**Exploratory Research Essay**

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Description

Exploratory Research Essay (5-7 pages, double-spaced, 12 pt. Times New Roman font)  Your job for this paper is to write an exploratory research-based essay on the topic you chose in your Project Proposal. This essay will combine elements of a traditional thesis-oriented essay and a narrative paper. In effect, you are telling the story of your research on your chosen topic, or the story of grappling with a research question, coming to a tentative answer to the question (or thesis statement) only at the end of your essay. If you’ve got multiple research questions, you’ll need to pick one primary question to focus on for this paper.  At the start of your essay you should tell your reader why the question you have chosen is significant and worth exploring. Then write a first-person, chronologically organized narrative account of your thinking process as you investigate your question through research, talking with others, and doing your own reflective thinking. . . . Your goal is to examine your question, problem, or issue from a variety of perspectives, assessing the strengths and weaknesses of different positions and points of view. In addition, a significant aspect of this paper is grappling with your question from multiple perspectives, and you will be graded on the extent to which you can demonstrate that you’ve considered your research question from various viewpoints, including points of view that you may feel inclined to disagree with.  The following sources will be required for this essay: (These are provided in attached files) (1) Two scholarly articles found through the library databases.  (2) One book or e-book found through the library or library databases.  (3) One substantial article (at least 4-5 pages) from a general-interest periodical or an additional source from category 1 or 2. This source should also be found through the library or library databases.  Sources used for the Project Proposal can be used if they fit these categories, and you can use additional library sources briefly if needed. You can also use up to one web source briefly, but should avoid low-quality web sources. You should make sure that these sources represent a diversity of viewpoints and perspectives on your topic.  In this essay, you should summarize, analyze, and compare the diverse views presented in your sources, highlighting the key points and positions that make each source different from the others, focusing on their differences and similarities. Make sure to integrate plenty of detail from each library source, focusing on paraphrase and short quotations, cited in-text and in a works cited page in MLA format. Work to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the arguments made in each source, demonstrating an objective consideration of the viewpoint found in each of them. At the end of the essay, you should present a tentative answer to your research question, or preliminary thesis statement, based on your consideration of these sources. You will develop a firm thesis statement for your final argumentative essay.