

Literary Research Analysis

A **Literary Research Analysis** is essentially an argument for your interpretations of a writer's body of work, a specific period/era of work, or another grouping of connected ideas. You are not writing a biographical report on an author or summarizing a book. Instead, you are analyzing the themes, intentions, and effects of whatever works/writers you choose.

For example, if I wanted to analyze the writers of the Lost Generation (Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, etc - writers who came of age during World War I and the Roaring 20s), I would select popular works from each of them and see how their themes align - books such as *The Sun Also Rises* and *The Great Gatsby*. I would consider the political climate of that time to see how it impacted their points of view and decisions to become expatriates overseas. I would choose this topic because these are books I've already read and writers I'm already familiar with. Research would be required, but I already have a jumping-off point.

You need to select literary writers/works you are already familiar with on some level or align with what we're reading this year. (No contemporary writers, please. No papers on JK Rowling.) **Do not get started until I've approved your topic.**

- Research an author and his/her body of work; analyze continuity, connection between personal life and fictional work, discern motivation and impact, or other elements that interest you
- Analyze similar works for their continuity and parallel themes (similar works means the books are from the same era, represent the same genre, explore the same themes, etc)
- A topic of your choice that meets the requirements of the class

Word Count: minimum 6 pages/2,200 words), not including Works Cited

Works Cited page: Required; minimum of five additional sources, not including your selected work(s)

For extra help on selecting a topic: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/618/02/>

For extra help on formatting: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/618/03/>

Grading Rubric - 35 points possible

4 points: Met deadlines (one point each)

3 points: Proper format

3 points: Clear, concise, strong thesis statement

5 points: Minimum number of sources, proper in-text citing, Works Cited page

10 points: Development, focus, structure

10 points: Ideas, arguments, evidence

Plagiarism results in an automatic zero.

Dates to Remember:

BY February 20: You have shared a Google Doc with me that has a clear topic that I've approved.

BY March 6: You have a loose outline of your paper for me to view on Google Docs

BY April 10: You have a first draft for me to edit.

NO LATER THAN THURSDAY, APRIL 25: Turn in a final *printed* copy of your paper.

Note-taking

You are free to use whatever method works best for you, whether using notecards, a spiral notebook, or creating designated documents for each topic. Whatever method you choose, it needs to be shareable with me, which means using a huge whiteboard at home won't work. **From February 20 to April 10, I want to see your notes on a weekly basis and you need to be able to show them to me.**

Writing Tips

- Never ever ever ever start a paper with, “This paper will be about...” The HOOK is an essential part of your introductory paragraph, so it's important to get it right. There are many ways to *hook* the reader's attention:
 - **Anecdote or Imagine...:** set the scene and use a story to illustrate the importance of the topic.
 - **Startling information:** use true and verifiable statistics/facts to entice the reader. The facts can be about the subject matter or person of interest.
 - **Quote:** If you're going to use someone else's words to start a paper, they better be earth-shattering
- Know the difference between quotes, paraphrases, and summaries.
 - **A word-for-word quote** is lifted directly from the text and should be flanked by quotation marks.
 - “The course of true love never did run smooth” (Shakespeare).
 - **A paraphrase** is a mixture of your words and the quote.
 - Lysander is credited for the line, “The course of true love never did run smooth” (Shakespeare).
 - **A summary** is using your words to recreate the impression or point of someone else's work.
 - One of Shakespeare's most famous lines comes from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* when love-sick Lysander said that true love imitated a bumpy road.
- Use transitional words carefully so you are effective and coherent but not wordy. (See handout)
- Your thesis statement serves as the ROAD MAP for your paper, which means it includes the major stops and not the minor ones.
- The conclusion reiterates your main ideas and leaves a final impression. Do not introduce new ideas in the conclusion.

Literary Research Paper Topic Ideas (related to the books we've read)

1. Matriarchy and Female Power (*We've Always Lived in the Castle*)
2. How Isolation Shapes a Character (*We've Always Lived in the Castle*, *Fahrenheit 451*, and *Frankenstein*)
3. The Power of Guilt and its Influence on Behavior (*We've Always Lived in the Castle*, *Fahrenheit 451*, and *Frankenstein*)
4. A Study on Shirley Jackson (*We've Always Lived in the Castle* and selected works)
5. Ray Bradbury and the Prevention of Futures (*Fahrenheit 451* and selected works)
6. Frankenstein and Culture (*Frankenstein*)

7. Fate and Destiny in Frankenstein (*Frankenstein*)