

Assignment Sheet for Research Paper

Psychology and Child Development

Instructor Ed Newland

Assignment - Weighted at 20% of total grade of 4th quarter



Students must choose term paper topics from the following list. They may modify the topic and give it a different slant, with Permission. The paper must contain an argumentative thesis. You are required to choose from among the following topics for this semester.

Mechanics of the paper

A. The length of the body of the paper must be a minimum of seven (7) full pages. The preference would be that the paper would not exceed ten (10) pages.

B. The paper will be typed (word processor preferred but not essential), double spaced, with one inch margins (left margin may be 1.5 inches) The preferred font size is 12 point. The paper will be stapled in the upper left-hand corner. Papers in folders are not acceptable.

C. The paper must have a minimum of eight (8) sources. The writer must cite each of these sources in the body of the paper.

D. The paper must contain the following:

1. A **correct title page and outline** (not part of the page count).
2. A **thesis statement** that argues a position that the author is trying to prove or demonstrate, The thesis statement must be underlined in the paper. Thesis statements are normally placed as the last sentence(s) of the first paragraph.
3. The paper must be **free of spelling errors** and **sentence fragments**, and it must be written in **third person**.
4. Each paper must indicate and contain a summary of the paper and conclusions of the author. (i.e., a separate line indicating to the reader that this is the summary and conclusion.)
5. **Standard footnotes or endnotes** are required. This does not include 'parenthetical' footnotes.
6. A **bibliography** using standard form is required.

E. in most cases students should utilize **BCHS** library books, magazines, newspapers, and Internet materials. (**Encyclopedias are not allowed** and sources such as Readers Digest are not appropriate.) **Anyone caught plagiarizing will be failed for this course.**

F. The paper is due on Friday May 14th. Late papers are accepted at a twenty-five percent reduction in grade per day i.e., a maximum of 75 points allowed for one day late, a maximum of 50 points allowed for two days late and so on.

Argumentative Thesis Statements

In an argumentative paper, you are making a claim about a topic and justifying this claim with reasons and evidence. This claim could be an opinion, a policy proposal, an evaluation, a cause-and-effect statement, or an interpretation. However, this claim must be a statement that people could possibly disagree with, because the goal of your paper is to convince your audience that your claim is true based on your presentation of your reasons and evidence. An argumentative thesis statement will tell your audience:

your claim or assertion

the reasons/evidence that support this claim

the order in which you will be presenting your reasons and evidence

Example: Barn owls' nests should not be eliminated from barns because barn owls help farmers by eliminating insect and rodent pests.

A reader who encountered this thesis would expect to be presented with an argument and evidence that farmers should not get rid of barn owls when they find them nesting in their barns.

Questions to ask yourself when writing an argumentative thesis statement:

What is my claim or assertion?

What are the reasons I have to support my claim or assertion?

In what order should I present my reasons?