

## #GEA1 Reaction Paper

Instructors will have some flexibility in designing this short essay assignment (2-3 pages). Instructors can ask students to choose an historical interpretation of the past from the textbook or assign students an article. A common rubric will be used across course sections to ensure the assignment assesses the following Student Learning Outcome:

1. Critically compare and contrast opposing claims regarding the same fact or hypothesis, when the various sides are credible according to discipline-specific indicators of authority;

### Sample Assignment:

This paper assignment is designed to foster your information and data literacy by asking you to compare and contrast an author's argument about an historical figure or trend that differs from prior interpretations and assumptions discuss in Spring, J. (2013). *The American school, a global context: From the Puritans to the Obama administration*. McGraw-Hill Higher Education. It is important to also reflect on whether the author's argument might challenge your own beliefs about the past.

You must choose one of the following articles below:

- Harlan, L. R. (1971). The secret life of Booker T. Washington. *The Journal of Southern History*, 37(3), 393-416.
- Tolley, K. (1996). Science for ladies, classics for gentlemen: A comparative analysis of scientific subjects in the curricula of boys' and girls' secondary schools in the United States, 1794-1850. *History of Education Quarterly* 36(2), 129-153.

A successfully written paper will require you to:

1. Conduct a close reading of the article, keep detailed notes on the author's thesis and sources of evidence. For example, you should note what types of evidence is provided and from what types of sources (e.g. primary sources).
2. You also must compare and contrast the author's claims with others found in the text book or other scholarly works. How does the author's argument challenge other scholarly views? How does the authors' argument challenge your own perceptions of the past?
3. Evaluate the creditability of the sources used by the author. Do these sources directly or indirectly support the author's claim? Is the evidence factual or speculative? Does the evidence support other interpretations?
4. Take a position on the author's claim based on your evaluation of evidence and your interpretation of the evidence.

It is may be helpful to formulate your own argument (thesis statement) before drafting your paper. However, if you find writing up a draft first helps to organize your ideas and critique, make sure you formulate your thesis and rework the draft so the reader clearly understands your position.

Information and data literacy skills will also be required of your term paper, so this is a great opportunity for your instructor to provide you with feedback on your growth in this area.

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<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Ratings</b>				<b>Pts</b>
Identifies Opposing Claims <i>USF Information/Data Literacy SLO</i>	10 pts Full Marks <i>Critically compare and contrast opposing claims regarding the problem, when the various sides are credible according to discipline-specific indicators of authority.</i>	7 pts Proficient <i>Compare and contrast opposing claims regarding the problem, describes the strengths and weakness of the various sides;</i>	4 pts Emerging Proficiency <i>Compare and contrast opposing claims regarding the problem, when the various sides are credible, draws logical conclusion;</i>	1 pts Unsatisfactory <i>Does not compare or contrast opposing claims</i>	10 or <
Evidence* <i>AACU Critical Thinking Value indicator</i>	10 pts Full Marks <i>Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a comprehensive analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are questioned thoroughly.</i>	7 pts Proficient <i>Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are subject to questioning.</i>	4 pts Emerging Proficiency <i>Information is taken from source(s) with some interpretation/evaluation, but not enough to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are taken as mostly fact, with little questioning.</i>	1 pts Unsatisfactory <i>Information is taken from source(s) without any interpretation/evaluation. Viewpoints of experts are taken as fact, without question.</i>	10 or <
Position (thesis, perspective) <i>AACU Critical Thinking Value Indicator.</i>	5 pts Full Marks <i>Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) is deeply imaginative, taking into account the complexities of an</i>	4 pts Proficient <i>Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) takes into account the complexities of an issue. Others' points of</i>	3 pts Emerging Proficiency <i>Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) is stated, acknowledges different sides but is simplistic and obvious.</i>	1 pts Unsatisfactory <i>Position lacks clarity does not address complexities or limitations.</i>	5 or <

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	<i>issue. Limits of position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) are acknowledged. Others' points of view are synthesized within position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis).</i>	<i>view are acknowledged within position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis).</i>			
Written Communication AACU Written Communication Value Indicator	5 pts Full Marks <i>Uses graceful language that skillfully communicates meaning to readers with clarity and fluency, and is virtually error free.</i>	4 pts Proficient <i>Uses straightforward language that generally conveys meaning to readers, although writing may include a few errors.</i>	3 pts Emerging Proficiency <i>Uses language that sometimes impedes meaning because of errors in usage</i>	1 pts Unsatisfactory <i>Poorly written due numerous errors, poor organization, etc.</i>	5 or <
Total				100 or <	