

WR 65 Essay #2 Researched Position Paper

Overview: For this assignment, you will research and then write an essay on a topic that relates to the play *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller. Choose a topic that interests you, that is not too broad or too narrow, and that is easy to find credible sources on. See pp. 23-25 from your *Course Packet* for narrowed and specific topics. Choose **only one** area (science, psychology, sociology, history, or humanities) and approach your research from that *perspective*.

Length: 1000 (minimum) to 1200 words (about 4 pages).

Sources: Three to five properly documented, academic sources. Two of these sources **MUST** be from the COCC Barber Library databases. You may **NOT** use Wikipedia, general encyclopedias, pop culture magazines, fiction sources, or any non-credible web sites.

Citations: Minimum of three direct quotes within the essay. Every source used for this essay must be listed on the Works Cited page.

Thesis: The introduction must contain a clearly stated, explicit thesis statement that guides the entire essay. As you develop your topic, make sure that you are supporting **ONE** side of a debate, as opposed to just stating information or explaining the debate. Out of all the explanations about the causes of the historical Salem Witch Trials, which one explanation do you think is most credible or probable? What do you think caused the trials? Did we (society) learn anything from these trials?

MLA formatting: this essay must be in correct MLA format including heading, 12-point font, margins, in-text citations, and a correctly formatted Works Cited page.

In your introduction:

- Create an opening that will attract your readers
- End with a strongly worded thesis that clearly states your main point and prepares your audience for what's to come

In your body (at least four paragraphs):

- Choose a pattern of organization that suits your topic
- Make sure each paragraph focuses on a single point of support for your thesis
- Use evidence from your research to support your thesis
- Engage in original and thought provoking analysis

In your conclusion:

- Remind your audience of your main point
- Leave readers with a lasting impression of your essay

Important due dates:

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
|  Thesis and outline | 2/9 (written in class) |
|  Rough Draft w/Process Notes (hard copy & Bboard) | 2/11 |
|  Peer Review | 2/11 (done in class) |
|  Mid-Process Draft w/Process Notes (hard copy & Bboard) | 2/18 |
|  Final Draft w/ all process work (hard copy & Bboard) | 2/23 |

Drafts: a minimum of **three drafts** are required, all included in the folder with your final drafts.

Organization

Sample Outline

- I. Introduction
 - A. Hook
 - B. Provide background on the topic to provide context for your discussion.
 - C. Explain and define any specialized terms, vocabulary
 - D. Assert the thesis (your view on one possible cause for the events that led to the Salem Witch Trials).

Your introduction has a dual purpose: to indicate both the topic and your approach to it (your thesis statement), and to arouse your reader's interest in what you have to say. One effective way of introducing a topic is to place it in context – to supply a kind of backdrop that will put it in perspective. You should discuss the area into which your topic fits, and then gradually lead into your specific field of discussion (re: your thesis statement).

II. Your Argument (Body Paragraphs)

- A. Assert point #1 of your claims (topic sentence about one point). Remember, you are building a case for your thesis, so use the body paragraphs to present a strong piece of evidence in support of your opinion—one piece of evidence per paragraph. Topic sentences are *never* quotes or questions.
 1. Evidence: quote or paraphrase from your research (quote, statistic, or expert testimony in support of the idea in your topic sentence. Frame or integrate all quotes and cite properly. All sources must also appear in your Works Cited.
 2. Unpack this quote—clearly explain the relevance of this quote.
 3. Analyze—clearly analyze how this quote demonstrates, gives evidence in support of, or illustrates the point that works to support your thesis.
- B. Assert point #2 of your claims (topic sentence about one point). Remember, you are building a case for your thesis, so use the body paragraphs to present a strong piece of evidence in support of your opinion—one piece of evidence per paragraph. Topic sentences are *never* quotes or questions.
 1. Evidence: quote or paraphrase from your research (quote, statistic, or expert testimony in support of the idea in your topic sentence. Frame or integrate all quotes and cite properly. All sources must also appear in your Works Cited.
 2. Unpack this quote—clearly explain the relevance of this quote.
 3. Analyze—clearly analyze how this quote demonstrates, gives evidence in support of, or illustrates the point that works to support your thesis.

You may have more than 3 overall points to your argument, but you should not have fewer.

IV. Conclusion

___A. Restate your argument

___B. Provide a plan of action but do not introduce new information

The simplest and most basic conclusion is one that restates the thesis *in different words* and then discusses its implications.