



Introduction to Inquiry-Based Research Essay

ENGL 110: Freshman Composition | Fall 2020

See full Assignment Sheet [here](#)



Assignment Description

- 6-8 page (1500 – 2000 words) research essay on a **social issue of your choice**
- The development of a **research question** is the cornerstone of the essay
- Question must be **approved by instructor**
- Identify an article to serve as a **model for the essay**.
 - Your essay will take on the **genre conventions** of this model essay (i.e. where the thesis goes and how it's worded, how the essay is organized, its visual presentation, and how it concludes, etc.)
- **4 scholarly sources** and **3 popular media sources** (min.)
- (At least) one **opposing point of view**.



Considering the Rhetorical Situation of Your Essay

- **Purpose:** *What is your broad purpose? To inform? To argue? To analyze? A combination?*
- **Audience:** *To whom are you writing? What does your audience know about your topic, and is there any **background information** you'll need to provide? What kinds of **evidence** will they find persuasive? How do you want them to respond to your writing?*
- **Genre:** *What is your intended genre, and does it affect what content you can or should include? Does your genre require a certain organization? Does your genre affect your tone? Does the genre require formal (or informal) language? ***Note: Genre should mirror model essay***
- **Stance:** *What is your attitude toward your topic? Why? **How do you want to come across?** Curious? Critical? Positive? Something else?*



What makes a good research question?

- **Clear**: *It provides enough specifics that one's audience can easily understand its purpose without needing additional explanation.*
- **Focused**: *It is narrow enough that it can be answered thoroughly in the space the writing task allows.*
- **Concise**: *It is expressed in the fewest possible words.*
- **Complex**: *It is not answerable with a simple "yes" or "no," but rather requires synthesis and analysis of ideas and sources to answer.*
- **Arguable**: *Its potential answers are open to debate rather than accepted facts.*



Sample Research Questions

- How does tension between the N.R.A and gun protesters affect the process of gun control laws in America? -- *Aristotle Aung (Fall 2018)*
- What are the effects of not vaccinating infants on the overall public health in the United States? -- *Laura Link (Fall 2018)*
- How do safe injection sites influence opioid addiction and overdose within North American cities? -- *Rivka Bar-Chaim (Fall 2018)*



Evaluating a Research Question

- **Can the question be answered too easily?** Does it require research to answer?
- **Can the question be disproved or is it self-evident?** Does it prompt development of an argument supported by evidence?
- **Can the question be supported with factual evidence?** Does it avoid speculation, subjective responses, or bias?
- **Are there too many sources on this topic?** Is the question focused on a specific topic or issue?



Crafting a Research Question

Individual practice: Select a research topic and draft research question using the prompt below.

- Spend five minutes minutes, **writing a dialogue** between yourself and someone you imagine talking to about your topic (your instructor, roommate, or friend, for example). *Begin by trying to answer the questions you think that person would be most likely to ask about your topic and go from there.*
- **Select 1-2 questions from your list** that you find interesting and that suit your rhetorical situation. Use these questions to guide you in the revision of your final research question.



Model Essay Requirements

- Must be **related to your research topic**, however it does not have to specifically address your research question
- Must be at least **6 - 8 pages** (1500-2000 words)
- Must include **secondary sources**
- **Sample Model Essay:** "[Our Fear of Immigrants](#)" by Jeremy Adam Smith

Model Essay

[Federal Judge: Philadelphia's Safe Injection Site is Legal](#) | [Vox.com](#)

Cities are considering safe injection sites. A federal judge just said they're legal.

Philadelphia and other US cities are pursuing safe injection sites. Here's why.

By German Lopez | @germanlopez | german.lopez@vox.com | Updated Oct 2, 2019, 3:20pm EDT

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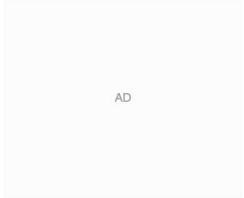


The Washington Post via Getty Images

Several American cities are rallying around a new response to the **opioid epidemic**: safe spaces for using heroin.

The concept has gained traction in New York City, Philadelphia, San Francisco, and other cities across the US. The thinking is to allow supervised drug consumption sites where people can use drugs with sterile injection equipment and the supervision of trained staff, who are ready with the opioid overdose antidote **naloxone** if anything goes wrong. The sites may also link people to addiction treatment on request.

The idea: While in an ideal world, no one would use dangerous and potentially deadly drugs, many people do. So it's better to give these people a space where they can use drugs with some sort of supervision. It's a harm reduction approach.

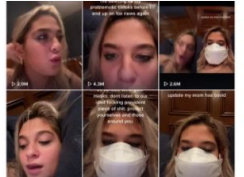


AD

MOST READ



California's largest wildfire on record is now a million-acre "gigafire"



Claudia Conway's TikToks, explained

Student Essay

How Safe Injection Sites are Preventing Death and Overdose by Rivka Bar-Chaim (Fall 2018)

Can safe injection sites help?

How Safe Injection Sites are Preventing Death and Overdose

Safe injection centers provide addicts access to clean needles and supervision. It is important to know if these facilities are effective.

By: Rivka Bar-Chaim | rbarcha000@citymail.cuny.edu | Published Nov 19, 2018



Photo by Cindy Shebley CC BY 2.0

"There's a big, gaping hole in the family... and everything we do – there's one missing," said the father of Teslin Russell, an eighteen-year-old girl [who died of drug overdose in 2016](#). Her family was heartbroken by her completely unexpected death, and so are many others who are affected by the opioid crisis every day (CTV News). The Opioid crisis is a major issue in many countries today. Many people die every day from the crisis, and others fall ill and are at [high risk of being hospitalized](#) (Raol).

One option for dealing with the opioid crisis is the establishment of safe injection sites. Safe injection sites are centers that supervise drug injection and provide clean needles for people addicted to opioids. In most safe injection sites, addicts come in with their own drugs and can safely inject the drugs under supervision. Safe injection centers [will often connect addicts to other programs](#) such as centers for recovery and rehabilitation (Weiner).



Assignment Timeline

OCT 9 -- RESEARCH TOPIC REFLECTION

OCT 16 -- RESEARCH PROPOSAL DUE

OCT 23 -- REPORT ON RESEARCH IN PROGRESS DUE

OCT 30 -- ESSAY #2 FIRST DRAFT DUE

NOV 2 -- PEER REVIEW COMMENTS DUE

NOV 6 -- ESSAY #2 FINAL DRAFT + REFLECTION DUE



QUESTIONS?

[Discussion Forum](#)