

Sociology 111C

Research Review Paper Prompt

In this assignment, you will conduct a review of existing literature in order to answer a single question on a topic of interest to you that is relevant to the sociological study of childhood. Appropriate questions may range from the broad to specific. Examples of possible questions are: How does children's use of electronic devices affect parent-child relationships? How does childhood trauma affect development? How does California's child welfare system work? You will answer your question by reviewing current scholarly, policy and current events literature on your topic and writing up a synthetic review of this material. **Here the word "synthetic" means to bring things together, as in "synthesize", which means that in addition to summarizing your sources, you will also evaluate them and suggest directions for future research.**

You will be expected to incorporate material from *at least 6* sources in your paper. You may use material from the class reading list if that is appropriate for your topic, but you are expected to incorporate other sources as well.

The majority of your sources should be scholarly books and articles but you may also use government and policy reports and news coverage.

The quality and relevance of your sources, along with the way you use them to answer your question will be an important part of your grade for this assignment.

In general, the literature reviews you find in papers published in academic journals are examples of synthetic literature reviews.

Looking over some of these will help you to organize and format your own paper.

1. You should begin your paper with an introduction that introduces your question, explains why it is important, provides a brief overview of the answer and your conclusions about future research directions and/or other implications.

2. The body of your paper should be organized using subheadings and the paper should end with a discussion of future research directions and implications of the findings that circles back to your initial discussion of the importance of the topic.

Early in the semester, you will turn in a paragraph that explains the topic or issue you plan to study, why it is important, and a list of preliminary sources. We will also hopefully have an in-class presentation from a librarian about how to locate relevant scholarly sources.

The paper should be about 6-8 pages long. It should be double-spaced, in 12-point font, and with one-inch margins. It is essential that you take great care to avoid plagiarism in this assignment and cite and reference materials properly. Make sure to proofread and edit your paper. Points will be deducted for sloppy work.

Include a reference list at the end of your paper formatted according to the ASA style guide,

posted on bCourses and here:

http://www.asanet.org/sites/default/files/savvy/documents/teaching/pdfs/Quick_Tips_for_ASA_Style.pdf).

You may find the following resources helpful:

"Evaluate the quality and credibility of your sources", UCSC Library,
<http://library.ucsc.edu/help/research/evaluate-the-quality-and-credibility-of-your-sources>

Purdue Online Writing Lab, Evaluating Sources: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/553/1/>