

US History Research Project

Task Write a 7-page analytical research paper on an approved topic in 20th century American history.

Definition of Analytical Paper

An analytical paper presents a thesis, which is defended by a series of carefully considered arguments and supporting evidence. It addresses a debatable question. The paper moves from one analytical argument to the next while also considering the significance of these main ideas. It finishes with a conclusion that synthesizes the arguments into a convincing and definitive endpoint for your reader (Engelke 22).

Steps

1. Choose a topic
2. Use sources such as online encyclopedias and the textbook to become more familiar with your topic.
3. Narrow topic by posing a debatable question that you would like to answer about the topic.
4. Conduct research—search for and locate appropriate primary and secondary sources
5. Develop preliminary thesis and three to four arguments that you will make to support the thesis.
6. Take organized notes. Organize notes by main topics (arguments) of paper and by source. An easy way to do this is to use index cards.
7. Create outline and revise thesis (if necessary).
8. Write first draft.
9. Review peer's and teacher's edits of rough draft and make additional edits.
10. Revise thesis (if necessary) and write final draft.

Examples of how to go from a topic to a debatable question

Topic	Question
Woman's Suffrage	Why did so many women oppose women's suffrage in the 19 th century?
New Deal	Did the New Deal weaken or strengthen capitalism in the United States?
Vietnam War	Did public protest undermine support for the Vietnam War, thereby affecting its outcome?

Selected Online Sources

- Library of Congress American Memory - <http://lcweb2.loc.gov>
- Eyewitness to History - <http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com>
- National Archives and Records Administration - <http://www.nara.gov>
- Smithsonian National Museum of American History - <http://www.si.edu>
- Public Broadcasting System - <http://www.pbs.org>
- ACLS Humanities E-book - <https://www.humanitiesebook.org>
- Historical Statistics of the United States - <http://hsus.cambridge.org/HSUSWeb/HSUSEntryServlet>
- The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History - <http://www.gilderlehrman.org/collections/groupings/twentieth-century>

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Evaluating Online Resources

To verify whether you should use a web site for your paper, use the following checklist:

- Who owns the web site? Is it affiliated with an organization or business?
- What is the purpose of the web site? Is it to entertain, sell products or educate?
- Who are the author(s) of the web site and what are their backgrounds?
- Is contact information for the author(s) provided?
- When was the web site last updated?
- Does the web site contain grammatical, spelling and/or factual errors?
- Is there a clear bias?
- Is the information provided relevant for your research topic?

Examples of Plagiarism and Appropriate Citing (Engelke 41)

Original passage from William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983), 126.

Reducing the forest was an essential first step toward reproducing that Old World mosaic in an American environment. For the New England landscape, and for the Indians, what followed was undoubtedly a new ecological order; for the colonists, on the other hand, it was an old and familiar way of life.

Word-for-Word Plagiarism

Example:

For New England colonists, cutting down abundant trees was an essential first step toward reproducing the Old World mosaic in an American environment. What followed was undoubtedly a new ecological order.

Correction:

For New England colonists, cutting down abundant trees “was an essential first step toward reproducing the Old World mosaic in an American environment...What followed was undoubtedly a new ecological order” (Hill and Wang 126).

Unacknowledged Paraphrase

Example:

The colonists sought to recreate their English pastoral landscape in the New World by deforestation. This greatly altered the ecology of New England, and thus the Indians way of life.

Correction:

The colonists sought to recreate their English pastoral landscape in the New World by deforestation. This greatly altered the ecology of New England, and thus the Indians way of life (Hill and Wang 126).

Research Paper Requirements (Detailed rubric will provided in a separate handout.)

- Tile page (title, name, date of completion, name of teacher, and name of course)
- 7-page essay (introduction, body, and conclusion organized in paragraph form)
- Introduction includes clearly written, narrowly focused analytical thesis
- Effective integration of quotations, data, and other evidence to support analysis
- At least two primary sources and two secondary sources that cover multiple perspectives
- 1-inch margins all around; 12-point Times Roman font; double-spaced; and numbered beginning on page 2
- 3rd person (formal tone; no slang, sarcasm or colloquialisms)
- Citations and bibliography (List of Works Cited)

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Selected Topics

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Great Migration 2. 19th Amendment 3. Introduction of the Model T 4. Rise of Jazz 5. Invention of Motion Pictures (Movies) 6. Babe Ruth 7. Prohibition 8. American Foreign Policy during the 1920's 9. Scopes Trial 10. Harlem Renaissance 11. Causes of the Great Depression 12. New Deal 13. American Foreign Policy during the 1930's 14. Decision to Drop Atomic Bombs on Japan to end World War II 15. Internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II 16. Truman Doctrine 17. Marshall Plan 18. Space Race 19. Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) 20. Causes of the Korean War 21. <i>Brown v. the Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas</i> 22. Life in America during the 1950's 23. Suburbanization of America 24. American's Foreign Policy towards Cuba since the 1950's 25. JFK's presidency 26. Causes of the Vietnam War 27. Impact on the Vietnam War on confidence in American government 28. Role of public protest on the outcome of the Vietnam War 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 29. Johnson's Great Society program for improving America 30. Women's Rights Movement 31. Civil Rights Movement 32. Black Panthers 33. Nation of Islam 34. Betty Freidan's "The Feminine Mystique" 35. Watergate Scandal 36. Title IX 37. Environmental Movement 38. Cesar Chavez and the Migrant Farm Workers Movement 39. Rise of Conservatism 40. Rise of Hip Hop 41. Reaganomics 42. End of the Cold War 43. Clinton's presidency 44. Causes of the Iraqi War 45. Comparison of the presidential election of 2000 to that of 1876 46. Impact of the Ku Klux Klan during the 1920's 47. Impact of the Ku Klux Klan during the Civil Rights Movement 48. Comparison of the Red scare of the 1920's to that of the 1950's 49. McCarthyism 50. American-Chinese relations since 1949 51. War on Drugs 52. Counter Culture Movement 53. Origins of the American Welfare State 54. Comparison of Booker T. Washington's and W.E.B. Dubois' approaches to improving the lives of black Americans 55. Impact of the Great Depression on the social fabric of American life
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Due Dates

February 17
 February 24
 March 3
 March 24
 April 9

Topic and Debatable Question
 Thesis and Arguments
 Source Cards and Initial Note Cards
 Rough Draft
 Final Draft