Essay I: Inquiry Essay. Project Goals § Begin practice of research § Initiate exploration of a semester-long topic § Argue for the importance of the topic § Explore how research on the chosen topic informs our own thoughts § Explore different aspects of and perspectives on the chosen topic § Identify and raise important questions about the topic You will begin your inquiry this semester by asking your own research question that corresponds to one of our three course paths: Where does our food come from? How do we change the way we eat? What is the significance of our food practices? Thousands of conversations and areas of research and inquiry intersect with this question. Consider, for example, the many choices we make every day about what we eat. Are they conscious? Should they be? How does what we eat affect us? How do our surroundings influence our eating habits? Think about the three paths you might pursue: questions related to the food we currently eat, the alternatives to these options, and the significance of eating and food practices in daily life. While we are discussing readings related to these topics, consider what intrigues or confuses you. Choose a question that genuinely interests you and one that you genuinely want an answer to—rather than something you have already made up your mind about. Remember, be creative and come and speak to me about the range of questions you might pursue. The possibilities for inquiry into questions of food will be as diverse as you are. Your first task, then, is to determine which questions related to foodways most intrigue you. Purpose and Audience The Inquiry Essay is a research-based exploratory essay that presents different ways of answering a research question that interests you. The audience for this essay is our class —a diverse group of people who may be neutral or slightly skeptical of the importance of this topic. Topic In this assignment, you will begin by asking a question that fits within our overarching course theme of foodways. You should select your question carefully because this topic will frame your research for the duration of the semester. Try to choose a question about which you are genuinely curious. Project Components This assignment will contain the following stages: 1. Research Question Proposal (a well-developed paragraph) 2. Inquiry Essay (1000-1200 words) 3. Letter of Reflection (1-2 pages) Research Question Proposal (See Canvas assignment for details and deadlines) You must submit a one-paragraph proposal and have your question(s) approved by me. Inquiry Essay Your inquiry essay will present your findings from an initial process of inquiry and research. The Inquiry Essay might be a new genre for you because you will be exploring the contours of a research topic and not yet making a formal argument about which perspective is “right.” The exact structure of your essay is up to you and should reflect the organizational structure you deem most appropriate for your topic. Essay Requirements: § Introduce your topic and explain why your research question is worth exploring. Your introduction will set up the context for this topic and answer the question, Why should we care about this topic? § Explain, briefly, what your thoughts and feelings were about the topic before you began your formal inquiry into this topic. § Identify the major perspectives within this topic (What do different sources propose as answers to this question?). This is the central task. § Share your findings from this preliminary process of research and inquiry (How have other people tried to answer this research question?). Then, consider how these findings have shaped your own thoughts (How have these different perspectives impacted your own thinking about this topic?). § Conclude your Inquiry Essay with important questions about your topic that will continue to guide your process of inquiry this semester. These questions will give you forward momentum as you continue your research. § You will engage a minimum of three credible sources in your essay. One of these sources must be a peer-reviewed article or scholarly book. § All sources must be cited using MLA formatting in text and at the end of the essay on a Works Cited page. Technicalities: (See the Example Essay Formatting document on Canvas) § Length: 1000-1200 words total. Going over is fine (within reason), but if you do not meet the minimum, you will lose points. If you are severely below the minimum, your paper will not pass. § Format: Double-spaced, 12pt Times New Roman font, 1-inch margins, last name and page number in the top right corner of each page (use the “Page Number” function in Word). § Title: centered right above the first paragraph on the first page. Make it interesting and informative. Do not add extra spaces between the heading, title, and first paragraph. § Heading (not header): single-spaced in the top left corner on the first page only. Please include your name, the course, your instructor’s name, and the date. § Please use proper MLA formatting for all quotations and please include a Work(s) Cited page at the end (not included in your word count). § See the “Example Essay Formatting” file or the example student essays for formatting examples. Letter of Reflection (See Canvas assignment for details and deadlines) In a 1-2-page (double-spaced) letter (minimum 300 words) addressed to me, you will reflect on the process of writing this first major course assignment. Essay 1 Rubric Introduction (10 points) § interesting way § Clearly articulates the area of inquiry and establishes the context, relevant background information, scope of research, etc. § Explains the significance of the research question (i.e., Why should we care? Why does this research question matter?) Organization (15 points) § Follows a logical organizational pattern § Includes clear transitions within and between paragraphs that guide readers through the argument § Develops one main idea in each paragraph § Includes clear topic sentences that set up the focus of each paragraph Process of Inquiry (40 points) § Identifies the major perspectives within this area of inquiry § Demonstrates careful reading of source material § Shares research findings (i.e., what are people saying in response to this research question?) § Places sources with different perspectives in conversation with each other (e.g., identifies common ground between sources but also highlights important areas of disagreement) § Communicates writer’s evolving perspective § Maintains a neutral and exploratory stance towards the topic Quality of Research Questions (15 points) § Articulates well-defined research questions for exploration and inquiry § Makes clear connection between research findings and future areas of research § Concludes with more focused research questions that will guide an ongoing process of inquiry Source Use (10 points) § References three relevant, credible sources § Cites paraphrased or summarized information using MLA or APA formatting in text and on a Works Cited page § Use quotations marks around all directly quoted material and limit use of direct quotations Grammar, Punctuation, and Style (10 points) § Demonstrates careful proofreading § Follows standard grammatical conventions § Communicates ideas clearly and in an engaging manner Total