

# The Researched Essay

ENGL 110 | WATSON & NIVENS | FALL 2023 | PHASE 3

## Overview

For this assignment, you will examine a current, specific, and debatable topic to explore and present to a specific audience of your choice.

## Length

5-6 Pages (12-point font, 1-inch margins, double spaced)  
**plus** any images you choose to include

## Due Dates

Proposal: **Oct 31, 2023**

**FULL** draft (peer review): **Nov 14, 2023**

**FINAL** draft: **Nov 17, 2023**

**PORTFOLIO VERSION** (with cover letter): **Dec 7, 2023**



# The Researched Essay

## Assignment Prompt

1. Investigate a theme that has emerged from our introduction to language politics.
  - Respond to one of the claims made in our texts or research your own question (personal connections welcome) to share a new perspective not covered in the readings.
  - Consider language and literacy's relationship with one or more of these issues: identity, culture, and background; social and linguistic hierarchies; government, educational, and (socio)economic influences; public and cultural beliefs; family, personal, and other interpersonal dynamics and conflicts; accent politics; the dominance of standardized English; language subordination; colonization; race and racism.
  - Whatever it is, **the topic must be controversial or debatable** in some way, allowing you to explore multiple perspectives and determine your own stance.

## Assignment Requirements

- Your paper will be **5-6** pages (12 pt font, 1 inch margins, double-spaced)
- Any images will be in addition to the minimum page requirements
- **MLA citation** within the body of your essay
- **Works Cited** page
- The **final** version of your essay should be preceded by a **cover letter**.

## The "A" Option

If pursuing an "A" in the course, your essay will be **7-8 pages** long and use the **maximum** amount of sources in what's outlined (on the next page), and **one of your academic sources must be a peer-reviewed scholarly article**.

# The Researched Essay

## Sources

Your essay must include **4-7 sources** comprised of the following:

- 1-2 scholarly sources specific to your topic that you locate. This can take the form of a peer-reviewed academic research article, a chapter in a scholarly book, a scholarly website (.edu), or reference work (e.g., encyclopedia).
- 2-3 non-scholarly sources. If pursuing the topic of language and literacy, you may fulfill this requirement by using 2-3 of our course texts. Otherwise, locate sources such as websites (public affairs, advocacy, government, commercial), statistics, essays, articles (newspaper, magazine, blog), press releases, documentaries, and literature.
- 1-2 multimedia sources: video/movie clips, photographs, images, memes, (political) cartoons, sound bites, links, lyrics, Tweets, graphs, etc.

**Note:** About **half** of the essay will be your **source work** (summary, paraphrase, and quotations). The **other half** will be your interpretations, ideas, examples, transitions, connection making, and claims about your source work.

## Questions to Ask Yourself

1. Who will be your intended audience?
  - Will they be your classmates and instructors? Friends or family? The general public? An academic crowd? Is your audience informed or uninformed about the topic? What are their interests and values? Are they likely to agree or disagree with your perspectives?
2. What will your purpose be?
  - Your purpose will depend on your goals, how much you know about your topic, and what your audience needs. Your purpose will be to explore the issue and to inform your reader what you find. Your purpose might be to argue your case, and you'll have to decide whether to argue "gently" or "fiercely."

# The Researched Essay: Writing Strategies

## Include the Following Writing Strategies in Your Essay:

### 1. Make some persuasive rhetorical “moves.”

Consider your own goals alongside your audience’s needs and expectations: What will capture their interest? What sorts of evidence will they find credible/persuasive? What tone will appeal to them? What sorts of claims will be welcome or cause alarm? What sort of conclusion will compel them? How much do you want to adhere to or defy audience expectations?

**Remember:** You decide the order, tone, style, and language you’ll use. You’re welcome to draw on your “native,” “home,” or “other” languages, literacies, and ways of being as you so choose.

### 2. Summarize, paraphrase, and quote.

Introduce each source in your paper by providing a brief (1-3 sentence) summary of the rhetorical situation (the audience, genre, publication, purpose, and context) and the overall argument. Strike a balance between paraphrasing and quoting key ideas/passages from sources.

### 3. Take a Stance.

Whatever it is, it's important to make your stance clear throughout your essay. Any claims you make should be relevant, explicit, specific, qualified, and complicated.

### 4. Signpost.

Provide “signposts” (or “metacommentary”) throughout your essay, aka topic sentences, transitions, and other “guiding” language aimed at helping your reader follow along and make sense of what connections exist between sources, ideas, examples, you, and your claims.

# Assessment Rubric

## **I. Audience Awareness**

How effectively are ideas, arguments, and sources introduced given the specific audience, their perspectives, and expectations?

## **2. Source Use**

How effectively are ideas and sources delivered and developed in the essay? How specific and appropriate are the examples and passages used? How effectively and accurately does the essay introduce and summarize the rhetorical situations and main ideas from each source used? How effectively are specific ideas/passages paraphrased and/or quoted?

## **3. Stance**

How relevant, explicit, specific, qualified, and complicated are the claims throughout the essay? How effective is the relationship between stance and evidence? Are the claims made supported sufficiently by the evidence? That is, are appropriate/relevant ideas pulled out from the source use to establish the writer's thesis/stance?

## **4. Signposting**

How effectively are readers "guided" throughout the essay so that ideas, sources, and different claims are clearly attributed and distinguished from one another? Are the perspectives and relationship across texts named explicitly? That is, are ideas from across texts shown as supporting, extending, complicating, and/or challenging one another?

## **5. Revision, Editing, and Formatting**

Does the essay show evidence of thoughtful revision and editing? Has the essay been effectively formatted, including the title, in-text citations, and Works Cited page?

## **6. General Requirements**

Were all general requirements for length, source use, and due date met?