

SLEEP SYNTHESIS ESSAY

ENGL 102.2

WRITING AND RESEARCH

Choose ONE of the following writing situations and write a fully thought out, well organized and properly supported synthesis essay responding to the assignment. Since this is a SYNTHESIS essay, you will be expected to synthesize **at least three sources** from the assigned class readings to support your claims and opinions. Remember that your knowledge and experiences also count as potential sources, just not as your only sources. There is no outside research beyond the textbook required or expected for this assignment.

1. Several of the articles in this section deal with the idea of "sleep debt." Write an essay in which you explain to your audience what sleep debt is, why they should be aware of it, and how they should change to compensate for it. A major part of this essay will be determining exactly who your audience is and how to put the information from your sources into a specific context for them. For example, you could write to an audience of students, or nurses, or warehouse workers, or construction workers, or... **Whoever your audience is, be sure to use examples and explanations that put this information into THEIR context.**
2. Several of these articles talk very specifically about schools and the impact of sleep problems on both students and teachers. Write an essay to the administration of YOUR school explaining the concepts to them and indicating what steps you think the school should take to fix this society-wide problem.
3. Write an essay explaining what business/employers need to change to address these issues. You will need to first identify what the problems are, then show how they affect the specific business that you are writing about, and then offer the solutions that you propose. All of these steps should have information from the readings. You will need to decide what business is your audience – you can choose your current employer or a past employer, but it should be a workplace that you know well enough to be able to discuss specifically in terms of the examples that you give. **You need to take the generic ideas/examples from the sources and build/expand on them to make the specific examples for your intended audience.**
4. What should parents do with this information? What do parents need to know? Would parents of young children use this information differently than parents of teenagers? **Pick an audience (parents of a certain age of children) and write an essay explaining these concepts and potential solutions to them in detail.** For example, if you think these sources support the need for a specific and regular bedtime, then make that argument. But don't just SAY that it's necessary – share the specific evidence and arguments that supports that claim.
5. How can an individual use this information? How practical is this information? Are Americans really able to change their lives to spend more time sleeping? Write an essay arguing one side or the other. You could write an essay refuting these claims and showing how incredibly difficult and ineffective these suggestions for improving sleep really are. **OR** you could write an essay in which you help your audience understand exactly how important this information really is and why they need to change their attitudes towards sleep. Either way, you'll need to explain the concepts and use information from the sources to support your claims.
6. Several of these articles talk about how important it is to educate people about the importance of sleep – that it needs to become a public health issue. **Write an essay to your local health officials making the case for sleep debt as a public health issue.** Who would they need to educate? Where? To what extent? At what level of school should this be taught? How do you teach adults about the importance of sleep? These are just some of the issues that you **might** address in your essay. Remember that the sources were very clear that health professionals **DO NOT** understand the importance of sleep. It's NOT part of their training or education. So the first thing you have to do in your essay is make the case that it is important. THEN you can discuss some of the practical suggestions about how to educate the public about this health issue.

Be sure to review the back of this page for specific hints/assignment objectives.

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The successful synthesis essay will contain:

- Clear thesis/purpose
- Multi-paragraph organization that supports and reinforces the main thesis
- Appropriate use of Logos/Ethos/Pathos
- Fully explained background/history/definitions of key terms
- Properly integrated information from at least three outside sources
- Synthesis of multiple outside sources to support individual claims/arguments
- Analysis of the main ideas and information, not just repetition of the sources
- Use of credible academic/professional sources
- Proper use of MLA citation form (both in-text and full citations at the end)
- Proper grammar and sentence structure

Don't assume that your readers are familiar with the issue or the experiments that you have been reading about. Make proper references and summaries of those ideas if necessary. Be sure to explain the basic background of obedience to authority and groupthink to your audience in your essay, as they will most likely NOT be aware of these theories anymore than you were before reading these sources.

Don't just jump into the "good stuff," either. Students have a tendency to want to start arguing their main arguments right from the first sentence or two. Wait a bit. Use the intro to set up the topic—grab our attention. Then slowly work your way into the specifics of the topic, making sure that you have explained the ideas and points as clearly as you can. THEN, after everything is set-up and the reader understands the big picture, THEN you can start getting into the specific argument(s) that you want to present to us.

The Video that was watched in class would have the following MLA citation:

Coville, Charles, dir. *NOVA: What Are Dreams?* PBS, 2009. DVD.