

**Spring 2022—Standard Primary Document Analysis**

The goal of this writing assignment is for you to learn to summarize and analyze information from primary documents and to gain increased familiarity with documentation and format prescribed by the *Chicago Manual of Style, 17th edition*. It builds on the knowledge that you acquired doing the annotated bibliography assignment, adding the requirement for analysis and footnotes or endnotes. Make sure that you choose primary, not secondary, or tertiary documents.  We will discuss primary documents and other primary sources in class to help you prepare for this assignment.

**Definitions**

Primary. Materials produced by people or groups directly involved in the event or topic under consideration, as either participants or witnesses.

Secondary. Books, articles, or documentary films that people who were not eyewitnesses to the event or period in question write or create.

Tertiary. Texts such as encyclopedias, dictionaries, or textbooks that summarize and synthesize primary and/or secondary sources.

**Getting Started**

Go the [PPCC History Research Guide](http://libguides.ppcc.edu/History) where you will find a wealth of information on primary sources. (Consult the CRAAP Test in Web Resources.)

Read “History as the Antidote to Fake News” In *Content>Readings* for strategies on evaluating sources.

Be sure to choose documents that are about one to three pages in length.

Choose two documents on the same topic that take a different view and do a compare-and- contrast essay. The documents must come from the time period and content of the course.

Read “Working with Historical Documents” in *Content> Writing Resources* in the course shell to get some ideas about questions you might consider when analyzing primary documents.  Focus your analysis on the documents. While your analysis should not be a discursive *tour d’horizon*, you must also address how the documents reflect social, political, economic, and/or cultural aspects of their historical period.

Ask yourself a “how” or “why” question that you can answer using the primary documents. Use this question as the title of your paper.

**Write**

The audience that you are writing for is your classmates at PPCC.

Title the first part of your paper *Summary*. Make the first page a summary of the two documents that you have selected.  Summarize each document in a substantial paragraph.  Be sure to include the author and title in the first sentence of each summary paragraph along with the date of the document. Underline the author’s thesis, or controlling idea, near the beginning of each paragraph.

You will find information sheets on thesis statement development in *Content>Writing Resources.*

Title the second part of your paper *Analysis*. Underline your closed thesis in the introductory paragraph of the analysis.  Your analysis or evaluation must have an introduction, a body, and a conclusion and be three to five pages in length. When you make an assertion, back it up with cited evidence from the document.  Make quotes short and relevant.  Remember that each paragraph should have a topic sentence that supports your thesis. Use transitions that link your ideas. Draw conclusions as you end your analysis.

**Be sure to:**

Provide information on the context of your documents at the beginning of your analysis to include the historical setting. Use and cite a secondary or tertiary source; your textbook often serves well here.

Evaluate the purpose of the document to include the intended audience.

Evaluate your document’s importance in the study of History.

Address the perspective of the author of the documents.

**Mechanics**

Compose your document analysis using the Notes-Bibliography version of Chicago citation. You will find an excellent guide in the [PPCC History Research Guide--Cite Your Sources.](https://libguides.ppcc.edu/History/Citations) There is also a section on documentation in Chicago style in Rampolla’s *A Guide to Writing in History,* the optional text for this course. The History tutors have copies of this guide; copies are also available in each Learning Commons.

Please use Chicago formatting throughout your paper paying attention to the title page, page numbers, and bibliography.

You may use footnotes or endnotes.

For this paper, cite the tertiary sources that you use to provide historical context.

Word-process your document analysis; double-space, use Times New Roman font, size 12 and make your margins one inch.

Prepare your paper in Microsoft Word, which is available free to PPCC students in Office 365 in the dashboard of the student portal.

Do not forget to do a bibliography and to attach copies of the documents that you used for this assignment to the paper copy submission.

Remember that I grade the mechanical aspects of your writing to include grammar, spelling, and punctuation as part of all writing assignments.

**Drafting**

You must have a consultation and a sign off by a tutor on both the draft and final versions. You need to see a tutor well before the due date so that you have time to incorporate revisions before turning in the paper. Tutors will not sign off without reviewing your paper; they do not do “drive byes.”. I have observed over more than twenty-five years of teaching that students who work closely with tutors and me in the careful preparation of their writing assignments enjoy success in this assignment and significantly improve their college-level writing skills. I will provide specific information on how to schedule appointments with tutors.

**“TUTORS SAVE LIVES!”**

**Organization**

Organize your paper in the following fashion from front to back:

* Title page
* Summary
* Analysis
* Endnotes (If used in lieu of footnotes)
* Bibliography
* Copies of documents

**Submission**

Submit a paper copy of the draft and final at the beginning of class on the due date. Also submit an electronic copy of the final no later than the beginning of class in *Assignments* in the folder Standard *Document Analysis*. You do not need to submit copies of the documents in the electronic submission.

I encourage you to do your own plagiarism check in the *Self-Check for Plagiarism* folder in *Assignments* so that you may resolve possible plagiarism issues before you turn in the paper. Remember that submitting a paper that you have previously submitted in another class also constitutes plagiarism. If you chose to submit a plagiarized paper, oh dear.



**Questions?**

If you have questions, see a tutor, or me. “Winging it” invariably leads to trouble.

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