

English 1A, LPC, Cole

Fast Food Nation:
Research Paper Project

Assignment and Audience

Write a 6-8 page documented research paper that educates your teacher and peer researchers about a topic/issue related to Fast Food Nation by Eric Schlosser. See attached list of possible topics / issues.

Objectives:

In writing this paper, you will practice the following:

- Developing and addressing a research question;
- Conducting research;
- Using the Las Positas College Library;
- Evaluating sources;
- Extracting pertinent information from researched materials;
- Synthesizing the information from researched materials;
- Discussing the ideas and / or presenting information from researched materials with accuracy and clarity;
- Accurately attributing ideas and / or quotations from researched materials using MLA documentation;
- Avoiding plagiarism;
- Writing a focused, cohesive, well-developed, organized, clear research paper;
- Participating in the steps in the writing process;
- Engaging in peer response;
- Presenting your work to peer researchers.

Content Requirements:

These requirements will overlap and the organization of your paper need not follow the organization of these items. The paper should be a minimum of 6 pages (not including the Works Cited).

- Title at the top of the paper;
- Introduction of your topic / issue;
- Summary of Eric Schlosser's discussion of the topic / issue in Fast Food Nation;
- Your research question (this will be your thesis);
- Why you are interested in this question;
- Any key terms and / or background information that is needed to understand the topic / issue;
- Presentation of your research which addresses the research question;
- Your answer to the research question;
- Your conclusion.

Research and Documentation Paper Requirements:

- All researched information should be accurately documented using parenthetical citation.
- There should be a thorough and accurate Works Cited attached.
- The paper should cite a minimum of six sources in addition to Fast Food Nation. The sources must include the following:
 - At least one book;
 - At least one article from a magazine or newspaper;
 - At least one article from a database.

Format and Structure Requirements:

- Follow the "Manuscript format" guidelines as described in A Writer's Reference (see p. 368).
- The paragraphs should have the "PIE" structure.

Process Requirements:

*Note: If you want to work with a partner, refer to the guidelines / requirements listed below.

Choose your topic / issue from the attached list (or propose your own, contingent upon instructor approval). Read all that Schlosser says in *Fast Food Nation* about the your chosen topic / issue (use the index). Write your research question. See the handout with sample questions.

Due to Instructor: Th 11/17 (10 points)

Choice of topic / issue

Summary of Schlosser's discussion of this topic / issue in *Fast Food Nation* (You may have to read ahead. Use the index in the back of the book.)

Your research question (rough draft).*

Attend the LPC Library Orientation: Th 11/17 (10 points)

Conduct initial research and refine research question.

Due to instructor: T 11/22 (10 points)

A list of at least 10 possible sources*

At least two printed-out articles (with bibliography cards)*

Your refined research question.*

Research your topic / issue, attempting to answer your question.

Due to Instructor: T 11/29 (30 points)

20 Note Cards (follow format on handout)*

8 Bibliography Cards*

Rough Outline of Paper.*

Note: I will not accept your paper without the note and bibliography cards

Presentation: Th 12/1 and T 12/6 (20 points) – See requirements below.

Rough Draft: T 12/6

Rough Draft for Turn-It-In: Th 12/8

Final Draft: T 12/20, 9:30 a.m.

Presentation*:

Your goal for the presentation is to describe your research question, any key terms or necessary background information, and where you are in your effort to answer this question to a group of peer researchers and your teacher.

Requirements:

The presentation should be no longer than 5 minutes per speaker.

The presentation must include a visual aide.

The speaker(s) should hand in an outline of the presentation.

*Requirements – Working with a Partner:

You may work with a partner on this research project. In fact, working with a partner can be very helpful. However, if you choose to do so, please adhere to the requirements below. If the partners do not adhere to the requirements below, both partners will receive a "0" for the given assignment. If at any time you are unclear about the requirements, please see me.

The choice of topic / issue may be the same. However, the research question must be different. It should be related, but each partner should look at a different aspect of the topic / issue. (Due Th 11/17, 10 points each)

The partners should hand in at least 15 possible sources and three printed-out articles. The refined research question will be different. (Due T 11/22, 10 points each)

The partners should hand in 40 notes cards and 16 bibliography cards together or each may do his / her own. The outlines will be different. (Due T 11/29, 30 points each)

The presentation should be between 5 – 10 minutes. The partners may share one visual aide and one presentation outline. Both partners should speak. (Due Th 12/1 or T 12/6, 20 points each)

The papers should address different aspects of the topic / issue and will answer different research questions, so each paper must be written by the individual researcher. Please do not participate in "group" authorship.

Turn-It-In:

I will be requiring you to submit your rough draft and final draft to Turn-It-In in an effort to facilitate our discussion of how to avoid plagiarizing.

Grading:

As in previous essays, your paper will be graded on the strength of the following characteristics. The numbers indicate the points you will receive for each characteristic (100 points possible).

Focus / Cohesion: 15 points

The essay has a clear thesis (research question);
The paragraphs have clear points that develop the thesis and each other;
All of the information in the essay relates to and / or develops the thesis.

Development: 55 points

Content Requirements – The essay has . . .

A title at the top of the paper;

An introduction of your topic / issue;

A summary of Eric Schlosser's discussion of the topic / issue in Fast Food Nation;

An explanation of why you are interested in this question;

Defined key terms and / or background information that is needed to understand the topic / issue;

A presentation of your research which addresses the research question;

Your answer to the research question;

Your conclusion

Body paragraph points that are supported by accurate and specific researched information;

Explanations (as needed) of how the information supports the points;

Accurately documented information from sources, using citations and including a works cited.

Organization: 10 points

The paragraphing is logical;

The order of ideas is logical;

The transitions are smooth so that the essay is cohesive.

Style: 5 points

The word choice is fresh and appropriate;

The sentence structure is smooth and varied.

Mechanics: 15 points

The sentences are properly constructed, with no grammar or usage errors;

The punctuation is correct;

The writer has proofread for typographical and spelling errors.

Note: Inability to accurately and thoroughly document research will result in a "0" as will a plagiarized paper.

Peer Response:

Arrive to peer response prepared with three copies of your rough draft. Arriving unprepared will result in the loss of 10 points on your final draft.

Final Draft:

Include in your manila envelope the following:

Your final draft (with works cited);

All rough draft(s) with peer / instructor / tutor / turn-it-in notes;

All prewriting (planning sheet, outline, etc.);

All note and bibliography cards (Paper will not be accepted without these.)

Original research questions;

A self-addressed, stamped envelope if you want the paper returned to you with instructor comments.

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I've listed some possible topics below. Because we haven't finished the book yet, you should read ahead based on the topic that you choose. Also skim the "Epilogue" in which Schlosser presents some possible solutions (see p. 262 . . .) and the "Afterword" (see p. 271 . . .) in which he adds additional information. You may develop your own related topic / issue, but I must approve it before you officially begin your research for your paper. If you choose your own related topic / issue, please hand it in for approval on 11/17.

Possible Topics:

Kids as consumers (see p. 41 . . .)
Fast food in the schools (see p. 51 . . .)
Workers in the fast food industry (see p. 59 . . .)
Fast food franchisees: free enterprise with federal loans (see p. 98 . . .)
Potato farmers and the fast food industry (see p. 116 . . .)
The flavor industry (see p. 119 . . .)
The beef industry and the fast food industry (see p. 133 . . .)
The poultry industry and the fast food industry (see p. 139 . . .)
Slaughterhouses (see p. 152 . . .)
Migrant workers and the meatpacking industry (see p. 160 . . .)
Working conditions and the meatpacking industry (see p. 169 . . .)
Meat and public health (see p. 193 . . .)
Fast food across the globe (see p. 225 . . .)
Fast food and obesity (see p. 239 . . .)
Critics of fast food (see p. 243 . . .)
Mad cow disease (see p. 271 . . .)
Politicians / political parties and the fast food / meatpacking industries (see p. 277...)
McDonalds and vegetarians (see p. 278 . . .)
McDonalds and an improved public image (see p. 282 . . .)
Meatpacking industry in Texas (see p. 283 . . .)

Related Possible Topics:

"Organic" meat and produce
"Sustainable" farming and ranching

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Prewriting: Planning Sheet
12 Important Questions)

What is your possible topic / issue?

What does Schlosser say about this topic / issue? (Note direct quotations / page numbers. Check the index and skim the end of the book.)

What is your possible research question? You are likely to refine it as you conduct your research. This will be your thesis.

4. What interests you about this question?

What are the "supporting" questions, the smaller questions, which you will need to answer in this paper to address the research (thesis) question?

What are key terms and / or background information that is needed to understand the topic / issue?

What are the subjects you are likely to address in the paper and for which you should make note cards?

Freewrite or brainstorm the answers to the following questions after you have finished researching your paper. You should attach additional pages to this prewrite and label each so that I know what question you are answering.)

What are the answers to the research question?

How will you organize the paper? Make an outline.

What might make a good title for the paper?

What might make a good introduction for the paper?

What might make a good conclusion for the paper?
Tips: Organizing Your Paper and Making an Outline

Depending on your topic and research question, there may be a variety of ways that you might want to organize your paper. Here are a couple of possible approaches:

Problem / Solution & Cause / Effect:

Define the Problem (research question)
Why is this a problem?
Define key terms.
Give background information.
Describe causes.
Describe effects.
Propose possible solution(s).

Argument:

Give research question.
Define key terms.
Give background information.
Present position (your informed opinion that addresses the question).
Describe opposing positions.
Refute those positions.
Explain the reasoning behind your position .
Call to action.

Other approaches might involve illustration, comparison and contrast or classification. Please let me know if you want to know more about these organizational structures.