



Researched Critical Essay over *Oedipus the King*

In Essay #2, you will write a critical essay over the play, *Oedipus the King*. The foundation for a strong essay will be the quality of your reading and thinking about this play. You will need to apply all the strategies of close, interactive, and critical reading as well as reflective thinking to be successful.

Essay Requirements:

You are to write a “critical essay” on *Oedipus the King* using one of the Essay Questions we determine together in-class. Your essay should be 1000-1250 words and include supporting information from the play as well as from a minimum of two critical articles found from the SAC Library Databases (in the databases I designate) and one book. Students desiring an “A” will include at least four research sources (in addition to the play). The final draft should be turned in MLA Manuscript format using MLA Documentation Style to document sources.

Essay Question:

As a class, we will develop a set of Essay Questions to assist you in focusing what to write on. You will choose your Essay Question from this set of options. If you choose to write on another Essay Question, you should gain instructor approval.

Developing your “Argument”

As you develop YOUR interpretation of the play and YOUR answer to YOUR ESSAY QUESTION, you will incorporate support for your thinking from both the play AND the academic articles and book you find from research. You are encouraged to explore alternative interpretations, and handle them as point-counterpoint sections or paragraphs where you express and fairly summarize the alternative interpretation, and then counter or refute it.

What is a “Critical Essay?”

You will be writing another “critical essay,” and an important part of doing well in this essay is continuing to learn and study the characteristics and features of a critical essay so that you can reproduce them in your own essay. You will find these three sources as essential to assisting you in this inquiry:

- 1) Guide to the Characteristics of a Critical Essay
-- <http://www.lirvin.net/WGuides/critical.htm>
(be sure and follow links that explain each feature)
- 2) “What is Academic Writing” <http://www.parlorpress.com/pdf/irvin--what-is-academic-writing.pdf>
- 3) See this example critical essay using research:
<http://www.lirvin.net/WGuides/EGcritessaywresearch.pdf>

Writing Critical Summaries

For this project, I am asking for you to find, read, and summarize TWO articles written on the play. If you read three articles, you can do three Critical Summaries. Follow the guidance below:

Find Articles

I am asking you to select articles from the *Literature Resource Center* database inside the SAC Library selection of databases. Alternatively, you can also use *JSTOR*.

Read Your Article

You will need to read this article closely and critically, so be sure to print a copy of your article so that you can annotate it. To help you summarize the article, I suggest that you re-read, re-skim the article and outline its main parts and points.

Summarize Your Article

You will write a 100-200 word summary of your article. Start the summary with the complete and correctly formatted Works Cited entry for the article. Skip a line and write your summary generally following this format:

- A) What is this article about? What question or issue or topic related to the story does it discuss?
- B) Summarize the main points that it makes related to this question/issue/topic.
- C) Evaluate what is useful or insightful about this article. Evaluate its limits too. Do you find the article useful and good or not? Why?

Strategies for Developing Your Essay

1. Clarify your “logical skeleton” of your essay
 - Essay Questions:
 - Thesis:
 - Primary Supports (at least three)
2. Create “data sheets” or Evidence Sheets for each of your Primary Supports
 - put the THESIS + REASON/SUPPORT at the top of each page
 - review your play and your research sources for “evidence” that supports that reason/support and “collect” it on the data sheets
3. Use your Evidence Sheets as you write each separate Body paragraph

Remember when you write the body paragraphs on each Primary Support that you will need at least THREE secondary supports with textual evidence for each Primary Support. Also, your secondary support will come from BOTH your research sources and the play.)

Hint: “Good writers write from a surplus of information.” Donald Murry

See this [Guide for Crossing the Bridge from Reading to Writing](#)