**Research Paper**

The purpose of the assignment is to explain how literature from the past eras we have studied—Enlightenment, Revolutionary, Romantic, Modern—shaped, influenced, or paved the way for the book you read. You should also pay special attention to the *book’s* *influence*, explain any *ideals* revealed in your text of choice, how those ideals do or do not reflect ideals from the past and influence the future, and discuss how the *characters* are indicative of what the intended audience needed, expected, feared, or desired at the time of publication. You will consider the elements we have discussed in class: *Writer, Audience, Text, Reality, Critic, and Influence,* research them, and offer a thorough explanation in your research paper. Your research should include at a minimum: (1) information on the author, (2) the social norms and historical events of the time, (3) literary criticism, (4) genre, and (5) influence. You should explain in detail the influence the text has had on its intended audience and why it is an important piece of literature.

Your paper should focus on what social factors influenced the author to write the book and how the book in turn prompted social change. Your research will focus on the author, the social norms and historical/political events of the time the text was published, any literary criticism or discussion you can find from experts, and how the text was influenced and is still influential. Determine the genre of the text, do some research on it, and provide your own analysis as to how the text meets those expectations of the genre requirements.

**Research:**

**Author:** biography of author – consider what life events, cultural influences (race, religion, nationality, gender, age, etc.), beliefs, or opinions influenced the author and are exposed in the text. What year was the text published? What historical or political events were going on that may have influenced the author and the text?

**Audience:** Consider social norms of the *intended* audience. Think about how historical and/or political events may have affected the intended audience’s perception of the text. What assumptions might the audience have? What about their cultural influences?

**Text:** What makes the text stand on its own as a valuable and classical piece of literature? Consider *rhetorical tools* (logos, pathos, ethos, Kairos, exigence). If it is a fictional book, consider *elements of fiction*: plot, point of view, characterization, setting, tone and style, themes, and symbolism.

**Reality:** How accurate does the author represent the world and universal truths? How factual are the descriptions to real world? How does the author make the text, characters, and message relatable to the reader?

**Critic: (you**) What experiences, beliefs, assumptions, cultural influences, etc. affect you and your take on the book?

**Influence**: What social/global influences helped shape the book, and what social change did the book help create in return?

**Genre:** What genre is the text? Does it meet genre requirements? Why is genre important?

**Topical Proposal**

The Topic Proposal is an explanation of the book you’ve chosen, why you chose it, what it is about, and what you intend to research and discuss in your paper. ​ (Note: the chosen book is ​**Oliver Twist** by Charles Dickens) ​

For the Topic Proposal, you must give a concise summary of the book, explaining the main idea and key points. Give a brief explanation as to why you chose the text and what you intend to research and discuss in your paper. It should be at least 750 words. Be sure to include the following:

* Introduce the author and the text. Provide necessary background for the readers to understand your proposal
* Give some information on the text itself-publication date, country in which it was published, social norms of the intended audience
* Briefly explain why this text is an important text
* Give an overview of your plans for research and discovery
* Provide a summary of the full text so that someone who has never read the book understands the main concepts
* Give character analyses and consider why the protagonist might be a good protagonist for the intended audience
* Delve into your precursory analysis of the influence of Enlightenment, Revolutionary, and Romantic (think emotions and passion here) eras on the text. Provide a working hypothesis about how you think the text is influential