Explanatory Essay

Organization is one of the most important aspects to a successful research paper. Therefore, I have begun by creating a detailed outline of my paper, and I am working on filling it in with sufficient details so I can merge all of the information together in the end to form a cohesive and persuasive research paper. My outline includes my introduction paragraph, followed by a tentative four main body paragraphs, and finally ending with my conclusion. I have not made much progress on my introductory paragraph; however, I have created a thesis statement, which provides a general overview of the purpose and topic of the paper.

“Despite the fact that Timothy’s memoir was a complete hoax, he portrays valid healthcare problems prevalent in Native American reservations, including inadequate funding, lack of medical knowledge, cultural differences, and environmental barriers” (Zha)

My thesis is not only debatable but also provides a clear topic. It presents an argument concerning the fact that although the author wrote his memoir in hopes of gaining fame and money, he actually describes immediate problems facing Native Americans. I am working on revising my thesis so that it implicitly answers a question without being too specific. Although my thesis includes information that guides the reader into my paper’s subject matter, it could be more compelling and successful in generating questions for the reader about my topic.

I have devised a general format that I would like each of my body paragraphs to follow as well. I would like to begin my paragraphs with a close reading and analysis of either a sentence or a paragraph from my primary source, “The Blood Runs like a River Through my Dreams.” My topic sentence will come either before my close reading as a foreshadowing of what is to come or after my analysis as a summary of my close reading that will ultimately introduce my research information. I have begun formally writing only one of my body paragraphs, however it has turned out exactly as I pictured. The one thing I am working on is developing complete ideas and avoiding syntax mistakes. Also, I may deviate away from my paragraph structure and experiment with different patterns to make my writing more complex.

Another difficulty I have been having is transitioning from my close readings to my research data. Because I would like my primary source to be the main focus of my essay, I am trying not to have it be overwhelmed with secondary information, turning into a paper about healthcare issues. For example, in my paragraph about the struggle of cultural differences in healthcare, I begin with a close reading of a couple of sentences.

“Rather than suffer in the pitiless environment of a hospital, Nasdijj believed that bringing the “Navajo hataalii…to the Hogan for sings” was the best cure (Barrus). Therefore, Tommy could be surrounded by his culture and given traditional, trustful remedies. This dichotomy between modern and traditional healthcare is in fact a prevalent issue in Native American reservations throughout the United States” (Zha).

It is very easy to list a bunch of information about the traditional and modern health practices while forgetting about the main idea. I will try to include a couple research points followed by how it might relate to my story. Therefore, by constantly switching between my primary source and my research, I will be able to not only provide smooth transitions but also keep the information relevant to my thesis.

Finding sources for my research information has been relatively easy. Because of its broad range of information, I have been using Jstor for the majority of my sources. Jstor is an online database for not only online primary sources but also academic journals and articles. Although a couple of my secondary sources are books, I noticed that most of my sources come from health reports and journals, such as *Health Services Reports* and *Public Health Reports.* A few of my sources even include information on the specific areas and people the information was taken from. Therefore, it provides the reader with evidence, providing a credible source of information. I believe that because I knew the specific information I wanted for my paper, it was easier to find sources. I found a book describing specific information about the Indian Health Services as well as a source giving me direct challenges to healthcare on Native American reservations. Using keywords such as “Native American alcoholism,” “Native American healthcare,” and “Indian Health Services,” I found a plethora of information including the history of alcohol on Native American reservations, the workings of the Indian Health Services, and the daily struggles the IHS face.

My research topic has not necessarily changed; however, I may make my thesis broader. Instead of mentioning specific healthcare issues, I will state terms such as “environmental, social, and economical.”

“Despite the fact that Timothy’s memoir was a complete hoax, he portrays valid healthcare problems prevalent in Native American reservations regarding environmental, social, and economical factors” (Zha).

Bibliography

Boyum, William. “Health Care: An Overview of the Indian Health Service.” *American Indian*

*Law Review* 14.2 (1988): 241–267. *Jstor*. Web. 11 Nov. 2015.

I will be using this source to provide background details on the Indian Health Services. It gives a detailed overview of the responsibilities, eligibility, and services of the IHS. It gives reasons such as, inefficient management and inflation, to justify how the $850 appropriated to a Native American individual may not be sufficient.

Guyon, Sue. “The Challenge to the Indian Health Service.” *Health Services Reports* 88.8 (1973):

687–691. *Jstor*. Web. 11 Nov. 2015.

The biggest challenge to Native American healthcare is reaching the magnitude of individuals with the lack of professional staff. Also, the struggle of treating Native Americans living in rural areas and isolated villages, where not only communication but also transportation is an issue. The source gives data on the 7,400 full time health personnel and allotted to the IHS program for 435,000 Native Indians and 53,0000 Alaska Natives. This source provides information for all of my body paragraphs, but I will most likely use it to support my argument about the lack of medical personnel because it provides concrete numbers comparing Indian Health Services medical staff to the large population of Indians needing healthcare.

Johnston, Susan L. “Native American Traditional and Alternative Medicine.” *Annals of the*

*American Academy of Political and Social Science* 583 (2002): 195–213. *Jstor*. Web. 11 Nov. 2015.

This source is perfect to support my claim of the struggle between traditional and modern healing practices. It takes on a different perspective and investigates the struggle traditional medicine has assimilating to modern practices. Federal healthcare programs are hurting the native cultural traditions and Native American traditional health practices have become an alternative to the government sponsored programs. It gives an overview on traditional medicine and describes how sickness is related to religion and spirituality. It also gives the roles of healers, such as singers or herbalists.

Melissa L. Walls et al. “Early-onset Alcohol Use Among Native American Youth: Examining

Female Caretaker Influence.” *Journal of Marriage and Family* 69.2 (2007): 451–464. *Jstor*. Web. 11 Nov. 2015.

This article describes the effects of the caretaker’s alcohol use on an adolescent’s attitude toward illegal drinking among Native American families. It gives an overview of risk factors that may influence the use adolescent alcohol abuse and trends among certain demographics. This source will be included in my paragraph detailing the environmental struggles of Native American healthcare. I will use it to justify my reasoning behind why Nasdijj’s community and behavior might attribute to the prevalence of FAS.

Noren, Jay, David Kindig, and Audrey Sprenger. “Challenges to Native American Health Care.”

*Public Health Reports* 113.1 (1998): 22–33. *Jstor*. Web. 11 Nov. 2015.

This source surveyed 39 Native American programs in 10 states and gathered data on the major challenges facing Native Americans. It gives a thorough background on the IHS and how funding has been a continuous problem due to barriers such as resource constraints and transportation problems. The survey provides a detailed overview and information on the most cited issues: inadequate funding, retaining medical staff, relationships between local clinics and the IHS administrations, Federal changes, and cultural difficulties. For my paper, I will use this source to support my paragraph on the economic challenges facing Native American healthcare.

Teret, Stephen P., and Annie P. Michaelis. “Litigating for Native American Health: The Liability

of Alcoholic Beverage Makers and Distributors.” *Journal of Public Health Policy* 26.2 (2005): 246–259. *Jstor*. Web. 11 Nov. 2015

This source describes the history of the European introduction of alcohol to Native Americans. It attributes the high morbidity and mortality rates caused by alcohol to the suppliers marketing their products to the Native Americans. It gives reasons as to why Native Americans may be more vulnerable to alcohol, including biophysical, socioeconomic, and cultural reasoning. This source will be useful in not only my introduction but also supporting my paragraph about the social challenges facing Native American healthcare.