

Topic:

Consider the articles we've read from *Present Tense*, specifically their method of exploring some facet of our world such as the environment, health/nutrition, and technology, popular trends (in literacy, political beliefs, societal concerns of environment, safety, individual rights, etc), etc.

Your research paper will explore a contemporary issue of the world at large, whether political, cultural, or social, in a way that examines more than one point of view, and that seeks to analyze the causes, effects, and alternatives. As a result of this analysis, you will arrive at a singular, informed opinion that you will present in 3rd person, objective tone as a thesis statement. The specific angle you choose to present is up to you: you might argue for or against continued support of a policy; you might present an informative (yet persuasive) look at a particular media trend or technological influence, etc. As part of the response, you also should address the continuing influence of the social, cultural, or political moment.

You might choose to explore a topic addressed by one of the articles; for instance, you might explore further the effects that Google might have on our society—in a way that goes beyond “Is Google Making Us Stupid?” Or you might consider exploring the effects of environmentalism (or lack thereof), or explore trends in television such as the trend in creating “shocking” cartoons for adults or the direction of reality t.v.. These are just a few of examples.

Purpose:

The purpose of this topic is to cause you to see the complex relationships of seemingly mundane, ordinary things and/or to have you recognize that something seemingly simple or “true” is actually comprised of a series of complex causes and may ultimately result in unexpected consequences if not examined carefully. You are always surrounded with media images, public opinion, rapidly advancing technological gadgets, policies, and happenings that influence your life and that connect you to the community around you. How often do we stop to consider such a connection? This assignment gives you the opportunity to discover the world around you as it relates to something so common that you have perhaps never considered its importance on your development as a human being.

Requirements:

- Your research paper will be 5-7 pages typed in Times New Roman 12 pt. Font.
- You must utilize 4 sources in constructing your research paper.
- You may use only one internet source--all other sources must be from the SCF virtual library or from books, journals, magazines, newspapers, or other print sources or databases.
- You must utilize precise MLA in-text citations and a works cited page
- You must present a strong introduction, clear thesis, and identifiable main points with specific development.

- Your paper must conform to MLA specifications for page set-up (use the format from the Handbook).

Please stay within the page length guidelines: papers that are shorter than 5 pages tend to be incompletely developed; papers longer than 7 pages are often unfocused or contain too much "filler."