

# Unit 11: Literary Research Paper

Content Area: **Language Arts**  
Course(s): **English 3A**  
Time Period: **Semester 2**  
Length: **6/8 weeks**  
Status: **Published**

## Standards

---

ELA.L	Language
ELA.L.SS.11–12.1	Demonstrate command of the system and structure of the English language when writing or speaking.
ELA.L.SS.11–12.1.A	Apply the understanding that usage is a matter of convention, can change over time, and place, and is sometimes contested.
ELA.L.SS.11–12.1.B	Observe hyphenation conventions.
ELA.L.SS.11–12.1.C	Recognize spelling conventions.
ELA.L.KL.11–12.2	Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.
ELA.L.KL.11–12.2.A	Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level.
ELA.L.KL.11–12.2.B	Vary syntax for effect, apply an understanding of syntax to the study of complex texts.
ELA.L.KL.11–12.2.C	Demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.
ELA.L.VL.11–12.3	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 11–12 reading and content, including technical meanings, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
ELA.L.VL.11–12.3.A	Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
ELA.L.VL.11–12.3.B	Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., conceive, conception, conceivable).
ELA.L.VL.11–12.3.D	Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech, its etymology, or its standard usage.
ELA.L.VL.11–12.3.E	Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).
ELA.W	Writing
ELA.W.AW.11–12.1	Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
ELA.W.AW.11–12.1.A	Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
ELA.W.AW.11–12.1.B	Develop claim(s) and counterclaims avoiding common logical fallacies and using sound reasoning and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience’s knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.
ELA.W.AW.11–12.1.C	Use transitions (e.g., words, phrases, clauses) to link the major sections of the text, create

	cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.
ELA.W.AW.11–12.1.D	Establish and maintain a style and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose (e.g., formal and objective for academic writing) while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
ELA.W.AW.11–12.1.E	Provide a concluding paragraph or section that supports the argument presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).
ELA.W.IW.11–12.2	Write informative/explanatory texts (including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes) to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
ELA.W.IW.11–12.2.B	Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience’s knowledge of the topic.
ELA.W.IW.11–12.2.C	Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.
ELA.W.IW.11–12.2.D	Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic.
ELA.W.IW.11–12.2.E	Establish and maintain a style and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose (e.g., formal and objective for academic writing) while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
ELA.W.IW.11–12.2.F	Provide a concluding paragraph or section that supports the argument presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).
ELA.W.WP.11–12.4	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, trying a new approach; sustaining effort to complete complex writing tasks; tracking and reflecting on personal writing progress (e.g., using portfolios, journals, conferencing); or consulting a style manual (such as MLA or APA Style), focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
ELA.W.WR.11–12.5	Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
ELA.W.SE.11–12.6	Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation (MLA or APA Style Manuals).
ELA.W.RW.11–12.7	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes.
ELA.SL.II.11–12.2	Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.

## Enduring Understandings

Students will understand the following:

How to read challenging fiction, poetry, drama, and nonfiction with attention to nuances of content and style.

How to make connections between and among ideas of multiple authors writing on related subjects.

How to craft and develop a complex thesis expressing the writer's own informed position.

How to achieve clarity and coherence through formal organization, expert use of evidence, effective transitions, and correctness at the sentence level.

## **Essential Questions**

---

How can writing help readers understand a work of literature more fully?

How do we make meaningful connections between and among works of fiction, poetry, drama, and nonfiction?

How do we develop and support an interpretive position on an issue?

How do we balance the voices of other authors with our own voice?

## **Knowledge and Skills**

---

Students will read and understand articles, essays, and works of fiction, poetry, and drama intended for an educated audience.

Students will use this knowledge to develop claims that respond to the ideas of others.

Students will develop their own sustained claims in dialogue with texts and independently make connections, solve problems, and convey understanding based on synthetic thinking.

Students will synthesize texts by connecting ideas from multiple texts.

Students will become proficient using the Modern Language Association documentation style in their writing.

## **Additional Resources**

---

Literary Research Paper Guidelines

Grade 11 - all levels

Assignment rationale:

The goals of this assignment are to foster inquiry, and to strengthen research, close reading, and analytical writing skills by teaching students to manage the extended task of writing a literary research paper.

The kind of research paper this assignment requires

While this paper will most often be described as an argument, it is not an argument in the sense that the student is attempting to persuade the reader to take some specific action or change a previously held point of view. Instead, this paper is more of an attempt to gain the reader's acceptance of the information and explanations the student sets out in writing.

Selecting a topic and getting started

The starting point for this paper is a student's own reading of a literary work - a short story, novel, play, or poem - from junior year English class. After selecting the literary work that will serve as a starting point, a student uses the list of topic options below to propose a focus for the paper.

Excerpt from Roberts, Edgar V. *Writing About Literature*, 13th ed. Upper Saddle River, Pearson, 2012.:

1. A particular work. You might treat character... or tone, ideas, structure, form, and the like. A research

paper on a single work is similar to an essay on the same work, except that the research paper takes into account more views and facts than those you are likely to develop without the research.

1. A particular author. A project might focus on an idea or some facet of style, imagery, setting, or tone of the author, tracing the origins and development of the topic through a number of different stories, poems, or plays... This type of essay is suitable for a number of shorter works, although it is also applicable for a single major work, such as a longer story, novel, or play.
1. The influence of an idea, author, philosophy, political situation, or artistic movement on specific works of an author or authors. An essay on influences can be specific and to the point... or it can be abstract and critical.
1. The origin of a particular work or type of work. Such an essay might examine an author's biography to discover the germination and development of a work... Another way of discovering origins might be to relate a work to a particular type or tradition.

(Roberts 263)

Sequence of activities:

In-class and homework activities while planning, researching, and writing this paper follow the general progression outlined below.

With ongoing instruction and individualized support, students will:

- Determine a research topic using the options above.
- Transform this topic into a set of questions to guide research.
- Find sources that will be useful in answering research questions.
- Use insights gained from source material to help refine or "educate" the research questions.

-Take notes and develop a method for organizing those notes and the sources that help answer the core research question(s).

-Reflect on findings from primary and secondary sources.

-Develop a working thesis, and establish a line of reasoning - a sequence of supporting claims to develop the thesis.

-Draft the paper one section at a time. To do this, a student close-reads well-chosen pieces of evidence to develop each supporting claim.

-Use feedback from the teacher and from peers to revise and strengthen the focus, organization, development, and overall presentation of the paper.

-Edit writing for clarity and to be sure that sources are documented according to MLA style.

Assignment specifications by course level:

	Eng 3 OCR	Eng 3 CP	Eng 3A	AP Lang and Comp
Required length in pages	2-3 pages	3-4 pages	4-5 pages	5-6 pages
Minimum number of sources required for annotated bibliography	2	4	6	8
Minimum number of sources required for paper	2	2	3	3

Assessment and Grading

Required at all levels:

Individual conference and/or written feedback on:

-Working thesis, basic line of reasoning, and first paragraphs. (pair & share/ large group/conference)

-Annotated bibliography to correspond with minimum number of sources required for each level

(pair & share/ large group/conference)

-Outline of full paper outline to include working thesis, supporting claims stated as full sentences, primary source textual evidence, secondary source textual evidence. (Written Comment)

-An early draft of the first three paragraphs (pair & share/ large group/or conference)

-A mid-process draft consisting of the first half of the paper (Written Comment)

-A late-process draft of the full paper, with sources documented and a corresponding works cited page

(Rubric & Endnote)

Scoring rubric:

-English department scoring rubric for writing (College Board) with an addendum for MLA documentation.

---

## **Assessment**

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1\\_w12qVbVV7OTThc9VW43HSpZm3Czh9kegRwYqjMm7fQ/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1_w12qVbVV7OTThc9VW43HSpZm3Czh9kegRwYqjMm7fQ/edit?usp=sharing)

---

## **Modifications**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/17jJtNi1cFhRgM3667P67m3pGkjlSD-XarWejIWAANIg/edit?usp=sharing>