

American Studies Honors Summer Assignment

Historical Fiction or Non-Fiction: Instruction for Students

Your review will be divided into three sections.

1. The first section identifies the scope or theme of the book, how the book is organized, and the material upon which the book is based.
 - A. The scope of the book includes the general subject area and the chronological period covered.
 - B. The theme is the message the author is attempting to convey concerning the historical period under consideration. In some cases, identifying the theme will be extremely easy - the author will spell it out for you in the introduction or conclusion. In other cases, it may be more difficult and you may have to synthesize a good deal of what the author says into a simple sentence. In any event, you should attempt to state the author's central idea in one sentence. Remember, in this section, you are merely identifying his thesis or purpose, not evaluating it.
 - C. Your identification and classification of the sources the author has chosen should also be brief. Tell whether the book relies mainly on primary materials or secondary sources.
 - Primary materials include original documents, eyewitness accounts, personal papers, memoirs, etc. They are materials that the author is using to get his knowledge of the facts without relying on other historians.
 - Secondary sources are usually biographies or other works of history in which the author's knowledge of the facts is conditioned by what others studying the past have said.

There is obviously some overlap between primary and secondary data, but the categories are fairly well identifiable. You should briefly summarize the actual materials the author uses. For example, the account may be based largely on official reports, private papers, memoirs, other works of history, or a combination of the above. It is extremely important that you know the material upon which the book is based, because it will aid you greatly in your evaluation.

2. The second section will consist of an analysis of the author's treatment of his subject using the criteria of accuracy, logic, and balance. Include a discussion of the book's strengths and weaknesses. This analysis, along with the thesis identification, is the most important aspect of your book review.

A. In evaluating the work for accuracy, you should examine the author's facts. Does he make glaring errors of fact, especially regarding important points in his argument? This may require your spot-checking some of his key points with another source. Do not overly concern yourself with minor errors such as the spelling of a name or an exact date, unless it makes a real difference in his argument. You may not find many substantial errors if the book is well written.

B. In evaluating the work for logic, you should ask whether or not the author's argument makes sense.

- Does the author leave any questions unanswered?
- Does he/she make unwarranted assumptions?
- Are his/her statements of cause and effect reasonable?

This is especially crucial if an author is developing a major new interpretation and his evidence base is slim. In other cases, this may not be a significant factor, and you should concentrate on evaluating the book's accuracy and balance.

C. In evaluating the work for balance, you should ask yourself if the author is fair.

- Does he/she have a particular axe to grind, or is he/she attempting to view the past as a detached observer seeking to discover the truth?
- Does he/she weigh the evidence (pro and con) carefully and use it fairly, or does he/she seem to bend it to fit his/her own presuppositions?

An author's national origin, political affiliation, occupation, and even religious beliefs can have an influence on his objectivity, and you must develop some information on the author of the book. This can sometimes be gathered from the preface, from the dust jacket (if it is still extant), or the backs of paperback books.

3. In the third section, conclude your review by stating your opinion about the relevance of the book.

- Was it a good source?
- Are there better accounts?
- Would I recommend this for others to read?

The length of your book review is to be approximately 1,000 words (four or five typewritten, double spaced pages, 12 pt. Times New Roman font). You will probably have to rewrite your review at least once in order to boil the required analysis down to this length. I strongly suggest that you write your review one week before it is due, let it gather dust for a while, and then go back and put it into final form.

Reviews must be typewritten and submitted to Turnitin.com. See instructions provided.

Book Review Format:

Date:

Course:

Name:

AUTHOR AND TITLE OF BOOK:

SECTION ONE: (Source Information)

Scope:

Theme:

Description of Sources:

SECTION TWO: (Factual Analysis)

Accuracy:

Logic:

Balance:

SECTION THREE: (Value Judgment)

Suggested Novels

<u>Title</u>	<u>Author</u>
Red Dawn at Lexington	Louis Birnbaum
Drums	James Boyd
Last of the Mohicans	James Fenimore Cooper
Drums Along the Mohawk	Walter D. Edmonds
The Hessian	Howard Fast
Lusty Wind for Carolina	Inglis Fletcher
The Crow Neck Revels	James Forman
Oliver Wiswell	Kenneth Roberts
Rabble in Arms	Kenneth Roberts
The Stratford Devil	Claude Clayton Smith
Burr	Gore Vidal
Bold Journey: West with Lewis and Clark	Charles Bohner
The Chaneyville Incident	David Bradley
High Hearts	Rita Marie Brown
Waterlily	Deloria Ella Cara
Bring Home the Ghost	Follis Cheatham
The Tamarack Tree; A Novel of the Siege of Vicksburg	Patricia Clapp
So Ends This Day	James Forman
The Ceremony of Innocence	Jamake Highwater
The Bear Flag	Cecelia Holland
No Resting Place	William Humphrey
Elkhorn Tavern	Douglas C. Jones
Roman	Douglas C. Jones
Andersonville	McKinlay Kantor
This Strange Feeling	Julius Lester
The Dark Canoe	Scott O'Dell
Stories of the Old South	Ben Forkner
The Killer Angels	Patrick Samway (eds.)
Jubilee	Michael Sharra
The Massacre at Fall Creek	Margaret Walker
Unto This Hour	Jessamyn West
One-way to Ansonia	Tom Wicker
The Camp Grant Massacre	Judie Angell
	Elliot Arnold

Introduction

This quickstart will help you get started with Turnitin and will walk you through the steps for submitting your first paper. To begin, you need to first register with Turnitin and create a user profile.

- 1** If you have received an e-mail from Turnitin with a temporary password, a user profile has already been created for you. To get started, log in to Turnitin with your e-mail address and password and proceed to Step 2 in this quickstart.

Step 1

To register and create a user profile, go to www.turnitin.com and click on the *New User* link to the right of the *Sign In* button on the homepage **1**.

- 1** Click to register and create your user profile

The new user page will open, follow the directions on this page to help you create your user profile. To create a profile, you must have a **class ID** and an **enrollment password**. You can get this information from your instructor. Once you finish creating your profile, you will be logged in to Turnitin.

Step 2

Class ID: 2724784
Password: honors (all lowercase)

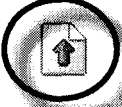
Your class will show up on your homepage. Click on the name of your class to open your class portfolio **2**.

class ID	enter a class	instructor	status	drop class
203596	Class Demo	American Studies Honors '09-'10	Turnitin, D. active	

- 2** Click on the name of your class to open your portfolio

Step 3

Your class portfolio shows the assignments your instructor has created and your submissions to the class. To submit a paper, click the submit button next to the paper's assignment ③.

#	assignment	submit	title
1	Assignment Demo start: 11-05-08 due: 11-12-08		Summer Assignment

③ Click the submit icon to upload your paper

Step 4

The paper submission page will open. Enter a title for your paper. To select a paper for submission, click the *browse* button and locate the paper on your computer. We accept submissions in these formats:

- MS Word, WordPerfect, RTF, PDF, PostScript, HTML, and plain text (.txt)

After entering a title for your paper and selecting a file, click *submit* to upload your paper ④.

submit a paper by:

file upload ▾

first name *

Demo

last name *

TURNER

submission title *

Demo Paper

browse for the file to upload

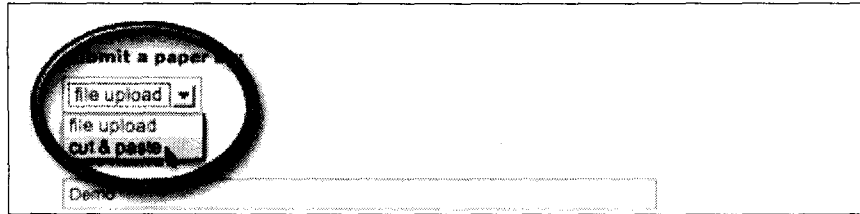
ames/Documents/Turni **Browse...**

We currently accept document files of the following types: MS Word, WordPerfect, PostScript, PDF, HTML, RTF, and plain text. File size limit: 10 MB

submit

④ Once you have located your paper and entered a title, click submit

If your paper is in a format that we do not accept, you can submit it by cut and paste. To submit a paper this way, select *cut & paste* using the pulldown at the top of the form **5**.

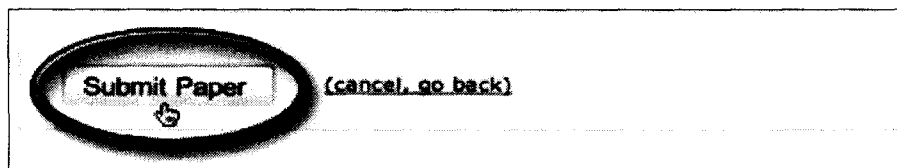


5 Select *cut & paste* with the pulldown to submit a paper in a file format we do not accept

To submit a paper by cut and paste, copy the text of your paper from a word processing program and then paste it into the text box in the submission form. If you submit your paper using the cut and paste method, you can skip the next step.

Step 5

The paper you chose to submit will be shown on the next page. Look over all the information and make sure that it is correct. To confirm the submission, click the *Submit Paper* button **6**.

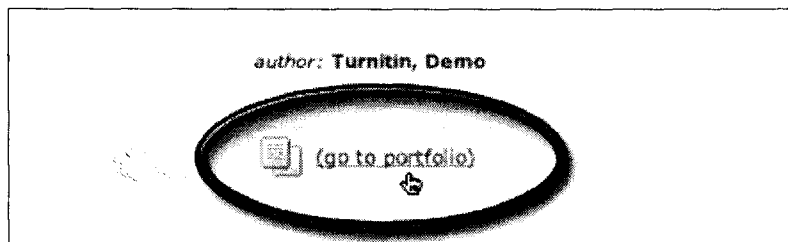


6 Make sure you selected the correct paper; click "Submit Paper" to finalize your submission

Step 6

After you confirm your submission, a digital receipt will be shown. This receipt will be e-mailed to you. To return to your portfolio and view your submission, click the portfolio button **7**.

! By default, students cannot see their own Originality Reports. If you do not see an Originality



7 Click the portfolio icon to return to your portfolio and view your submission

Report icon in your portfolio and want to see your report, contact your instructor.

If you need further assistance with Turnitin or would like to learn about the advanced features our system offers, please download our [student user manual](http://www.turnitin.com/static/training.html), which is available at <http://www.turnitin.com/static/training.html>