

THE RESEARCH PAPER

The most common complaint voiced by freshman university students regarding the transition from high school to post-secondary study is that the expectations for written assignments are vastly different from those outlined in former high school classes. Research has shown that high school writing assignments differ from post-secondary prompts in these two major capacities¹:

1. The expected length of the finished product is often much longer. Some undergraduate papers call for a response of up to 4000 words (16 pages). The average length of a high school composition, however, hovers around 1000 words or four pages.
2. Unlike many high school writing prompts, the opinion of the student is not the central lens through which a topic is assessed. Rather, the student is expected to apply the philosophy or research of other scholarly writers or thinkers in place of his or her own pre-conceived conclusions.

As a means of helping you bridge this gap (and to nurture a competitive edge over your future peers), you will learn the thinking patterns, organizational structure and writing format required in a typical sophomore-year university writing assignment.

While I understand that you are not yet at this level, the pace at which we tackle this project will be gradual and the emphasis will center on the development of sound reading, writing and research habits alongside a sophisticated end product. Don't be intimidated. You have the opportunity to participate in an effort that, although challenging, will contribute to your future success in both the academic and work worlds. Make the most of the experience.

THE PROMPT

It is probable that historians will one day describe the 21st century as a period filled with fantastic global changes. Our goal as a class will be to discover how the United States fits into our increasingly globalized world. How does this country influence the many dramatic changes brought about by these powerful agents of change? How will these same forces affect America's position in the future?

*Thomas Freidman attempts to define these changes in his insightful book **The World is Flat**. Using this book as a springboard, you will choose one aspect of American society, economy or politics and analyze its connection with globalization in the form of a 2500-word research paper. You will go about this in three major ways:*

1. *Choose one aspect of our contemporary society (i.e. an element of life relating to race, gender, culture, politics, economics, religion, socio-economic class, etc.) and conduct the necessary research that will allow you to describe how it is influenced by globalization.*
2. *Select one major philosopher, writer, thinker, or leader from a bygone era. Read a biography, novel, or other landmark publication (whichever is most applicable) in order to better understand the fundamental aspects of this person's position on major issues. You must also read at least two scholarly interpretations of this individual's thoughts, with at least one of these publications in partial or complete opposition to the position taken by your chosen figure.*
3. *Analyze how your chosen figure would explain, refute, and/or confirm the changes that have taken place in the aspect of society you examined in section one. It is important that you analyze HOW and WHY this shift in American society has taken place through the perspective of this individual by synthesizing the research that you have gathered from each of the aforementioned sections.*

You will weave each section of this assignment into a written report and employ the conventions of formal academic writing. Two versions of this paper will be submitted, one in MLA format and the other in APA format.

¹ McErney, Lawrence & Williams, Joseph M (2002). Writing in College. New York: Vintage.

PART I

1. **General Concept:**
Specific Concept:
Research Question:

2. **General Concept:**
Specific Concept:
Research Question:

3. **General Concept:**
Specific Concept:
Research Question:

PART II

1. **Thinker:**
Reasons for Selection:

2. **Thinker:**
Reasons for Selection:

3. **Thinker:**
Reasons for Selection: