Critical Analysis Format Guidelines

The following merge some of the standard MLA requirements with those that are unique to this assignment.

I. PROPER FORMAT: 12pt. Times New Roman/Arial Font, Double-Spaced, 1” Margins

II. PROPER HEADING: Bibliographic Data - Submitted By – Paper Body
III. Pagination – All pages shall be numbered via MLA style: Your Last Name, Page Number

IV: CITATIONS and QUOTE FLOW: Proper citation of Quoted Material both from your book and Critical Reviews. Quotation, Citation, Punctuation (QCP)

Sample Text From Book: “In fact it was Washington’s boldness alone that prompted success during that dark time in 1776. Ignoring requests from his general’s staff for a course of surrender, Washington’s assertiveness assuaged the indecision of even his most vocal doubters and wrought forth the confidence to undertake the massive task of alleviating desertion. Within his decision-making alone stood the success of Trenton.”

Sample Excerpt From Kirkus Critical Review:

“…however the author departs from his initial pretense of the demythification of Washington by isolating his character and mind as one of unparalleled brilliance.”

Sample Excerpt From Library Journal Critical Review:

“…It’s as if the book is posthumous propaganda for elongating the legend of Washington. The cruciality of the moment is described as if it depended solely on Washington, deriding the abilities of the talented men upon which he oft depended.”

Sample Critical Analysis Paragraph Excerpt:

In attempting the “demythification of Washington”(Kirkus), Washington the Man loses its noble thesis during analysis of the 1776 Christmas campaign at Trenton. The loss of thesis most noticeably occurs by “isolating Washington’s character and mind as one of unparalleled brilliance”(Kirkus). Historical accountability fades into “posthumous propaganda”, ultimately “deriding the abilities of the talented men upon which he oft depended”(Library Journal). ........... Followed by several more sentences...........
V. In-Text Citations:

- Use www.citationmachine.net to easily generate a correct in-text, parenthetical citation

VI. The Works Cited Page:

- CENTERED TITLE = WORKS CITED (NOT BIBLIOGRAPHY!!!)
- All entries are alphabetized
- Properly Spaced (Teacher/Professor specifications!!!)
- Properly Structured (http://www.citationmachine.net)

Works Cited


V. The SIGNATURE: On the Final Page of Analysis, type the following and sign your name in ink:

X_____________________________________  Date: __________________________
Critical Analysis Paper Guidelines (Redux)

Beginning in the first marking period, you will begin the process of reading, researching and writing a “Critical Analysis paper. The goals of this assignment are as follows:

1. To further your ability to write on an historical subject.
2. Learn about a specific topic and become an “expert”.
3. Attain a beginning understanding of the nature of historical research.
4. Analyze and review the work of historians.
5. Gain insight as to how historians work.

GRADED ELEMENTS: The Second Marking Period’s requirements/steps are as follows:

Production of a final paper (Critical Analysis) to be written in accordance with the following MLA standards:
- Typewritten
- 4-6 pages
- 12pt – Arial/Times New Roman
- Double-spaced with 1 inch margins
- No Grammatical, Punctuation, Spelling Errors
- Format includes Introduction, Analysis and Conclusion
- Proper Citations
- Works Cited Page

STEPS: Organize and Write the Critical Analysis (Submission Date TBD)

Your paper must include the following, so it’s a good idea to take notes on and research the following elements of your book:

- Full bibliographic data of the book being analyzed in Author – Date format. This goes at the top of the first page.
- Purpose/Thesis of the work. This is the central theme that the author tries to demonstrate, defend, and prove.
- Author’s competency and viewpoint
- Summary of contents: Be analytic – explain how the thesis is developed, use examples, discuss good points and bad, etc.
- Organization of the book.
- Author’s writing style: Include such areas as readability, length, sentence structure, humor, etc.
- Reader aids. Number and usefulness of photos, drawings, maps, charts, graphs, tables, etc.
- Suitability of sources used by the author. Where does the info come from and how is it used to prove his/her thesis?
- Conclusions:
  - Does the book meet its objectives?
  - Is the book a valuable contribution to the exploration of this topic?
  - How could the book have been improved?
- Works Cited Page
- Sign and date your paper at the bottom of the final page.

You do not have to follow step-three line-by-line, but you must include the information listed above in your paper.