

Literature-Based Multi-genre Research Paper

The novel project for English 2110 – World Literature is to create a research based multigenre paper drawing on a work of literature. The novel you choose must be a work of World Literature. Here is a link to a website with great suggestions: <http://www.perfectionlearning.com/top%20100-world-lit-titles>
To create an excellent final project, you must do three things:

- Work with the text of novel,
- research *criticism* about the work, the *historical* time in which the work was written, and the author,
- compose a multigenre paper that explores and communicates through imaginative genres the **content** and **themes** of the literature, as well as **historical/critical information** and, **perhaps, biographic information about the author** that illuminates the work in some way and enhances the reader's thinking about that work and author.

How Long Should the Literature-Based MGP Be? Your mgp must contain at least eight (8) “genres.” Included in the eight are an introduction, the note page, an expository piece, and a bibliography. That leaves four (4) genres for you to choose as you share with the reader what you've learned, what you've imagined about the story, and your interpretation. You may find that you need to create more pieces than the required eight to make your paper complete, high in quality, and aesthetically pleasing. That is fine; in fact, that is more than fine.

What Components Must the Literature-Based MGP Contain?

- Introduction/Preface/Dear Reader
- Expository piece (250-350 words. Make this vivid, informational, straight-ahead writing. Boil your topic down to essentials. Write exposition that is good to read.)
- A visual element – this is not one of the genres, but a unifying element that might come from a visual, a metaphor, a motif or recurring theme in the text
- Bibliography – you complete an annotated bibliography using your research sources
- Note Page – documents how the research informs and explains each genre
- Unifying elements (repetend, repeated images, genres answered, fragmented narrative, a detail just mentioned in one piece but expanded and illustrated in a later piece)

Some words on the research component of the paper. As an inquirer, expect to be informed, surprised, and intellectually delighted by what you learn through your literary and historical inquiry. As a reader of your mgp, I want to experience these same things: surprise, intellectual delight, and widened and deepened understanding.

You all are familiar with how research can deepen your reading of a text, but what about historical research? How can inquiry into the times in which a work is written further illuminate the text? You'll have to see. But I can give you an example of one such historical influence on the writing of literature: There is a strong quality of feminism in the character of Hester Prynne of *The Scarlet Letter*, which is set in Massachusetts in the 1600s. That isn't unexpected when we realize that Nathaniel Hawthorne wrote *The Scarlet Letter* in the late 1840s, during a time of significant activity for women's social, economic, and political rights led by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony. The Declaration of Sentiments, patterned after the Declaration of Independence, was drafted in 1848 at the first women's rights conference at Seneca Falls, NY.

Literature is not imagined in a vacuum, neither when it is imagined and created by a writer nor when it is imagined and recreated by a reader. I want you to capture some of the historical flavor and ideas afoot during the time the literature you choose was written.

Your research might take other avenues. For example, a student writing her MGP on The Notebook could do extensive research to learn more about Alzheimer's Disease. Another student might who might read a science fiction novel about environmental abuse and research specific forms of environmental abuse taking

place when the novel was written in the early 1970s. **The lesson these two students provide is to not limit yourself to one predetermined slant in terms of research.** Follow your curiosity and think outside the box.

One Tip For Incorporating Into Your MGP What You Learn Through Your Research:

Avoid simply providing quotations from research on a page. Such a move is not effective and shows little imagination or initiative on your part. Rather, incorporate into genres what you learn through research. For example, a student might learn that Harper Lee was greatly influenced by the trial of nine young black men accused and convicted of raping two white women on a train during the 1920s. Harper Lee was eight-years-old at the time of the trial. In To Kill A Mockingbird, Scout is about the same age when she witnesses the trial of Tom Robinson. The student wrote a two-voiced poem to capture the similarities and differences of the true case and fictional case. One voice was Harper Lee, the other voice was Scout. As a reader I was informed and delighted to see this melding of research and imagination.

What Research?

I have a professional friend—an active scholar—who does 85% of his research online. But be careful. There are incredible databases available; there are a lot of websites, too, many useful, but many that are shallow, inaccurate, and misleading.

The library is still an amazing storehouse of journals, magazines, newspapers, book chapters, and primary material. Incorporate what you learn from the research into your MPG—on a Note Page document how the research informs each genre of your mgp.

Genres You Might Try

Genres and subgenres abound. Remember, too, that often the most effective genres arise naturally from your material. A student writing about a novel involving bulimia, for example, began her paper with a doctor's report for a patient with bulimia. The official form of the report was professional looking with the doctor's name and business address appearing in a standard format and the handwritten notes of the doctor providing pertinent information about the patient's symptoms.

Here is a partial list of genres you might try:

First person narrative	Newspaper style
Third person narrative	hard news stories
Stream of consciousness	feature stories
Interior Monolog	obituaries
Dialog (written in play format)	editorial
Diary Entries (minimum 7)	Adventure Magazine Story
Poems for two voices	Business Letter or Correspondence
Dramatic monolog	Persuasive or Advocacy Letter
Eyewitness Account of an Event	Autobiographical Essay for a Character
Research Review	
Character sketch	
Research Brochure	
Announcements	
Directories	
Researched Encyclopedia entry	
Map with details of place/events	
Manifesto – if one is present in the text	
Newscast	
Epistolary Rewrite of an event	

****You may only use a genre once.**