

The Multigenre Project

A Project Inspired by D. Immaraju: DVC

“Creativity is intelligence having fun.” - Albert Einstein

Last semester, English 12 Honors focused on authors who had written successfully in multiple genres. For your second semester project, now it's your turn! Either on your own or in pairs, you will be choosing a primary source of literature or expository writing and using it as inspiration to create several pieces of your own writing. You will research, learn, experiment, draft and design your way into a deep exploration of a topic of your choosing. Go deep - get deep - have fun!

What is a Multigenre Project (MPG)?

Rather than a single, extended piece of writing about a single perspective on a topic (like a traditional research paper), a multigenre project (MGP) is a cohesive series of written pieces in a variety of genres that look at different (sometimes conflicting) angles on the same question, topic, or theme. An MGP is personal, creative, and can't be copied from some other source. It involves you, the writer, making conscious decisions about what information or ideas are important, and how it should be presented to the reader. The purpose of this project is to develop your research skills, strengthen your writing skills, review how to document sources, and explore writing in different genres. At the end of this project, you will have a product of your learning and research that will show both critical thinking and creativity.

Your MGP should reflect the following:

- **A primary source:** Whether it's a novel, a play, a collection magazine or a newspaper articles about a particular issue, a film, or some other collection of writing, you will be drawing inspiration for your research and subsequent pieces of writing from one source. This source may or may not connected to the work you did first semester; go back to a work from your author, or choose a new source for a fresh start!
- **A theme of focus:** You should not only include documents that relate to a general topic or event, but you should ensure that the documents forward a point of view / message of significance / a rhetorical purpose. Keep your thesis / main argument in mind throughout!
- **A coherent organization:** Documents should be created and organized in order to lead readers through the project, to help them understand your focus and purpose. A series of seemingly unconnected pieces, though they may share a similar topic, will not result in a strong project. You can create a sense of coherence for your readers through transitional pieces between genres, your table of contents, etc.
- **Evidence of strong research:** Include citations for sources you've referenced as applicable, and include a comprehensive MLA Works Cited at the end.

Warning: This is NOT the kind of project that you can wait until the last minute to complete; it will be clear who invested time and energy over the course of the next two months! The entire portfolio is quite manageable to complete if you complete roughly one document per week. **To help hold you accountable, there will be strict deadlines in place; anyone who misses two deadlines or who does not complete the final paper will see a letter grade drop in their English grade.**

Please take advantage of upcoming peer review sessions to get feedback on your work, and seek my guidance at ANY point if you're having difficulty on any aspect of your MGP. I'm here to help! ---Stoll

Your final project will include **at least 5 documents** (not including sections like an Introduction, Table of Contents, Commentary, Self-Assessment, and a Works Cited page) that offer a sustained argument about your chosen issue. By creating documents in different genres (e.g., academic research essay, editorials, feature stories, brochures, short fiction, charts, scripts, etc.), you learn to write for multiple audiences, multiple purposes, and multiple forums.

- **Your entire project should be presented in a theme that best fits your purpose.** Consider “packaging” your project as a scrapbook, a photo album, a patient file, an employee handbook, a manual, a newspaper, a magazine—the options are endless! Just be sure to offer a table of contents (TOC) that provides an overview of and title for each document.
- **Your Introduction serves as a guide to readers,** helping us understand the issue you’re addressing, offering us insight about why you chose the genres you chose, etc. The intro is your chance to help us understand why this topic is important, how we should “read” your documents, etc. The intro may be written as a letter to readers, a magazine article, a formal introduction to the work, a menu, or something else entirely.
- **The bulk of your MGP will be the five documents, each representing a different genre, that helps persuade your audience(s) to your point of view.** Aim for a good balance of genres, and be sure that at least three of your documents *directly* use the sources you’ve gathered from your research. Your MGP helps an audience understand many different perspectives about your topic. Some of the documents you’ll include may be more time-intensive than others - and that’s okay. But the 5 documents that make up the body of your MGP should show your knowledge, creativity, and ability to persuade your audience(s) toward your central thesis/claim.
- **In the Commentary section, you’ll explain the rationale of each piece.** Describe the purpose and audience of each piece one at a time, and discuss which resources you used for that piece (both cited in text and/or for inspiration).
- **In the Self-Assessment section, you’ll reflect on the writing process in your MGP.** What surprised you during the process of writing your multigenre portfolio? What did you learn about writing in different genres as a way of inquiring into your topic and communicating what you know? Describe the strongest and weakest parts of your project and explain why you categorize each as such. Finally, what grade do you feel you deserve on the project and why?
- **The MGP should conclude with a Works Cited page.** As you cite sources for each document, your citation approach should be appropriate for each genre. It’s a rare ghost story, for example, that includes parenthetical citation practices, so don’t do that. However, there are creative ways to ensure that you a) give credit to the source from which you draw information (e.g., discussing that info in your introduction, using endnotes/acknowledgment pages, etc.), and b) establish your credibility as a writer who has conducted significant research to support your opinion.

MGP Examples: This is the first time this type of project has been completed in English 12 Honors; therefore, examples specific to THIS assignment do not yet exist. Undoubtedly, many of your projects will serve as excellent examples for future years. However, by looking over multigenre projects done for other assignments in other school settings, it is possible to get an idea of what a completed multigenre project looks like. Visit the following websites to see examples:

- <http://www.users.muohio.edu/romanots/mgrpapers.htm>
Strong ex’s: “Blood and Bravery” (Novel: *Dracula*), “The Wonderful Wizard of Oz” (Film)
- <http://writing.colostate.edu/gallery/multigenre/toc.htm>
Strong ex’s: “Cross Dressing & Disney”

GENRE LIST

What types of genres can you use? Your multigenre project will contain a variety of genres that are informative, literary/creative, and functional. You will have a lot of choice about what to include. But BEWARE—this should not be a haphazard collage of disjointed stuff; you must connect the genres and what they represent with a central, significant theme or idea (thesis). Your creative efforts must be informed by solid research, including research about the genres themselves.

Your project must include **at least 5 works** from the genre list below. **Each student must author at least two works from the first column (informative)**, and at least one work from the other two columns (literary/creative, functional). If you would like to propose another genre, see Stoll for approval.

INFORMATIVE	LITERARY/CREATIVE	FUNCTIONAL
Literature review	TV show pilot script	Personal note/letter
Informative/expository essay	Dramatic scene/ One-act play	Series of diary entries
Argumentative essay	Song lyrics	Memo
Compare/contrast essay	Poem/Spoken word	Facebook/Instagram page
Biography	Graphic novel chapter / Zine	Obituary/Eulogy
News article (feature or hard news)	Editorial cartoon/Satirical article	Resume/cover letter
Encyclopedia entry	Music video storyboard	Advice column
Review of a book on your topic	Speech/Monologue	Police report
Letter to the editor/editorial/op-ed	Photo gallery (5 photos min. with 5-sentence captions)	Chart/Diagram/Map with detailed explanation
Legislative bill	Podcast or Interview Transcript	Advertisement(s)/Classified ad
Policy brief	Short story	Website
Brochure/Newsletter	Myth/Fairy tale/Fable/Ghost story	Eyewitness account
Magazine article	Picture book/children's story	Movie or restaurant review
	Board game with answers/rules	Tabloid/Buzzfeed article
	Restaurant description with menu	Transcript of an interview

Primary Source Suggestions / Examples List:

Your MGP should rely on a primary source for inspiration and focus. This primary source should be something well known, prolific, has written about extensively or has had a wider effect on popular culture. Here is a short list of examples you may refer to:

- **Novels:** *Frankenstein*, *Siddhartha*, 1984, *Middlesex*, *The Wind Up Bird Chronicle*, *Harry Potter (Series)*
- **Plays:** *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Hamlet*, *West Side Story*
- **Articles:** *A collection of food reviews by Jonathan Gold*, *a collection of advice articles by Dear Abby*
- **Films:** *The Godfather*, *Titanic*, *Pulp Fiction*, *Toy Story*, *Star Wars*, *Forrest Gump*

MULTIGENRE PORTFOLIO REQUIREMENTS

1. **Cover page**
 - Title
 - Your name
 - Date (due date)
 - Teacher & course names
2. **Table of contents** (including the name of the author if done in pairs)
3. **Introduction**
 - What does the reader need to know before reading your MGP?
 - What is the primary source you chose, and why?
 - What topic from this source are you focusing on? Why is this topic important?
 - How did you choose your topic?
 - Include a thesis statement or claim (underlined)
4. **5 works of different genres from each student (10 total if done in pairs)**
 - Two from the informative genre (min. 800 words each)
 - At least one piece from each of the other genres (literary/creative, technical)
5. **Connectors between each piece to create unity** (pictures, graphs, diagrams, song lyrics, quotations, interesting facts, section titles, fables, stories, etc.)
6. **Commentary:** In a 1-2 page commentary, complete the following:
 - Describe the purpose and audience of each piece (about a paragraph per piece)
 - Discuss which resources you used for that piece (both cited in text and/or for inspiration)
7. **Self-assessment**
 - What surprised you during the process of writing your multigenre portfolio?
 - What did you learn about writing in different genres as a way of inquiring into your topic and communicating what you know?
 - Describe the strongest and weakest parts of your project and explain why you categorize each as such.
 - What grade do you feel you deserve on the project and why?
8. **MLA Works Cited page:** Minimum of 10 sources (credible, relevant)

****DATES, DEADLINES AND FINAL PRESENTATION TO BE DETERMINED AT A LATER DATE****