

Extended Definition Research Paper

Purpose: To thoroughly define and reveal various meanings and applications of a word in an amusing and informative manner. (See list below for words to choose from. One word per student per class; in other words, you may not work on the same word as another classmate.)

Requirements:

MLA format

500-800 words

Include quotations; however, the bulk of the paper should be in your own words

Include a bibliography page following the body of the paper.

Include a formal outline consisting of a minimum of three (3) levels: Roman numerals, capital letters, and Arabic numerals

Track research and sources on note cards and bibliography cards in MLA format. A minimum of 25 note cards and five bibliography cards are required.

Format:

Introduction – find an interesting and inviting way to approach your word; for example try a rationale, a justification for thinking and writing about the particular word you chose, a brief dialogue, or an anecdote.

Formal Definition – provide a fairly complete dictionary definition, but do not quote more than a few brief phrases. Dictionary definitions are usually "stiff" and dull; paraphrase instead.

Etymology – this is a history of the word – its spellings, meanings, and existence in different languages and times. For example: *atom. ME fr L. atomus, fr Gk Atomos, fr Atomos indivisible. Fr A- = to cut--* How to paraphrase this: *The word atom comes from the fourteenth to fifteenth century Middle English. Earlier, it appeared in Latin and Greek, meaning "indivisible". The prefix a- means "not"; thus, the meaning is literally "a [part that cannot be cut]". (Source)*

Main Body – present several fairly well-developed applications (meanings or uses) of the word. The word might be used in the arenas listed below. The paper should show evidence that you have researched a minimum of three (3) of these categories.

Politics	Science	Popular Entertainment	Technology	Cultural
Literature	Psychology	Fine/Performing Arts	History	Religion
Myth				

Overall – Consider developing the definition through analogy; comparing the concept or application with something that the reader already knows. For example, make it easier to conceive the relative sizes of our earth, moon, and sun by comparing the first to a mustard seed, the second to a grain of salt an inch away from the mustard seed and the last to an apple forty feet away from the mustard seed. Or, compare the words to similar words. Clarify a definition by excluding what the word does not mean – for example distinguish a riddle from a dilemma, a puzzle, and a conundrum; or distinguish the verb *to educate* from *to train*, *to rear*, *to teach*, and *to instruct*.

Word List

Aggression	Crusade	Iconoclast	Megalomania	Odyssey	Purgatory	Taboo
Alternative	Cult	Idealist	Mercurial	Optimist	Radical	Tantalize
Amateur	Dilemma	Infamy	Nemesis	Panic	Scapegoat	Trivial
Chauvinist	Enigma	Machiavellian	Nepotism	Pessimist	Security	Uncertainty
Clone	Eugenics	Martyr	Oblivion	Phony	Soul	Utopia
Cosmopolitan	Fidelity	Mavericks	Obsession	Profound	Stigma	Vandalism

Try these Websites as you research:

www.etymonline.com
www.libraryspot.com

www.takeourword.com
www.thefreedictionary.com

Extended Definition Rubric

THE PAPER

Content _____ out of 75

Overall – paper covers all required topics: formal definition, etymology, and a minimum of three applications from designated areas. Follows format of sample paper.

Introduction – catches attention of reader through anecdote, dialogue, etc.

Body – presents a minimum of three well developed applications of the word; utilizes a variety of methods to explain the word, i.e., analogy, comparison, exclusion; is cohesive and flows smoothly from one point to the next.

Conclusion – ties paper together.

Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage _____ out of 15

Includes correct grammar; correct use of conventions such as punctuation and paragraphing, as well as spelling; and correct usage such as pronoun-antecedent and subject verb agreement. Additionally, includes appropriate and correct use of parenthetical citations, where applicable. Also includes varied sentence structure. Paper is published in complete and correct MLA format. *Includes correctly formatted Bibliography page.*

PRELIMINARY MATERIALS AND ACTIVITIES

Formal Outline _____ out of 10
Includes a minimum of three levels

Note Cards _____ out of 10
Includes minimum required; Correct format

Bibliography Cards _____ out of 10
Includes minimum required; Correct format

TOTAL SCORE _____ OUT OF 120