**Textual Analysis Essay Assignment**

In your college courses, you are often asked to read and analyze text, and by text, I am referring to books, articles, websites, and even movies. You are then often asked to write papers in which you explain the meaning or the significance of the text and point out its strengths and weaknesses. These papers are known as **textual analyses**. This type of essay is explained in detail in Chapter 14 of your *Simon & Schuster Handbook* and there is a sample student textual analysis paper on pages 167-172.

For this assignment, you will analyze the advertising campaign developed by The Meth Project ([www.methproject.org](http://www.methproject.org)), which has taken the “Just Say No to Drugs” campaign of the past to the extreme. You will then write an essay in which you analyze the effectiveness of this campaign and some of its advertisements.

You will obviously need to cite The Meth Project website in your essay, but you *may* (or *may not*) choose to include additional research as well. All sources must be cited within your essay using **parenthetical citations** and these sources must also appear on a MLA-formatted **Works Cited** page. You should reference Chapter 25 in your *S&S Handbook* for models of parenthetical citations and works cited entries.

**The Writing Process**

Follow the steps in the writing process to compose this essay:

1. First, go to The Meth Project website ([www.methproject.org](http://www.methproject.org)) and analyze its contents. Take notes of your reactions as you click around. These notes will be quite helpful when you begin to plan your essay.
2. Next, critically think about the effectiveness of this anti-drug campaign. Consider what types of rhetorical strategies, which are also known as **persuasive appeals** (logos, ethos, and pathos), the advertisers are using. See section 3B on pages 17-18 in your *S&S Handbook* for more information about these three persuasive appeals. You should also consider if the advertisements contain any **logical fallacies**; see section 3I on pages 37-39 of your *S&S Handbook* for definitions of the most common logical fallacies. Again, take notes as you review these sections; you may be able to incorporate some of your notes into you essay.
3. After putting some thought into this topic, you should be ready to begin organizing your raw ideas into an outline for an interesting essay. To start your outline, you must first decide on a **thesis** (central idea) to convey to your readers. Your goal is to draft a thesis sentence that forecasts the major topics you will address in your essay—for example: “The Meth Project advertising campaign is [insert adjective] because [reason 1], [reason 2], and [reason 3].” This type of thesis is known as a **three-part thesis statement** and it is a helpful way to ensure your essay will be well-organized. As you create your outline, keep in mind that your analysis essay must include an **introductory paragraph** (in which you state your thesis), a *brief* paragraph that includes summary information about The Meth Project website, at least three (3) **body paragraphs** in which you support your thesis with evidence, and a **concluding paragraph**. Refer to the “Frame for a Textual Analysis” on pages 165-166 of your *S&S Handbook* for suggestions on how to outline your analysis essay. You should submit your outline on Canvas and receive feedback before moving on to the next step in this writing process.
4. Refer to your outline as your write your **first draft**. Make sure your introduction begins by capturing your readers’ attention and ends with a clear **thesis statement**. Also make sure each of your body paragraphs begin with a clear **topic sentence**. Refer to the sample student analysis essay on pages 167-172 of your *S&S Handbook* for more ideas on how to draft an essay of this type. Do not forget to include a **Works Cited page** at the end of your essay; you can use model #76 on page 340 of your *S&S Handbook* to help you create a works cited entry for The Meth Project website.
5. Take some time away from your first draft (at least a day) and then read it over with “fresh eyes.” Think of ways that you can **revise** your writing to make it more clear and detailed. Consider whether you need to include more specific details, or whether you need to reorganize your points. Pay special attention to your thesis to be sure it accurately conveys the central point of your analysis, and make sure that each of your body paragraphs begins with a clear topic sentence that relates back to your thesis. Only after you have gone through a self-revision process should you participate in **peer review**. Peer-review will occur through Canvas; be sure to carefully consider the feedback you get from your classmates as you make additional revisions to your essay.
6. Read over your revised essay several times to **proofread** for mistakes in grammar, word choice, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. Try reading your essay out loud or from the conclusion up to catch all mistakes. Be warned: Essays that are not carefully proofread and edited will receive low or failing grades! Once you are satisfied with your final draft, you should upload it to Canvas by the due date. Your essay will then be graded using the ENG102 rubric (see Canvas).

**Essay format & due dates**

Your essay must be MLA-formatted (consult class handouts and your *S&S Handbook* for more information on MLA style). Your essay should also include a creative, attention-grabbing title. The final draft of your essay should be *at least* three (3), double-spaced pages in length (approximately 800 words). Please consult Canvas for due dates and record those dates below.

**Due date for outline: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Due date for rough draft (peer-review): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Due date for final draft: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**