

PROJECT TWO: RESEARCH PAPER (MIN. 3,000 POLISHED WORD)

This second project has three goals: to help develop your research skills; to operationalize some of what you learned about genre in the first project; and to help you develop a sense of audience. In your previous essay, you analyzed the discursive practices of a community; in this paper, you will **choose an issue of importance** to the community, **form a position** about it, and, in a focused, organized, articulate paper, **argue for your position**. For example, someone whose previous essay examined a fangroup might decide to research cyberbullying; someone who previously discussed a video game community might decide to research the relationship between violence in video games and its effects on children.

Your argument will depend, in part, on your choice of audience, so develop your position with a specific audience in mind—you are *not* writing to me, your instructor. You want to choose an audience whom you could realistically convince of your position so that the audience could then take action. If a student were writing about violence and video games, which audience would be a more logical choice: the general public or the CEO of one of the nation's largest retailers of video games?

Additionally, your project must include a **counterargument**—that is, you must discuss, in depth, an opposing position, which you may then refute or concede to. Your counterargument must be well developed—there's no perfect way to structure your paper, but make sure that you spend more than one sentence discussing the counterargument.

In order to make your project and research manageable, we will break the research down into several smaller steps.

Preparatory Assignment Two: Research Proposal (min. 400 words)

You will need to write a research proposal designed to help you focus and organize your ideas and intentions. This proposal will be based on your exploration of your area of expertise and your initial research. You should reflect on how you have decided to focus your project, how you came up with your research question, why you think it's important, and how you plan to explore the question in your research. In this proposal, include a clearly articulated research question—e.g., “Have social media sites like Instagram become catalysts for activism such as intersectional feminism?” Also include the **specific** audience of your argument.

Preparatory Assignment Three: Annotated Bibliography (min. 500 words, not including citations)

For your annotated bibliography, you must include the MLA-style citation for each of your sources (minimum of ten, seven of which are scholarly in nature—book or peer-reviewed), as well as an annotation (minimum of 50 words) for each source. Each annotation should include: a summary of the source, how the source relates to your research topic, and a description of how you envision the source relating to or interacting with your research (e.g., background information, argument); if you decide that a source is argumentative, then also include whether the source agrees with your position or takes a contrasting position. You might also discuss any weaknesses or strengths of a source—e.g., “This article provides real-world reasons for why people do cosplay, but all the reasons are limited to why young Asian women do cosplay; there isn't any mention of American teenagers or coed groups of cosplayers.”