

Term Paper: Exploration

Overview

The major assignment for this course is a term paper. At this point, you should have settled on a topic for your term paper, thanks to the brainstorm assignment. Now it is time to find an appropriate literary work on that topic. This “exploration” assignment is designed to help you come up with some possible ideas for what that work could be.

Structure

To receive full credit, your exploration must present three possible literary works on your chosen topic, as recommended by three different kinds of sources, as follows:

- (1) **A recommendation from a search engine:** Find one literary work on your chosen topic by searching for such works on a search engine, like Google or DuckDuckGo. You may have to try a few different search terms to find an appropriate website. Once you’ve found what you think is a promising recommendation from one of these websites, write out the name of the work, a link to the website where you found the recommendation, and a short description of the work. (If the website itself does not include a description of the work, find another website that does and use that.)
- (2) **A recommendation from a real person:** Find another literary work on your chosen topic by asking for a recommendation from a real person. This person could be a librarian, a teacher, a professor (including me!), a TA, or just a well-read friend or family member. Once you’ve found what you think is a promising recommendation from someone, write out the name of the work, the person who gave you the recommendation, and a short description of the work. (Ideally, this description will come from the same person.)
- (3) **A crowdsourced recommendation:** Find another literary work on your chosen topic by seeking out crowdsourced recommendations. For example, make a post on Facebook or Twitter or the suggestmeabook subreddit ([reddit.com/r/suggestmeabook](https://www.reddit.com/r/suggestmeabook)), asking if anyone knows of any good books on your chosen topic. Or do something similar; the key here is, in some way or another, to get a recommendation by asking people on the Internet. Once you’ve found what you think is a promising recommendation, write out the name of the work, the website/app you used (with a link if possible), and a short description of the work (ideally, from the person who recommended it).

Finally, after you’ve listed out your three recommendations, specify which work you are most interested in making the focus of your term paper and why.

Guidelines

Your “short descriptions” of each work should, among other things, make clear why the work is relevant to your chosen topic.

Your three literary works must all be different; even if you receive the same recommendation from multiple sources, you cannot use that recommendation multiple times.

You may list out more than three literary works, so long as you include at least one from each kind of source.

None of your literary works may be the same as any of the works that we are reading in class.

You will receive full credit for this assignment so long as you present a literary work from each of the three different kinds of sources, along with all the required information; in particular, you will not be graded on the quality of the recommendations or the descriptions.

Turning it in

Please submit your exploration via Quercus, in the textbox provided on the “Exploration” assignment.