

Synthesis Prompt Notes

Stable Language

Read the six sources, including introductory information for each source.

Then, write an essay that synthesizes at least three of the sources and develops your position on the topic you are asked to address.

Timing

There are fifteen minutes to read the prompt and sources, and forty minutes total for the essay.

It is recommended to look at those sources during those first fifteen minutes.

Goals of the Synthesis Prompt

Critical Reading

Focused Argument

Organization

Use of Source Material

Citation of Source Material

Who is supposed to be in control?

Show you are in control of the sources. Use them to guide your argument, not define it.

Try to pair sources to make writing easier.

Public Libraries

You are invited to “develop a position on the role, if any, that public libraries should serve in the future.”

Sources given vary from blogs and more traditional articles to activity calendars, bar graphs depicting e-book use, and librarian assistance to patrons.

Monuments

This one uses language that doesn’t comport with the new promised language, so adjustments were made.

Here, you’re invited to take a position on “the factors a group or agency should consider in memorializing an event or person and in creating a monument”

Wind Farms

When it comes to energy, wind farms may not be the first thing that comes to mind.

This 2019 prompt asks, “develop your position on the most important factors that an individual or agency should consider when deciding whether to establish a wind farm”

It is suggested to always try to use charts or graphs, when given.

The USPS

The 2012 prompt states, “take a position on whether the USPS should restructured to meet the needs of a changing world, and if so, how”

Unlike other prompts, this one also asks for solutions for the future.

Example Thesis: *The United States Postal Service should continue to adapt to the ongoing needs and demands of changing communication and commerce, embracing emerging delivery methods*

Skills

All of the skills learned in the class will continue to build on each other, including the ability to synthesize documents.

Citations

Be very careful of citing anything, including someone in a class discussion.