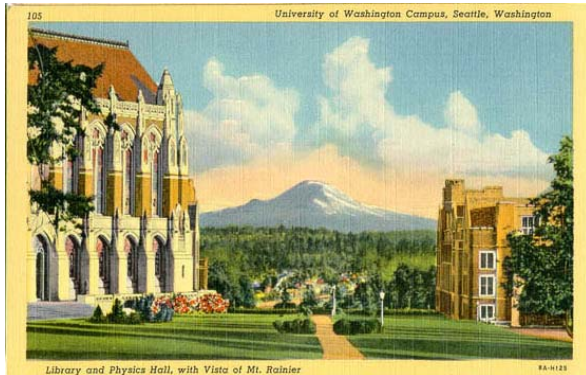


# Final Paper 2.8: Read-Search Project

gis 140 / sec. A / early fall quarter 2007-08 / chang



The point cannot be overstated: close reading is central to reading, writing, learning, and living. Attending to detail, to language, and to the rhetorical situations around you is vital to any intellectual and creative enterprise. In a deep sense, close reading is about being curious and critical about the world. By now, you have already closely read many different kinds of texts: narratives, essays, assignment sheets, peer papers, your own writing, advertisements, what you're wearing, images, and commercials. The list goes on. Now it's time to turn your critical eye to another central activity that involves reading, writing, learning, and living: **inquiry and research.**

In many classes at the university you will be asked to complete an end of the quarter research project or paper where you will be expected to do independent and substantial research. After searching, reading, annotating, compiling, re-reading, and organizing, you will be asked to produce a paper or project where you explain the information that you discovered and analyze what you have learned about your specific topic. For this sequence, you will be exploring the varied resources that the university has for helping you to search, find, generate, and compile material for a research project. We will also be discussing different strategies for analyzing this data and also for organizing your thoughts into a complex and interesting research paper. Because you do not have enough time to actually write a full research paper in this course, you will complete rather a **Read-Search Project** consisting of: a research narrative, a literature review, and a research proposal.

**First, read.** You need to pick a topic that interests you and that can be developed into a research project. Draw on the readings from the course, class discussion, and previous assignments as fodder for brainstorming. **Use the readings and your responses as occasions to generate ideas, potential topics, and lines of inquiry.** What caught your attention? What surprised you? What do you want to learn more about? What questions do you have? What did you agree with or disagree with? These questions put you in conversation with your texts and may help you identify something to explore, explicate, analyze, or investigate further. You might want to research more about Frederick Douglass or Gloria E. Anzaldúa. You might want to research more about pedagogy, education reform, the role of the university, or student issues. **Be clear, specific, concrete with your topic;** explore whether the topic might be too broad or too narrow with a little initial research.

**Then, search.** You will be introduced to the library, research databases, search engines, and other academic resources, which you will use to find information and materials about your topic, to see if your topic is viable, and to focus your research question. Once you have found your topic, **locate three useful, authoritative sources**, preferably journal articles and scholarly essays. Keep in mind what makes a good, academic source. You will read and use these sources to explore your research question, to think about how your ideas fits into existing research, and finally, to generate a research proposal and potential claim.

## Goals and Outcomes

For the Read-Search Project, you will be required to be self-aware, self-reflective about your research process and how you work to find, read, and organize your research materials. This metacognitive approach will help you identify and assess how you choose a topic, how you use close reading to generate potential questions and inquiries, how you use different resources for research, how you evaluate your sources, and how you put everything together to propose a larger project. In other words, you will explain what your topic is, how you came by this topic, how you searched for information, and what your main claim would be if you did have to write a research project for this topic. You may also include what surprised you about this assignment, any difficulties you had, and how you overcame these difficulties.

Your Read-Search Project will answer and be organized by the following questions (though you need not answer every single one like a laundry list):

## I. Research Narrative

- How did you generate and choose your topic?
- If your topic was too broad, how did you narrow it? If it was too narrow, how did you expand it?
- What is your research question?
- How did you find useful and credible sources?
- What research challenges did you face and how did you overcome them?

## II. Literature Review

- What authoritative sources did you find? How do you know they are authoritative? Academic?
- Why are they relevant or important to your research question?
- What are the salient points of each of your sources?
- How do these points fit your research project?

## III. Research Proposal

- What new insights or discoveries have you gained about your topic?
- What would be your prospective claim for a larger research project? How are you approaching your research?
- Why is your project important? What are its stakes? Who are you writing for?
- What more would you need to do in order to complete the larger research project?

As with your other major papers, your project should identify a clear research question, fully develop ideas, support those ideas with details and direct quotes from your research, and correctly use MLA in-text citation and bibliographic format. Your paper should demonstrate a clear outline and organization using the three prescribed sections, clear and engaging prose, detailed analysis, well-developed paragraphs, and an attention to your audience.

## Guidelines and Due Dates

**Audience:** At base, you are writing for your instructor and peers, proposing a research project. The audience for this paper is more formal, more academic than for the Literacy Narrative. You might also imagine an audience in which your research paper, if you fully wrote one, would appear such as a scholarly journal.

**Format:** This assignment is a formal, academic paper and should follow the manuscript guidelines outlined in the course policies (see the course website for an example of a major paper's formatting):  
formal title page, appropriate title for your paper  
5-6 pages, typed, double-spaced, with MLA citations, stapled  
bibliography, correct MLA format

### Grading Rubric & Expectations:

**Sequence:** Short Paper 2.1  
Short Paper 2.2  
Short Paper 2.3  
Short Paper 2.4  
Short Paper 2.5  
Short Paper 2.6  
Read-Search Draft 2.7

**Due:** Monday, September 10