**Assignment #3: Synthesize (Synthesis)**

The purpose of this assignment is to demonstrate how well you can capture patterns and trends in your research topic (problem). Specifically, you’ll want to connect (synthesize) what others have already said about this problem so that your readers will have an in-depth understanding of the different perspectives of this topic. With this background understanding, you can move to define a new term, refute someone’s point, further support a perspective, etc. For this paper, you will essentially synthesize multiple perspectives on one issue so that you can support what you want to say.

**Note!** This is not a summary assignment. You should not summarize each source individually, and each paragraph should not be dedicated to only one source. During the research portion of this assignment, you may wind up summarizing your articles – this will help you identify patterns and connections among your sources.

Because you want to provide an in-depth background, you must do deep and careful research using reputable sources - a simple Google search will not be enough. Your readers will probably not believe you if your sources are Apple or Yahoo! News.

To get started, choose a topic that you find interesting enough to deal with for two assignments. If you’re not sure about your topic, ask your instructor for guidance. Using the techniques discussed in class for conducting research, generate a list of sources related to your topic. Evaluate the sources on this list based on the criteria discussed in class and determine if they are relevant to your research. If they are, great!

Read, annotate, and briefly summarize the sources. Take notes on any patterns and connections, and group similar bits of information together. Refer to NFG, Ch. 50, pp. 520-521 for an example of how a writer synthesizes several sources into different categories.

When you’re ready to begin the writing process, think about the following:

* What is your topic, and why might readers find it important/ relevant?
* What are the writers saying, and what categories, patterns, or trends do you observe? Why are these writers believable, and what forms of appeal do they use? Are they reliable sources of evidence?
* If you can divide the topic into categories, how would you divide them? Which writers would fall into those categories?
* In response to all of these writers, what do you have to say? Do you agree, disagree, etc.?

**Cover Letter**

When you are ready to submit your final draft in Week 13, you must include a cover letter at the beginning of this document, before your final draft begins. Your cover letter must summarize and **explain** the revisions you made to your original draft.

**Format & Layout**

[Insert how you want students to organize their writing and format their paper.]

Sample General Outline

* Introduction with Thesis
* Category 1 with sources and evidence
* Category 2 with sources and evidence
* More categories as needed and so on and so forth
* Conclusion

Your paper should reference 3-4 sources and be about 3-6 pages in length, single-spaced.

Include in-text citations where you paraphrase or quote directly from the article. Include a Works Cited or Reference page at the end of the paper.

**Due Dates**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**  [Annotated or Working Bibliography] - strongly recommended

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**  First Draft

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**  Peer Review

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**  Final Draft

**Let’s Reach for an A!**

The default grade for this assignment (and this course) is a B. If you would like to earn a grade of “A” for this assignment, you must do the following:

In addition to the assignment's main purpose, you should attempt to include the arguments and perspectives from 2-3 extra sources as a way to enrich your argument and to explore the nuances of your topic.

For example, you could discuss another type of pattern, connection, or category that these extra sources bring to the topic. Or, you could discuss how these sources provide a different view within a certain pattern, connection, or category.

This extra layer of sourcework is very flexible. It does not have to be perfect, but it must demonstrate a good faith attempt to develop nuance in your argument by exploring more perspectives on a certain topic. **In other words, by doing this, you are practicing expanding an argument beyond a black and white perspective – you are trying to show that there are many ways that people have written and argued about your topic.**

*Note: If you want to earn an “A” in this course, you must make good faith attempts to complete the “Let’s Reach for an A!” sections in 2 of the 3 major assignments.*

**Final Submission Checklist**

* I have included a cover letter as the first page of my assignment where I summarize and explain what revisions I made to my draft.
* I have not simply summarized each article.
* I have included a thesis statement that captures the focus of my paper.
* I have provided evidence to support my thesis statement.
* I have discussed the context of the problem.
* I have discussed patterns and connections in what the writers are saying.
* If I want to earn an "A," I have made a good faith attempt to fulfill the requirements in the "Let's Reach for an A!" section.
* I have included in-text citations and a Works Cited/Reference list.
* I have formatted my paper [as my instructor has described.]
* I have saved the document as a .pdf or .docx file for submission.