Southern New Hampshire University

HIS 100 Project 2: Research Plan and Introduction Guidelines and Rubric

Overview

"If you want to understand today, you have to search yesterday."

—Pearl Buck

Your second longer term assignment in this course is to complete a **research plan and introduction**. The work you did on the Topic Exploration Worksheet in Theme: Questioning History will directly support your work on this project as well as your third longer term project—the multimedia presentation—due in Theme: Making History.

One of the prime benefits of studying history is that it allows us to learn about who we are and where we came from. The people and events of the past can often shed light on the conditions and social norms of the present. Having historical awareness can inform various aspects of your life as well as future aspirations. Learning from past failures and successes can shape ideals and values for years to come.

This is your second longer term project designed to help you understand the fundamental processes and value of studying history. In the first project, you selected an intriguing historical event and completed the Topic Exploration Worksheet. You investigated the types of research you might need to do to learn more about the topic and developed research questions. **In Project 2, you will use your completed Topic Exploration Worksheet to complete a research plan and introduction. You will choose one of your research questions and do some secondary source research, speculate on primary source needs, and use the information to write the introduction and thesis statement for a possible research paper. (You will not write the entire paper—only the introduction).** In the third project, you will create a multimedia presentation that explores both major developments in historical inquiry as well as the value of examining history.

This research plan and introduction assignment will assess the following course outcome, which you focused on throughout Theme: Interpreting History:

- Determine fundamental approaches to studying history in addressing questions about how events are shaped by their larger historical context

Prompt

In this project, you will write the introductory paragraph of a history paper based on one of the questions you identified in your topic exploration worksheet. To do this, however, you must first find out a bit more information about your topic and draft a research plan. This will allow you to transform your question about your topic into a thesis statement, as well as give you the background information you will need to craft an interesting introductory paragraph. You will not write the entire paper, just the introduction to the paper that concludes with a thesis statement. The following critical elements will be assessed in a Word document of 3–5 pages that combines both your research plan (Critical Elements I–II) and your introduction (Critical Element III).

Specifically, the following **critical elements** must be addressed:

I. Compile **secondary sources** about your event that address the following questions using the provided materials. Be sure to cite your information using the most recent version of APA guidelines. Based on the sources you have selected, address the following questions:
   A. What is the **historical context** of the event? In other words, what was going on in the world/area/society around the event?
   B. How did the historical context **influence** the event? For instance, what was happening in the world/area/society around the event that impacted how it occurred?

II. Compile **primary sources** you could use for additional information using the provided materials. Be sure to cite your information using the most recent version of APA guidelines. Based on the sources you have selected, address the following questions:
   A. Discuss how the primary sources **relate** to the secondary sources. Do the primary sources support what the secondary sources are telling you, or do they contradict what those sources have told you?
   B. Explain what these primary sources **add** to your understanding of the topic. How does it help you understand the topic *better* than the secondary sources?

III. Write your **introduction.**
   A. Based on your primary and secondary source research, turn your research question into a **thesis statement** that addresses your topic and how it has been influenced by its historical context.
   B. From the knowledge you have gained from your primary and secondary sources, determine what **background information** you will use in the introduction to lead to your thesis statement.
   C. **Write** your introduction. Be sure to incorporate your background information and to conclude with your thesis statement.

Supporting Work and Resources

Throughout Theme: Interpreting History, there are opportunities to work directly on different elements of the research plan and introduction.

1. In learning block 6-1, you will use your chosen **secondary sources** to help you establish the context for your topic and your research. What historical trends affected your topic? How did your topic affect historical trends?
2. In learning block 6-2, you will determine how your chosen **primary sources** "fit" with the secondary sources. Do the primary sources support the secondary sources, or do they seem to tell a different story? How do the primary sources help you to understand the secondary sources (and your topic) better?
3. In learning block 6-3, you will write an **introduction to your project**, which includes a **strong thesis statement**, relevant context, and a summary of the primary and secondary sources you would use in a full project.

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Project 2 Rubric

Guidelines for Submission: Your research plan and introduction should be 3–5 pages, with double spacing, one-inch margins, 12-point Times New Roman font, and formatted according to the most current version of APA style.

Instructor Feedback: This activity uses an integrated rubric in Blackboard. Students can view instructor feedback in the Grade Center. For more information, review these instructions.

Critical Elements	Exemplary (100%)	Proficient (85%)	Needs Improvement (55%)	Not Evident (0%)	Value
Secondary Sources: Historical Context	Meets "Proficient" criteria and information used from research communicates a strong grasp of the historical context	Explains the historical context of the event, properly citing the secondary sources used	Explains the historical context of the event but does not properly cite the secondary sources, or is cursory or has inaccuracies	Does not explain the historical context of the event	14
Secondary Sources: Influence	Meets "Proficient" criteria and information used from research communicates a strong grasp of the influence of the historical context	Explains how the historical context influenced the event, properly citing the secondary sources used	Explains how the historical context influenced the event but does not properly cite the secondary sources, or is cursory or has inaccuracies	Does not explain how the historical context influenced the event	14
Primary Sources: Relate	Meets "Proficient" criteria and compilation communicates depth of thought about the topic	Explains how the primary sources relate to the secondary sources	Explains how the primary sources relate to the secondary sources but has inaccuracies	Does not explain how the primary sources relate to the secondary sources	14
Primary Sources: Add	Meets "Proficient" criteria and details communicate depth of thought about the topic	Explains how the primary sources listed add to understanding the topic	Explains how the primary sources listed add to understanding the topic but is overly generalized	Does not explain how the primary sources listed add to understanding the topic	14
Introduction: Thesis Statement	Meets "Proficient" criteria and argument posited demonstrates insightful connection between event and its historical context	Crafts a thesis statement based on the research question that addresses the topic and how it has been influenced by its historical context	Crafts a thesis statement based on the research question that addresses the topic, but does not address historical context or has inaccuracies	Does not craft a thesis statement based on the research question that addresses the topic	14
Introduction: Background Information	Meets "Proficient" criteria and choice of background information demonstrates insight into the argument posited	Determines background information for introduction relevant to the thesis statement based on secondary source research	Determines background information for introduction based on secondary source research but lacks relevance to thesis statement or has inaccuracies	Does not determine background information for introduction	14

Introduction: Write	Meets "Proficient" criteria and cohesion of expression demonstrates a mature grasp of the requirements of an introduction	Writes an introduction that incorporates the background information and concludes with the thesis statement	Writes an introduction that incorporates the background information and concludes with the thesis statement but is cursory or has inaccuracies	Does not write an introduction that incorporates the background information and concludes with the thesis statement	14
Articulation of Response	Submission is free of errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, and organization and is presented in a professional and easy-to-read format	Submission has no major errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization	Submission has major errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization that negatively impact readability and articulation of main ideas	Submission has critical errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization that prevent understanding of ideas	2
				Total	**100%**