

IB History of the Americas-Summer Assignment

Welcome to IB History of the Americas!

This summer I would like for you to read the following work, Lies My Teacher Told Me-Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong, by James W. Loewen. The book can be purchased on Amazon.com, at Barnes and Noble, Joseph Beth, etc. It can also be found as an online pdf at:

<https://4.files.edl.io/0ec3/06/28/18/155729-1b8ab639-28ff-4b2d-858e-4ecf1f9cbbc4.pdf>

If the link does not work for you, try Googling: PDF Lies my Teacher Told Me. A few options should pop up.

You are to read the entire work and then write a critical analysis on the work for the beginning of the fall semester. I am attaching a brief explanation of what a critical analysis is, a sample outline and some helpful hints.

Just based on previous experience...this is a college level text. It will take you longer than a few days to read. Please factor this in and start early in the summer. Keep in mind, if you do not turn in your assignment by the first day of school, you will automatically be dropped from the class.

Critical Analysis

The purpose for writing a critique is to evaluate somebody's work (a book, an essay, a movie, a painting...) in order to increase the reader's understanding of it. A critical analysis is subjective writing because it expresses the writer's opinion or evaluation of a text. Analysis means to break down and study the parts. Writing a critical paper requires two steps: critical reading and critical writing.

Critical reading

1. Identify the author's thesis and purpose
2. Analyze the structure of the passage by identifying all main ideas
3. Consult a dictionary or encyclopedia to understand material that is unfamiliar to you
4. Make an outline of the work or write a description of it
5. Write a summary of the work
6. Determine the purpose which could be
 - To inform with factual material
 - To persuade with appeal to reason or emotions
 - To entertain (to affect people's emotions)
7. Evaluate the means by which the author has accomplished his purpose

If the purpose is to inform, has the material been presented clearly, accurately, with order and coherence?

If the purpose is to persuade, look for evidence, logical reasoning, contrary evidence.

If the purpose was to entertain, determine how emotions are affected: does it make you laugh, cry, angry? Why did it affect you?

Consider the following questions: How is the material organized? Who is the intended audience? What are the writer's assumptions about the audience? What kind of language and imagery does the author use?

Sample Outline for Critical Essay.

After the passage under analysis has been carefully studied, the critique can be drafted using this sample outline.

I. Background information to help your readers understand the nature of the work

- A. Information about the work
 - 1) □ 1. Title
 - 2) □ 2. Author
 - 3) □ 3. Publication information
 - 4) □ 4. Statement of topic and purpose
- B. Thesis statement indicating writer's main reaction to the work

II. Summary or description of the work

III. Interpretation and/or evaluation

- A. Discussion of the work's organization
- B. Discussion of the work's style
- C. Effectiveness
- D. Discussion of the topic's treatment
- E. Discussion of appeal to a particular audience

Helpful Hints:

Avoid introducing your ideas by stating "I think" or "in my opinion." Keep the focus on the subject of your analysis, not on yourself. Identifying your opinions weakens them.

Always introduce the work. Do not assume that because your reader knows what you are writing about, you do not need to mention the work's title.

Other questions to consider: Is there a controversy surrounding either the passage or the subject which it concerns?

What about the subject matter is of current interest?

Support your thesis with detailed evidence from the text examined. Do not forget to document quotes and paraphrases.

Remember that the purpose of a critical analysis is not merely to inform, but also to evaluate the worth, utility, excellence, distinction, truth, validity, beauty, or goodness of something.

Even though as a writer you set the standards, you should be open-minded, well informed, and fair. You can express your opinions, but you should also back them up with evidence. Your review should provide information, interpretation, and evaluation. The information will help our reader understand the nature of the work under analysis.

The interpretation will explain the meaning of the work, therefore requiring your correct understanding of it. The evaluation will discuss your opinions of the work and present valid justification for them.

Have a wonderful summer! I look forward to seeing you in the fall.