Synthesis Essay Pre-Writing Guide

1. Annotate (and, perhaps, take notes over) each of your sources, analyzing the rhetorical situation (audience, context, purpose, and claims) in each essay. **IMPORTANT:** As you take notes, be sure to write down the author name and page number for each piece of information you record.

2. Looking over your research notes for all of the essays, identify common areas of concern (points of agreement and disagreement or unusual areas of emphasis).

3. For each shared topic or argument you see across multiple essays, consider how each essay supports and explains the point.

4. Look for arguments that, perhaps, show up in one essay, but not the others.

5. Look for additional insights you might have or conclusions you might come to based on the information offered across the essays.


7. Develop main points to support your thesis statement.

8. Go through your research notes and find specific quotes, examples, and information which explain and develop each main point.

9. Bullet or list all of the related source information under each main point. **IMPORTANT:** Be sure to include the author’s last name and page number next to each piece of source information!

10. Draft your essay.

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