ARTICLE ANALYSIS - GUIDELINES

VALUE: 15% of Final Grade
LENGTH: 1000 words
Article Selection Due: Sunday February 16, by 11:59PM
Article Analysis Paper: Sunday, March 2 by 11:59PM.

Overview
Through this course, students should learn how to assess academic articles about the course topic and the merit of such analyses. Additionally, it is useful for students to see under what disciplines and more specifically, what journals publish articles related to the course subject. With this in mind, students will find a scholarly article that specifically explores one (or more) of the readings from the course (consult the syllabus for specific writings).

STEP 1: FINDING AN ACADEMIC ARTICLE

So, What Is an Academic Article?
- Written by a knowledgeable person within a specific academic field.
- Published in a “journal” (Literary Review Journal, Journal of Western Literature, etc) whose focus is on knowledge-building, not entertaining or delivering news.
- Usually subjected to the peer review process; a process wherein other specialists in the field, scrutinize the article and require revisions by the author before publication.

Where Do You Find Such Journals?
Students should be making use of the school library’s databases: [http://library.northshore.edu/resources/azlist](http://library.northshore.edu/resources/azlist)

Recommended Databases: JSTOR, Academic OneFile, Academic Search Premier, All Ebsco, and Expanded Academic ASAP

It is not recommended that students use the Internet for this because:
1. Often, students cannot get access to actual academic articles without paying.
2. Students tend to spend 5-8 times longer in searching for an article on the Internet than through the school’s databases.
3. Students often confuse websites for journals and therefore, don’t actually find a proper article.

***NOTE ABOUT ACCESSING THE SCHOOL'S DATABASES***
In order to access the Library’s databases off campus you must have a library activated NSCC ID. If you are on campus, stop by the Student Life Office in Danvers (DB 132) or Lynn (LW 171) with a current class schedule to get an ID. Bring your NSCC ID to the library circulation desk and we will activate it.

Article Selection Criteria: The article chosen by the student must meet the following criteria or it will not be accepted.
- A minimum of 12 pages of text (Cover pages, bibliography, end notes, etc do not count for the page count).
- Published in an academic journal; not a journalistic publication (such as Wall Street Journal, Time Magazine, National Geographic, etc).
- Published after 1970.
- Must be an actual article; not a book review, editorial, etc etc.
- Specifically discussing at least one reading or more writings from the class.

Recommendations for searching for the article:
- Make use of the school’s library databases.
- Use the advance search feature to limit to relevant results (such as page length, publication date, type of publication).
• Use keyword searches that link with authors and writings.
• Read the first 3-4 pages to get a feel for the article. One you choose the article, you cannot change it. Read it through to make sure you can understand what it is saying.
• Don't pick the first article. Find several before settling on one. This helps you evaluate which one works for you.
• The ideal articles will be about 20 pages in length. Shorter articles are likely to assume a lot on their audiences behalf which means it may be particularly jargon-filled.
• Save the article to your computer/thumb drive or email it to yourself.

I've Got An Article (I think?)! Now what?
Copy & Paste this below and fill it out; then post it to the Article Analysis Selection discussion board, where the instructor will approve it, if it meets the required criteria.

• Article Title:
• Author(s):
• Journal Name:
• Publication Date of Article (May not be a specific day—often a month/year or season/year):
• Volume Number:
• Issue Number:
• Page Numberings:
• Page Count (without Bibliography, images, etc).

DO NOT JUST SEND A LINK OR THE TITLE
NOTE: FIRST COME, FIRST SERVE. No two students will be allowed to cover the same article, so therefore, it’s better to get your selection in earlier rather than later. The instructor’s approval is required in order for the assignment to be accepted.

STEP 2: READING THE ARTICLE
Thoroughly read the ACADEMIC article.
• Read it more than once.
• Write notes while reading it; Highlight, etc.
• Identify the author’s thesis and purpose.
• Explore how the author’s ideas relate directly to the course.
• Read the footnotes/endnotes as you move through the article. (All of them may not make sense but some of them will be useful).

STEP 3: WRITING THE ARTICLE ANALYSIS
The paper should include the following:

1. An explanation of the article’s main points and ideas.
   Students should be able to effectively communicate what the author has set out to do in his/her research. This shouldn’t just cover the central thesis, but also consider the author’s method and how he/she proves or reinforces his/her thesis. Goal: What is the point of the article and how does the author prove his or her point?

2. The student’s opinion about the piece as a whole, along with justification for such an opinion.
   Students should be capable of providing an educated opinion assessing the merits of the article and what the student thinks of it. The point is not to just state your opinion by to defend it through the use of reason, argument, course material, class discussions, and other sources. This should also include a discussion of how the article has influenced the student’s understanding of the particular focus that the article examines (That is, if the article focuses on Hawthorne’s personal life, the student should be capable of discussing how that has helped him to understand or think about the specific readings we look at on Hawthorne.) Goal: Communicate an opinion that is grounded in a meaningful discussion of the article.
3. **A comparison of class material as it relates to the article chosen.**

   Based upon what we’ve read in class, where does this article seem to fit in? How can you connect the author’s discussion and analysis to other readings (besides the material it is discussing)? How it is relatable to other course readings and ideas within popular culture? How does the author’s analysis connect to the other theoretical work that we’ve been exploring in the course? This is the most challenging part of the assignment because it asks students to take the author’s argument and use it as a frame to think about and analyze other readings of the course that the author’s article doesn’t cover. **Goal: Connect the article and its analysis to other material within the course.**

4. **An assessment of the author’s notes and bibliography.**

   Students should be looking at footnotes, endnotes, and the bibliography to assess what other material the author is using. Consider where the author derives his/her information and whether or not it appears reliable. Does the author reference any work you are familiar with? How does the author use that material in his/her article? What other scholarship does the article draw upon? **Goal: Consider the research and material that the author used in composing his/her article.**

5. **An exploration into the author’s background—academic background.**

   This may require some additional footwork, but students should try and find out some more information about the author. Sometimes, they are accorded a brief biography, but students should search further than that. This can include web-searches and other means of inquiry. The idea is to see where this writer is coming from and what legitimizes him/her to write such a piece. Students are encouraged to use not just Google but Amazon, LinkedIn, Academia.edu, and the school’s databases (to see what else he/she has published). This will also mean that a Works Cited page should include those places where information was retrieved (and cited!). **Goal: Explain what qualifies this author to write this article.**

6. **A discussion of how this particular article fits into this particular journal’s theme and overall content.**

   Again here, students will need to do some extra work in assessing what is the purpose of the journal and how this article ties in with that. Sometimes, this is as easy as searching around in journal to find its purpose, other times; students will need to be a bit more detailed in their search. **Goal: Consider why this publication through this article was a useful contribution.**

**Parts 1-3 should take up about 80% of this paper. Parts 4-6 should be no more than 20% of the paper.**

**All papers should have the following:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heading with the following:</th>
<th>Title: Can be “Close Analysis” or something else</th>
<th>Proper format: Double-spaced throughout (expect for quotes longer than 3 lines; these should be single-spaced and blockquoted).</th>
<th>Works Cited: The last page that includes all material researched as well as a citation for the article they are discussing. The Works Cited should not be a separate file.</th>
<th>1 File: All work should be incorporated into the 1 document; do not send multiple files</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Class</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Word count [excluding quotes]. – First page only.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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