

EPS 038 Spring 2008 (Professor Goodrich): Reading/Writing Assignment

For this assignment you will be given a set of two readings:

Reading 1: From Demon Haunted World, by Carl Sagan.

Reading 2: The Scientific Method, from a website.

NOTE: There are two sets of due dates here. The Monday/Wednesday dates pertain to M/W sections of the course. The Saturday dates pertain to the Saturday section of the course.

Part I (Due Wednesday, April 2 or Saturday, April 29):

Write an answer to the following question: **What are these readings about?** Your answer should be 1-2 paragraphs long. It should be written in complete sentences, using correct spelling and grammar. It should be as informative as possible. Do not directly quote from the readings, rather paraphrase in your own words. Try to be general. Don't focus on specific details of the readings, rather try to get an overview of what they are about and convey your understanding to me. In particular, try to understand ways in which the two readings address the same subject.

3) Do some research (the internet is the best place to do that) into the author of reading 1. Write a few sentences explaining who the author is or was (for starters, is he alive?), what he is known for, what his accomplishments are, etc.

Part II (Due Wednesday, April 16 or Saturday April 12):

In order to do part III (the main part) of this assignment, it is necessary to completely understand the readings. You should understand what they are about in general, what specific topics are discussed, how each paragraph fits in to the whole, and in particular what all the words (the vocabulary) mean. To help you get going on this, I suggest that you write an outline of the reading (this applies mainly to reading 1), and/or annotate as much of it as possible (note that these are exercises that will help improve skills necessary to pass the CPE exam). These will be for your use only, and do not need to be turned in.

In addition, make a list of any words you do not understand and look up the definition of each one in a dictionary (note that there are many specialized science dictionaries available online). Write down the definition and make sure you understand the word in the context of the paragraph. Then, write a sentence (different from any in the reading) that uses each word and illustrates your understanding of its meaning. This list of definitions and sentences must be turned in.

Part III (Due Monday, May 5 or Saturday May 3):

Write an essay in which you discuss the subject of these readings. In your essay, summarize Carl Sagan's perspective on the subject, and compare it with that of whoever wrote reading 2 (anonymous). Identify at least two specific topics that are discussed in both readings. For each of these topics, draw a relationship between the way it is presented in the two readings. Consider whether the two readings express similar or different (conflicting?) views. Consider how the styles of the two readings differ. How would you characterize each style? What do you think was each author's main purpose in writing? Do the two readings complement, or clash with, one another? Feel free also to discuss any of your own observations that pertain to the topics or views described in the readings. In structuring your essay, be careful to respond to all parts of this assignment, and to connect your thoughts into a single, clearly-organized essay. Make specific references to the reading to support your ideas. As usual, be sure to write in complete sentences, using correct spelling and grammar.