

## English 1302

### Essay Assignment #1

#### Prewriting Exercise:

Reflect on the ideas presented in the various articles you have read addressing the impact of mass media technologies as well as the discussion you have had with classmates about these ideas. In particular, bear in mind Joanne Simpson's claim that students' use of media technology results in a scattered, fragmentary consciousness that is affecting their ability to communicate effectively with their instructors and their performance in college classes. Similar concerns about mass media and technology and their collective impact on reading, writing, thinking, and communicating are raised by all of the authors.

#### Essay Prompt:

Write an essay in which you defend, oppose, or modify Joanne Simpson's central claim that media multitasking is damaging to students' abilities to focus, to learn, and to effectively communicate with others.

Be sure that you address the three specific concerns referenced in the above prompt. And be sure that your position or stance is articulated in a clear thesis statement. To help support your claim (thesis), you will conduct some research, as detailed below. Draw upon the assigned readings, the research materials, and your own knowledge and experience to develop your argument. Be sure provide specific examples and details to support your position.

#### Sources:

You are required to have a minimum of four sources for this research project—three will be from the readings already provided (you may choose among the essays by Simpson, Tugend, Carr, and Schwartz); the fourth will be an external source that you locate.

You should look only for newspaper articles, mainstream magazine articles, or scholarly journal articles. Note that these can all be accessed through the Electronic Databases available via the DCCCD library website, <http://libguides.dccd.edu/az.php>.

Be sure to record the details about every source you find (authors, titles, publication places and dates, page numbers, etc.) for the Annotated Bibliography assignment and your essay's Works Cited list.

#### Annotated Bibliography:

An Annotated Bibliography is merely a standard Works Cited list that includes a brief description and/or evaluation of each source cited, which shows me what resources you have consulted and how useful they have been. For the Annotated Bibliography, you will need to create annotations for each of the sources that you use in your essay. Please refer to the guidelines on developing an Annotated Bibliography and sample AB provided, and please refer to the Course Calendar for the due date for this separate assignment.

**Citations:**

You must incorporate either direct quotes or indirect paraphrases of information from all of the sources you use to help illustrate and/or support your claims. References to sources and quotations from them will be done with parenthetical citation using the MLA format. At the end of the essay, provide a separate Works Cited page, again using the MLA format.

To help you out, here are the full citations for the essays provided to you:

Carr, Nicholas. "Is Google Making Us Stupid?" *The Atlantic*, Atlantic Media Company, 2008, [www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2008/07/is-google-making-us-stupid/306868/](http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2008/07/is-google-making-us-stupid/306868/).

Schwartz, Casey. "Finding It Hard to Focus? Maybe It's Not Your Fault." *New York Times*, 14 Aug., 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/14/style/how-can-i-focus-better.html>.

Simpson, Joanne. "Multitasking State of Mind." 2006. Rpt. in *Signs of Life in the USA*, 6th ed., edited by Sonia Maasik and Jack Solomon, Bedford, 2014, pp. 469-71.

Tugend, Alina. "Multitasking Can Make You Lose ... Um ... Focus." *New York Times*, 24 Oct. 2008. <https://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/25/business/yourmoney/25shortcuts.html>.

**Required Elements:**

Be sure to write your name, the date, and the course and section number in the upper left corner

Be sure that your essay has:

- an introductory paragraph—this should provide context for the reader; it should include information about the general topic being addressed as well as the more specific concerns or issues to be examined; it should also include your thesis statement.
- a thesis statement—this sentence should be direct and make clear your position or stance in the debate and address the three specific concerns referenced in the prompt.
- at least three supporting claims/points—be sure to organize your essay around the concerns and/or supporting claims, and not around the authors or articles.
- focused and well-organized paragraphs, with clear topic sentences—each topic sentence should offer a claim that addresses a specific concern or issue and functions to support the thesis.
- direct quotes and/or paraphrases, cited in MLA format, from all of the sources used.
- a clear concluding paragraph
- a Works Cited page, in MLA format, listing a minimum of 4 (four) sources

**Minimum Requirements**

The final version should be a minimum of 1000 words (approximately 4 pages, not including Works Cited), typed and double-spaced (standard 12 point font) with one inch margins on all sides. It must also include all of the required elements noted above.

If you do not meet the minimum requirements, you will earn no more than 50% of the allotted points for this assignment.