

## Core C American Lit | Research Paper—Getting Started | Quarter 2

### Paper Requirements:

- The paper must be 1500-2200 words and follow MLA guidelines.
- A minimum of *five* sources must be used; *one of those sources must be a book*.
- Your paper should include a combination of direct quotes, paraphrases, and summaries. Any material that did not originate with you **MUST BE CITED**. Direct quotes and paraphrases should not exceed thirty percent of your paper.
- Your sources must be scholarly writings. **This does not include blogs, Wikipedia, or personal web sites.**

**Choosing a Topic:** Choose a topic of interest to you from the time period studied in American Literature and History classes this year (think about influential people, social issues, movements, etc.). Keep in mind that your topic **MUST BE ARGUABLE**. This means that someone could disagree with your thesis! For Example:

NOT: *Adultery can be found in Puritan Literature.*

—This is uninteresting and leaves no room for disagreement.

INSTEAD: *Societal leaders should not determine the social punishment of sin.*

—There is room for disagreement here, and there is plenty of evidence to support your argument. It is as relevant today as it was during early America.

### Possible Topics List:

*The following is a list of possible research paper topics. A research paper is **not** a report. Instead, it must deal with a specific issue, and should prove a specific thesis. The following topics provide ideas for the focus of a paper, with the questions that follow intended to stimulate thinking about ways to approach a topic. THESE ARE TOPIC SUGGESTIONS ONLY—NOT THESIS STATEMENTS.*

**Native Americans**—What was the impact of European colonization on Native Americans?

**Women in colonial America**—What role did women play? How did they impact the revolution?

**Religion in colonial America**—How did religious persecution lead to the development of the American ideal of religious freedom? How did religious differences between the colonies contribute to a diverse and accepting citizenry?

**American Revolution**—What are the key causes? What factors contributed to an American victory?

**Indian Removal Act:** What were the reasons for its passage? What was the impact of the Trail of Tears that resulted?

**Manifest Destiny:** What were the causes of westward expansion?

**Oregon Trail:** Why was the motivation to move to the West so strong that people were willing to take enormous risks?

**Gold Rush:** What was its impact on the development of California?

**Slavery:** What was its impact on the economy of the South? What were its effects on African American families?

**Abolitionist movement** in the United States: Who were the key leaders, and what were their contributions? What was the impact on the tensions leading to the Civil War?

**The Underground Railroad:** What were the methods used? What was the impact?

**Dred Scott decision:** What was its impact on the slavery issue?

**Civil War:** What were the **key issues that caused conflict** between North and South?

**Civil War:** What were the **strengths and weaknesses of the North and the South**, and how did these factors contribute to the outcome of the war?

**Women in the Civil War:** How did they contribute?

**African American soldiers in the Civil War:** How did they contribute? What kind of discrimination did they face in the Union army?

**African Americans after the Civil War:** How were they affected by Reconstruction policies? How were they affected after the return of white supremacy? Discuss social, legal, and economic factors.

**Transcontinental railroad:** What was its impact on westward expansion?

**Legend vs. reality in the West:** Focus on myths and realities surrounding a particular figure (e.g.: Buffalo Bill, Wyatt Earp, George Custer, etc.)

**Native American conflicts in the West:** What were the causes and effects?

**Inventors/inventions of the 19th Century:** Choose a significant inventor or invention and examine the challenges of developing the item or the impact of the invention on the American society/economy.

**Wealthy industrialists in the late 1800s:** “Robber Barons” or “Captains of Industry”?

**The Gilded Age:** Discuss the origin of the term and why it is an appropriate metaphor for the United States in the late 1800s.

**Immigration in the late 1800s:** What were the difficulties faced by immigrants, and how did they adjust to life in America?

**Chinese immigrants:** Why did they come to the U.S.? What discrimination did they face? (Chinese Exclusion Act)

**Muckrakers:** What was the impact of this journalism on progressive reforms?

**Imperialism in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century:** Was it justified?

**Jim Crow Laws:** How did these affect African-American equality in the South?

**Spanish-American War:** What were the causes and/or effects?

**The automobile:** What was its impact on America’s economy and society?

**World War I:** What were the reasons for U.S. involvement?

**Women’s suffrage movement\_:** Who were the founders and what methods did they use? What were their successes and/or failures?

**Prohibition:** What were the causes? What was its impact on the development of organized crime?

**Stock market crash of 1929:** What economic factors caused it?

**Dust Bowl of the 1930s:** What were the causes and/or effects?

**Tuskegee Airmen:** What obstacles did they face? How did they influence the struggle for African American rights?

**World War II:** What was the impact of **propaganda** and its use in the United States?

**World War II:** What were the reasons for the success of the **D-Day invasion**?

**World War II:** What contributions were made by Americans on the home front, from **women** in particular? How did the war affect women’s employment?

**World War II:** What were the contributions of **African Americans**?

**Japanese Internment:** Why did it occur? How did it affect Japanese-Americans?

**Cold War:** How and why did it originate? What were its effects on U.S. foreign policy? How have attitudes toward communism changed since it ended?

**McCarthyism:** What were its causes? What were its effects?

**Baby Boom:** What was its impact on American society? (1950s-present)

**Brown v. Board of Education case:** What was its impact?

**Blacks in Baseball:** How did it affect/mirror the removal of other barriers for African Americans in society in general?

**Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s:** Evaluate the tactics and accomplishments.

**Lyndon Johnson’s Great Society:** What were its successes? What were its failures? What was the impact of this program on the creation of a welfare system in the United States?

**Vietnam War:** How did the **U.S. get involved**? **What were the social consequences**? Analyze the **treatment of veterans** returning from the war.

**Iran Hostage situation (1979):** What were the causes? Evaluate President Carter’s handling of the situation.

**Affirmative action in education or the workplace:** Is it still necessary? Why or why not? Be sure to focus the historical implications.

**Women’s Rights:** How have changes in women’s employment affected their role in society?

**Key people in American history:** chose an individual (i.e.: a President, First Lady, leader of a movement, etc.) and discuss that person’s impact on the United States. Get help formulating your thesis so that you do not simply write a report.

## Research | Library Database Instructions

Now that you have chosen your topic, your next step is to begin your research. You are to have a minimum of five sources, one of which must be a book. All of your sources should be of a serious academic nature, NOT blogs, Wikipedia, personal podcasts, etc. The public library databases in our area are recommended in your search for appropriate sources.

### Duval County Public Library:

- \* Go to: <https://jaxpubliclibrary.org/>, select "Research and Learning" link.
- \* From the "A to Z List of Databases, select MasterFILEPremier (EBSCO) or use the following link: <https://jaxpubliclibrary.org/masterfile-premier-ebSCO>
- \* Enter your library card number (FJP \_\_\_\_\_)
- \* Go to Advanced Search
- \* Check boxes for "Full Text," "PDF Full Text"
- \* Enter search terms in box ("Slavery and the U.S. Constitution," for example), click Search
- \* Numbered Results list will generate, click title to view abstract (summary)
- \* PDF Full Text to download to computer
- \* Tool bar on right allows you to print, save, email, download, and Cite button: gives correct citation, look for MLA, copy and paste to Word doc
- \* Return to list to view additional sources
- \* Can also select "Academic One File" for the Gale Academic Database (see directions below for St. Johns as it is the same database.

### St Johns County Public Library:

- \* Follow this link:  
[https://galeapps.gale.com/apps/auth?userGroupName=23414\\_sjcpl&origURL=https%3A%2F%2Fgo.gale.com%2Fps%2Fi.do%3Fv%3D2.1%26u%3D23414\\_sjcpl%26pg%3DBasicSearch%26it%3Dstatic%26sw%3Dw%26p%3DGPS&prodId=GPS](https://galeapps.gale.com/apps/auth?userGroupName=23414_sjcpl&origURL=https%3A%2F%2Fgo.gale.com%2Fps%2Fi.do%3Fv%3D2.1%26u%3D23414_sjcpl%26pg%3DBasicSearch%26it%3Dstatic%26sw%3Dw%26p%3DGPS&prodId=GPS)
- \* Enter your library barcode to sign in
- \* Go to Advanced Search, enter terms (Slavery, Christianity, etc)
- \* Choose "Documents with full text" and "Peer-reviewed journals"
- \* Choose "Article" for Document Type
- \* Search
- \* Select title to view, read
- \* Watch for book reviews—this is not a source, but could point you to a source
- \* Top bar allows you to download, print, cite, email, can even have text read to you with the "listen" icon
- \* Return to list to view additional sources

### Reminders:

- \* Look for university press publishers, authors with advanced degrees in subject area, legitimate news sources (New York Times, Wall Street Journal, etc.)
- \* You are to have identified 2 possible sources with which to begin your research before Christmas break. This is to be turned in as an annotated bibliography: a document each source as an MLA formatted Works Cited entry followed by a summary what the source is about and how it will aid in your research, due **December 14**.
- \* Please note that doing a quick internet search on your topic and turning in two links printed on a paper is NOT considered completion of this assignment, and if that is what you turn in it will be handed back to you with a grade deduction and the expectation of the correct assignment emailed within 5 days (which is during your Christmas break).

## Research | e-Notecard Pages

With your sources identified, begin taking notes on what you read, documenting as follows:

### Step 1: Bibliography Entry

After you find your source, BEFORE you start taking notes from it, you must create a bibliography entry. Your bibliography should contain the properly formatted MLA citation, the source number, and a brief description of how you plan to use the sources. Your entry should look like this:

#### **Source #1**

Gleick, James. *Chaos: Making a New Science*. Penguin, 1987.

I plan to use this book in my refutation to help disprove the theory of evolution.

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### Step 2: Notecard Entries

After you have created your bibliography entry, you can begin taking notes from this source. A notecard can contain a QUOTE, which you should put in quotation marks. It could also contain a PARAPHRASE (put a (P) after the note – no quotation marks), or a SUMMARY (put a (S) after the note – no quotation marks). Underneath your quote, paraphrase, or summary write a few words describing how it pertains to your topic. The notecard should first have the source number in bold (which source the information came from), with the TOPIC directly underneath (the TOPIC refers to the main idea of the card, not the topic of your paper). Leave an extra space, then note whether you are providing a quote, summary or paraphrase and provide the page number (if you use a website source, put a W if there is no page #; if it is from a database it will have a pg. #). Your quote, paraphrase, or summary follows, which should be more than a few words—the more complete your entry, the less digging you will have to do when you are actually writing your paper! Leave an extra space, then tell how this information could be important proof for your paper. Your entry should look like this:

#### **Source #4**

Huck Finn Controversy

Quote p. 44:

“The debate surrounding the racial implications of *Huck Finn* and its appropriateness for the secondary school classroom gives rise to myriad considerations. The actual matter and intent of the text are a source of contention. The presence of the word "nigger," the treatment of Jim and blacks in general, the somewhat difficult satiric mode, and the ambiguity of theme give pause to even the most flexible reader.”

This quote shows some of the things that could cause problems when the *Huck Finn* is taught in schools.

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### Step 3: e-Notecard Page

After completing your first notecard from a source, continue with another notecard from the same source, on the same document. The initial bibliography entry will still apply—you do not need to make a new one. Continue in the same manner until you have gathered the material you need from that source. If you are ready to begin a second source, start with a new page and begin again with Step 1 above.

## **Notecard Reminders:**

- ✓ There are e-notecard templates available on Weebly for both Word and Pages that set everything up for you. USE THEM!
- ✓ Every direct quote, paraphrase and summary in your paper MUST have a notecard tied to a specific source.
- ✓ All sources should be represented in notecards. To avoid relying too heavily on one source in your paper, try to have a similar number of quotes from each source.
- ✓ Make sure that you choose meaningful topics, reflecting your possible body paragraph topics, under the source number. This helps with the transition from note cards to outline.
- ✓ Remember to include a few of your own words on WHY this quote, paraphrase, etc. is important enough to include as a notecard.
- ✓ When you turn in your first set of 15 e-notecards, you should have bib cards & quotes/paraphrases/summaries from 1/3 of your sources. Your second and third sets of note cards should include the remainder of your sources. In other words, your first set of notecards should not be from one source only.
- ✓ By the end of the month (January), you will have turned in 3 sets of 15 e-notecards—45 notecards in all. Do not delay on this task—it will become insurmountable quickly!

## **Q2 Paper Deadlines:**

- November 30: Working Topic due
- December 14: 2 sources due (in class)
- Over break—Begin your research!

## **Looking Ahead (more info to follow in Q3):**

- Complete list of sources due in annotated bibliography format 1<sup>st</sup> day back
- January 13: Note pages from 1<sup>st</sup> 2 sources due (at least 15 notecards)
- January 20: Note pages from sources 3 & 4 due (at least 15 more notecards)
- January 20: Working Thesis Statement due
- January 27: Note pages from final sources due (at least 15 more notecards, for a total of 45)
- February 1: Body Paragraph outline with Topic Sentences
- February 8: Counterargument paragraph due
- February 15: Fully formed 1<sup>st</sup> argument due (1<sup>st</sup> body paragraph—TRIAC)
- February 22: Intro & Conclusion due; Bring full draft to class for peer review
- March 3: Final Research Paper due (see below)

**Late Penalties:** Each missed deadline will earn a twenty percent point deduction. Extensions are generally granted IF a request is submitted ahead of time in writing (e-mail). Just showing up to class the day something is due without anything to turn in is not acceptable and points will be deducted. When an extension is granted, student must diligently work to get caught up because the assignments build on each other.

**Final Paper:** Final drafts must be submitted in a pocket folder. On the left side, you will include all of your graded drafts. This will include: note pages, graded outline, graded 1<sup>st</sup> argument, and graded intro/conclusion. SAVE the graded work that is returned to you—you will need to resubmit it! On the right side, you will include your final draft, essay checklist, and rubric.