

Ancient Greece and Rome

Research Essay Prompt

In a 12-14+ page essay, written in 12 point Times New Roman font, following all of the rules of the Turabian style, as well as the conventional expectations of logic, grammar and rhetoric, write a research essay on a topic of your choice from either Greece or Rome. (Choose either a thematic or historical topic).

Option 1: Historical Research

Explain the cause and effect of one specific event from the classical world, from either Greece or Rome. Here is a general outline to follow.

Topic Selected – Due Wednesday, September 17

- Write a 1 page summary of your top 2-3 favorite topics, explaining what you know about each one.

Phase I – Due Friday, October 10

- **Introduction.** Give a general overview of the event. What happened? Why was the event important for ancient history? (1-2 paragraphs.) Then include the following:
 - **Literature Review.** What have the current scholars said about this event from the last couple of centuries? (2 paragraphs, documenting *two* secondary sources.)
 - **Thesis.** State your thesis in one short paragraph, either when Phase I or Phase II is due. (1 short paragraph.)

Phase II – Due Friday, October 31

- **Cause.** What was the historical background? What were the circumstances or the event that led to the outcome? Who were the major people or groups involved? (2-3 paragraphs, discussing at least one original source.)

Phase III (Final) – Due Friday, November 21

- **Effect.** What was the outcome? What were the major features of the event? (2-3 paragraphs, discussing at least one original source.)
- **Conclusion.** Sum everything up. What did it mean for the course of ancient history? What did it mean for the development of Western civilization? (1-2 paragraphs.)

Option 2: Thematic Research

Explore a theme or phenomenon from the classical world, from either Greece or Rome, based on both secondary and primary sources. Here is a general outline to follow.

Topic Selected – Due Wednesday, September 17

- Write a 1 page summary of your top 2-3 favorite topics, explaining what you know about each one.

Phase I – Due Friday, October 10

- **Introduction.** Give a general overview of the phenomenon. What were its major features? What was its place in ancient society? (1-2 paragraphs.) Then include:
 - **Thesis.** State your thesis in one short paragraph, either when Phase I or Phase II is due. (1 short paragraph.)

Phase II – Due Friday, October 31

- **Current Theories.** How have modern classical scholars explained this phenomenon? What have they said? What are their disagreements (if any)? Explain at least *three*. (3-4 paragraphs.)

Phase III (Final) – Due Friday, November 21

- **Sources.** How do the primary sources confirm or conflict with the theory? What is the genre of each primary source (poetry, history, philosophy, etc.)? How do the sources confirm or conflict with each other? (2-3 paragraphs, discussing at least *two* original source.)
- **Conclusion.** Sum everything up, and restate the thesis. What does this topic mean for the classical world? What does it mean for Western civilization? (1-2 paragraphs.)

Option 1 Suggestions:

- **Archaic Greece.** How did a tyrant establish his rule? How was Athenian democracy founded? What event made the Greeks especially aware of themselves as a people?
- **Classical Greece.** What was a major social trend in Athens? What was an important political event? What was a major development in the visual arts, particularly architecture?
- **Republican Rome.** What was an instance of Roman virtue? What was a major battle in the republic's various military conflicts? What was an event that led to the republic's decline?
- **Imperial Rome.** What was an event in the growth of the empire? What was an event that marked its impact on the world (for better or worse)? What was an event that marked its decline?

Option 2 Suggestions:

- **Art.** Concepts of beauty, excellence and aesthetic theory.
- **Custom.** Particular practices and observances.
- **Economics.** Property, trade and commerce.
- **Education.** Useful trades, civics and philosophy.
- **Family.** Parents, children, and the family in the city.
- **Friendship.** Love, trust, and citizenship.
- **The Gods.** Specific myths, local legends, and religion.
- **Historiography.** Ancient historians, myth and philosophy.
- **Law.** The social order, political organization, and custom.
- **Marriage.** Betrothals, weddings, and families.
- **Politics.** The city, individual citizens, and justice.
- **Religion.** Worship, community rites and observances.
- **Society.** Hierarchy, privilege and oppression.
- **War.** Weapons, strategy and military life.
- **Women.** Roles, social status, and political importance.

Research Essay Rubric

Content (60%). Engagement with the research.

____ **Thesis (10%).** The general point of the essay is clearly stated.

____ **Secondary Sources (20%).** There is an adequate discussion of the scholarly sources.

____ **Primary Sources (30%).** All claims are adequately supported with well-integrated quotes from the research.

Writing (30%). The essay is well-written according to the conventional rules of grammar, logic and presentation.

____ **Grammar (15%).** Correct use of grammar, punctuation, and word-choice.

____ **Argument (10%).** The thesis is supported by persuasive arguments based on sub-theses and quotes.

____ **Style (5%).** The essay is written in a simple style that conveys the author's meaning.

Form (10%). The essay is organized, and follows the Turabian Manual of Style.

____ **Structure (5%).** The essay is well-structured and orderly, showing the opposing sides of the question.

____ **Citations (5%).** All sources are cited following the Turabian manual for citations.

Note: Any essays with incorrect citations will not receive higher than a B+.

TOTAL: _____