

Paper # 1: Evaluating Scientific Sources

The purpose of this assignment is to (a) help you think about our readings with greater depth (b) practice making complicated, nuanced, effective arguments in written form, (c) review and employ proper use of citation and documentation.

Imagine you are working in a magazine such as *Psychology Today*, which takes scientific topics, summarizes old and new research, and presents them in articles accessible to the non-scientific public. You are part of a team working on a feature article on the science of love, “What Does Science Really Know About Love? 40 Years of Exploration.” This article wants to summarize important contributions to the science of love from various disciplines, but ultimately, it wants to show what questions science still has to ask and answer about love. You have read the five articles we have read: Jankowiak’s “Love in Cross-Cultural Perspective”; Sternberg’s “A Triangular Theory of Love”; excerpts from de Rougemont’s “Love in the Western World”; excerpts from Robin Dunbar’s “The Science of Love”; excerpts from Helen Fisher’s “Why We Love.”

Write a memo, about 900-1100 words long, recommending TWO of the articles we’ve read for inclusion in the upcoming piece. Make an argument as to why these two articles, and not others, are central to what we have come to understand about love. As you consider which articles to choose, think about: which articles have been the most influential? Which are based on Explain which two articles you are choosing; summarize the overarching argument of each; explain each article’s importance to how we understand love; discuss its methodological strengths and weaknesses, and make an argument about why it should be included in the piece. What does the article contribute to our understanding of love? What pathways to further research does it raise?

When you write:

- Like any persuasive paper, your memo should be organized – with an introduction, body, and conclusion – and it should present its arguments in a manner that is sequential and logical.
- Use concrete, specific references to the texts you are talking about, using summary, paraphrase and quotation as appropriate.

- Use MLA citation in order to reference the texts of the article as needed.
- Include a Works Cited at the end of your memo, listing the two articles you are recommending.
- Although the bulk of your piece should focus on the two articles you *are* recommending for inclusion, you may wish to spend a little bit of time on the counterargument – which other articles you chose not to include, and why (but this is not a requirement – only do it if it fits the logic of your writing).
- You may use any reasonable font and margins, but your word count should be within 5% (under or over) of the required range.

Your paper will be evaluated on: the clarity and persuasiveness of your rationale for choosing the two articles you've chosen; the accuracy of your summary of the two articles; the depth of your critique (the strengths and weaknesses of each article).

Grading Rubric:

Introduction: 10 points

Does the introduction set up the memo's argument clearly and effectively? Names which articles are being chosen

- Explains why they're being chosen (most influential? Opened new areas of research? Provides most helpful insights?)

Body: 20 points

Does the body accurately and concisely sum up the two articles' main arguments? Does it point out strengths and weaknesses of each? Is that analysis grounded and connected to the two articles, or is it too theoretical or show some misunderstanding of the article? Does it connect analysis to thesis, as stated in the introduction?

Mechanics 10 points

Does the paper fulfill the assignment, as formulated by the prompt? Within word limit? Properly spaced? Proper use of MLA citation? Has bibliography? Uses proper grammar and punctuation? Uses words correctly?