a strategy for seeking out sources to build your text set. We will be working with Mrs. Gigstad in the library to hone our search skills. Please refer to the research handouts and be sure to listen up when we get there!

**Make sure that you are gathering texts that address your essential question from a variety of angles. If you find that every text offers the same opinion about your question, you may need to change your question.*

STEP 3: Read your selected texts.

**As you read, make sure you have texts that address your essential question from a variety of angles. If you find that every text offers the same opinion about your question, you may need to go back to step 1 or step 2.*

STEP 4: Read them again. Really.

STEP 5: Write justifications for your selections.

You must have a specific reason for including the texts you choose as part of your set. Therefore, you need to write a **paragraph for each text** that addresses the following questions:

What is this text? (Be sure to include title and genre.)

Who authored this text?

How does this text help to answer your essential question? (What specifically does it say that addresses your essential question? Quote text.)

**This is another opportunity to check that you have texts that address your essential question from a variety of angles. If you find that is not the case, you may need to go back to Step 1 and modify your question, or Step 2 and find more texts.*

STEP 6: Formulate an argument.

Once you have justifications for all of your texts, it is time for you to make up your mind about what they have to say with regard to your essential question. Please make your argument in non-essay form (think presentation, video, poster, dramatic performance...something to entertain us), but be sure to include the elements we have included in our previous essays – a primary claim (or thesis), quotations from the text to support your claim, and concluding thoughts about where you stand in terms of your opinion about your essential question. We would especially love to hear about any changes in your opinions as a result of your reading.

STEP 7: Present your argument (in non-essay form) to the class.

We will sign up for specific dates. More to come...