

North Africa, Southwest Asia, and Central Asia Unit

Critical Thinking Essay!

Few regions of the world have more to do with current world events and news than the area often called the "Middle East." Home to the oldest civilizations in recorded history, and birthplace of the largest religions in the world, this region has always been a place of beauty and conflict. This critical thinking essay is an opportunity for you to decide what makes this region **so** important in the world today.

QUESTION What issue or conflict in the Middle East is most important issues in the modern world today, and why?

FORMAT Students will write a 1-2 page essay answering this question based on YOUR opinion AND information from your textbook (Chapters 17-19)

- Essay may be typed or written
 - if typed - no bigger than 14 font size; use 1.5 spacing
 - if written - neatness counts! Paper should be **more** than 1 page
 - rough draft or outline of some sort must be attached to final copy
- **MUST** have the **point-of-view of at least 2 adults** (one can be parent) in your essay, and mention of how these do or do not affect your opinion
- **MUST** include information from (and attach) a **news article or other primary source** of information about your topic, and how it affects your opinion
- **MUST** offer opinion and evidence as to why the topic is important today
- **Bibliography** is required for your primary source

EXAMPLES (*can include the following topics, or you may suggest another*)

Oil supply and control
Problems in Afghanistan
Arab Spring Uprisings

Arab-Israeli Conflict
Sunni vs. Shia Islam
Depletion of Aral Sea

Control over Jerusalem
Access to fresh water
Plight of the Kurds

ROUGH DRAFT WORK AREA BELOW

Topic chosen:

Pages in book:

Points-of-view:

Notes:

On-Task during class time spent on project	Student working responsibly throughout work time; used book and/or other sources to develop paper	Student reminded at least once to stay on-task during work time; lack of use of other sources such as websites and book	Student spent work time doing other work or none at all; no notes or indication of rough draft work or prewriting thoughts
Use of points-of-view	Student used at least 2 points of view from adults in essay and explained how they influenced their opinion	Essay missing either a point of view OR explanation of how they influenced the student's thoughts	Student essay missing both required points of view and explanation of how they influence opinion
Use of primary source or news article; rough draft	News article attached, and essay explains article as well as how it influences opinion; rough draft turned in complete	Either news article mentioned but not included, OR essay does not explain article and its influence on opinion OR missing rough draft	Essay missing news article as primary source as well as any mention of how it would influence essay topic; AND missing rough draft
Relevance of issue to the region and to the world today; Why Important?	Essay effectively explains the issue as it relates to the Middle East and also explains why it is an important issue in the world today	Essay briefly describes the issue and how it affects the Middle East OR explains why is it important in the world today	Essay does not provide enough information to explain the issue and how it affects the Middle East and/or the world today
Essay paper structure (neatness, font, spacing, grammar, spelling)	Essay paper is neat, and turned in either written or typed. Required spacing, font, and length guidelines and been followed; few if any grammar or spelling issue	Essay paper is somewhat hard to read, or missing either correct font, spacing, length; some grammar or spelling problems make it difficult to read	Essay is incomplete, or missing correct font, spacing, length, as well as very difficult to read. Paper may be crumpled and/or torn and/or have serious grammar or spelling errors

Any additional comments: