ASSIGNMENT

“Literacy” is a word used in many different ways. Traditionally, it has been defined as competency with the written word, or the ability to read and write. However, in recent years, the term “literacy” has grown to include many different forms of fluency, and the meaning of the word has evolved to indicate that one has adequate knowledge in a specified area, as well as the ability to use that knowledge.

We have read several essays that discuss the importance of literacy as it is traditionally defined—pertaining to the written word. There are, however, many types of literacy that are important to Americans in the 21st Century.

In this essay, you will be required to explore a form of 21st century literacy through an argument and analysis. Your task is to focus on one type of literacy and to craft an argument that analyzes the significance of that literacy for contemporary Americans. In other words, what is one interesting, newly-emerging, or noteworthy form of literacy, and why is it so important?

RELATED READINGS/WEB READINGS
Douglass, “Learning to Read and Write,”
Orwell, “Politics and the English Language”
Lakoff, “You Are What You Say.”
Web reading: The NCTE Definition of 21st Century Literacies
Web reading: Multiplicities of Literacies in the 1990s
Web reading: Kinds of Literacy

OTHER REQUIREMENTS
- Your final draft must incorporate at least 3 and no more than 4 sources.
  - One of those sources must be from the “Related Readings” in the prompt.
  - Your remaining sources may be book, periodical, and journal articles only. You may not use any web sites.
- An MLA Works Cited page is required, and you must use in-text citations.
- All drafts—rough and final—must have an introduction and conclusion, and be written in MLA format in order to be considered complete.
- The final draft must be a minimum of 5 pages. Rough drafts must be at least 2 full pages.
- Failure to submit complete any assigned thesis statements or drafts will result in a deduction of 10 points from your final grade per missing/incomplete submission.

TIPS
- You cannot discuss a term as broad as “Literacy” in a 5-page paper. Make sure that your argument is about a specific type of literacy. Find a focal point for your argument.
- Do not start your research until we begin researching together in class! You should already know what you want to argue before you start investigating what research is out there. Don’t jump ahead.
- Remember that a source cannot be a topic sentence. The main focus of this paper should be on your ideas, not on the essay(s) you use to support your point.
- Essay 2 required you to analyze a quote in a great deal of detail; be sure to use those skills in this essay. You should also expect to use many of the techniques from Essay 1. Clearly define any abstract, general, or subjective terms, and use your own rhetoric to help you develop a tone while conveying your position.
GRADING/OUTCOMES
Your score for this paper will be based largely on the following:

1. **Introduction** – Remember that every introduction serves at least two major functions: it discusses any necessary background (*context*), and it introduces the thesis statement.

2. **Thesis** – You are expected to craft a thesis using the C-S-C method. Your thesis must meet all requirements listed in the prompt, avoid general terminology, and set a specific focus for your paper.

3. **Topic sentences** – Your topic sentences should also follow the C-S-C format. Each topic sentence should carefully connect back to a key idea from your thesis statement. Your topic sentences must avoid general terminology and act as a magnifying glass, setting up a focused discussion about something that you allude to in your thesis statement.

4. **Body paragraphs** – Your body paragraphs must focus on developing the claim you make in your topic sentence. Your own ideas and arguments are most important to this development—do not simply summarize our readings. You will need to use “W” questions to develop your analysis thoroughly. Body paragraphs should be presented in a logical order and should have a natural “flow.”

5. “Showing” important **details** – Important details should be illustrated for the audience; show them what you mean, rather than telling them.

6. **Appropriate use of sources** – Sources should not be the main focus of the paper; they should be used to support an argument. All sources must be appropriately integrated and cited.

7. **Strength of argument** – Your argument should be strong, logical, and well-supported.

8. **Conclusion** – Your conclusion must wrap up your discussion while working to connect to your *audience* one last time. Remember that you must use the conclusion to answer the question “So what?” (or, in other words, “Why should my audience care about what they just read?”).

RECOMMENDED WRITING AND READING CENTER ACTIVITIES
You are encouraged to visit the **Writing and Reading Center** throughout the process to receive feedback on your drafts. You may also make an appointment with me if you have specific questions or concerns. If you are having difficulty developing your ideas, you may wish to work on any (or all) the following activities:

- General 30-minute session (DLA 001)
- DLA #214–Writing about Research

DUE DATES
Please see the reading and assignment schedule for due dates. Note that not all of the due dates are class meeting dates! All assignments must be uploaded to **Insite** by the start of class on the specified due dates. Additionally, you may want to review my syllabus to re-familiarize yourself with my policies on late work, incomplete work, technological difficulties, etc.

QUESTIONS AND FEEDBACK
You are welcome to post questions to your classmates about the assignment to the class Facebook group; this is a forum you can use for informal discussion about your assignments, and you are welcome to utilize it to solicit feedback on your ideas. Please note that if you intend to contact me, you should do so through e-mail.

Before e-mailing me with concerns, please ensure that the prompt and my syllabus do not already answer your questions.