

D8 HW: Option A: Editorial Letter War with Mexico

(50 pts, Due D11)

One powerful way to express feelings, emotions, and good way to get a snapshot of society is through an **Editorial Letter**. For this assignment, as you reflect what you've learned about the **Mexican American War**, and after reading **pp 371-374**, I'd like you to create an **Editorial Letter** to a **local newspaper**. In the letter, you should **discuss the issue of War with Mexico** (either just as it has started, during, or at the end, it's your choice). Do you agree with **Manifest Destiny**? Is the war necessary / moral? Why do you think so? What issues might be solved, or what issues might arise as a result?

DUE: D11. Things to consider as you write your letter:

- Clarify **who you are** (make sure that anyone reading the letter would be able to identify you as the author; e.g.: name, occupation, age, etc.)
- Share your **position**, and make it easy to tell what that is, with a short **thesis statement**: (example: **"I believe the War with Mexico is / was a good / bad thing, because of Point A, Point B, and finally Point C"**)
- Continue to explain what your **thoughts** are on the topic. Demonstrate why you believe your main points (A, B, and C) are correct. Explain why.
- **Compare / contrast** one with the other (just what you already know, though a bit of research may not hurt), & point out the **benefits / flaws** of one versus the other.
- Perhaps you, or others you may know, have **suffered / benefited** as a result of this issue...if so, **explain why!**
- Offer up some **solutions**, and / or **changes** you might suggest. Explain why you feel the way you do.
- You may wish to review this **Editorial Letter Guide Link**: <https://goo.gl/Wvmdmj>. it provides some great insight into how to write a basic Editorial / Opinion Letter.

Editorial Letter Rubric:

Criteria	Accomplished 16-20%	Satisfactory 11-15%	Developing 6-10%	Beginning 0-5%	Score
Ideas	Ideas were expressed in a clear and organized fashion. It was easy to figure out what the letter was about.	Ideas were expressed in a pretty clear manner, but the organization could have been better.	Ideas were somewhat organized, but were not very clear. It took more than one reading to figure out what the letter was about.	The letter seemed to be a collection of unrelated sentences. It was very difficult to figure out what the letter was about.	
Message Strength	The message to the viewers is clear, strong, & persuasive; viewer easily understands the message.	The message is clear, and mostly persuasive.	The message is somewhat clear, but not very powerful or strong. Somewhat persuasive.	The message is unclear or weak, and the viewer struggles to understand the point. Not really persuasive.	
Context & Accuracy	Contains fresh, original ideas. Solid content is backed up with examples, illustrations and a variety of support for ideas. The letter contains at least 5 accurate facts about the topic.	Good ideas and content backed up with generalized examples. Accurate wording is apparent. Support for ideas is all of the same type. The letter contains 3-4 accurate facts about the topic.	Stale ideas. Worn-out. Content is not well supported. The writer is beginning to define the topic, but development is still basic or general. The letter contains 1-2 accurate facts about the topic.	No real ideas. Content is murky or unsupported. No awareness of audience is apparent. As yet, it has no clear purpose or central theme. No accurate facts included.	
Conventions	The writer demonstrates a strong grasp of conventions by using punctuation, capitalization, grammar, usage and paragraphing in a way that enhances the message of the paper.	The writer demonstrates a good grasp of standard writing conventions: spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, usage, paragraphing. Writer uses conventions effectively to enhance readability.	Writer shows a reasonable control over a limited range of standard writing conventions. Conventions are sometimes handled well and enhance readability; at other times, errors are distracting and impair readability.	Errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, usage, and grammar and/or paragraphing repeatedly distract the reader and make the text difficult to read.	
Creativity	Student has taken the assignment and completed it in a way that is totally his/her own. The student's personality/voice comes through, yet is also a convincing imitation of the subject's voice.	Student has taken the assignment and has used source material as a starting place. The student's personality comes through in some parts of the letter, and attempts to imitate the subject	Student has copied some info straight from the source material. There is little evidence of creativity, but the student has done the assignment.	Student has not made much attempt to meet the requirements of the assignment.	

Comments:

Total Score:

Tips to Make this Assignment Awesome! (50 pts available):

- Make it an authentic letter; use a salutation and ending, and answer all the asked questions.
- Use fresh, original ideas; also, ideas should be backed up by accurate examples, illustrations and a variety of support.
- Make sure your message to the reader is clear, strong, persuasive, and easily understood. You are trying to convince others of your opinion, after all.
- Demonstrate a strong grasp of conventions by using proper punctuation, capitalization, grammar, usage and paragraphing in a way that enhances the message of the paper.
- Make sure your product is neat, well-organized and easy to follow.
- Take the assignment and complete it in a way that is your own, yet is also a convincing imitation of similar products from the era.