

Informative and Surprising Research Essay

What am I doing? You will be writing this essay to inform your audience about your topic. So how does the “surprise” element come in, you may be asking. The surprise element comes in like this: this information should be **NEW** to your audience. You will not just be hashing over what everybody already knows about your topic--you will be providing information that your audience didn't know before. So what do you have to know before you begin? You need to know:

- Your audience
- What you want to find out about your topic
- The “common view” of your topic

Audience

You will be picking the audience for this paper and specifying who they are. They should be someone who would be interested in your topic, but not an expert in the subject (if they're an expert, you probably won't be able to teach them anything). For example: if you're writing a paper about eating disorders, you don't want your audience to be eating disorder specialists. A better audience would be a group who would be interested in your topic (or would need to know about it) but doesn't currently know a lot about it, such as teachers, parents, or coaches. **Be sure to name your audience right under the title of your essay!! It should look something like AUDIENCE: parents**

Guiding Question

The guiding question can be a very helpful tool when writing an essay such as this because it provides just what it suggests: guidance. It gives you a good idea of what you need to look for and it helps you narrow down your topic. Once you have picked a general subject like “eating disorders”, you will need to narrow it down a lot further. What do you really want to know about eating disorders? Maybe you want to know “do eating disorders only affect women?” This gives you someplace to go with your investigation. It gives your research focus. After you establish what you're looking for, it's easier to find the information you need.

Common View

The common view of your audience is something that **MUST** be established. The “common view” is the set of beliefs that your audience already holds about your topic. If your topic is eating disorders, and your guiding question is “do eating disorders only affect women?”, then you have to find out what your audience already believes about this subject. If your audience **DOES** believe that eating disorders only affect women, then providing them more information about **THAT** won't surprise them. However, if you could find information that said that there are a significant number of men who suffer from eating disorders, based on the common view of your topic, **THAT** would be surprising information.

The Assignment:

Write a 4-5 page Informative and Surprising Research Essay using ***the prompt below***. The essay needs to:

- Be typed in 12 pt Times New Roman font
- Be double spaced
- Use an MLA paper header
- Use MLA formatted in-text citations (using at least 5 outside sources)
- Have an MLA formatted works cited page (using at least 5 outside sources)
- Be submitted to turnitin.com
- Be printed and brought to class

Prompt:

Informative papers are kind of “teaching” papers. Teach your audience something about your topic with your paper. The twist here is that the information that you choose to give the audience about your topic should be a surprise to them. It shouldn't be something that everybody already knows. If the information is not surprising, the assignment guidelines have not been fully met. You have to specify

what the common view of the topic is and then provide information that would surprise the audience (based on what they already thought).