

ASSIGNMENT FOR  
PERSUASIVE ESSAY DRAWING ON LIBRARY RESEARCH

Academic Writing II

Write a five to six page research paper (approximately 1,000 to 1,200 words) concerning a current issue which is important to you. Refer to at least five or six sources which may include journals, newspapers, books, speeches, films, tapes, documentaries, and interviews with experts in the field. The paper must be neatly typed, and all drafts must be dated and handed in with the final revision.

The choice of topic is an essential part of the research process as you need to obtain the required number of sources. Most topics need to be limited in order to focus on the main points of the issue. As you conduct the research, you'll need to evaluate sources to include the best possible authoritative information from which to synthesize the facts. In writing the paper, you must establish and support a position in addition to providing the opposing points of view.

Of course writing paraphrases and selecting quotes for the paper are an integral part of the research process. Activities which involve thinking skills such as categorizing comparing/contrasting, evaluating, questioning, and other skills will be emphasized as part of the procedure. Part of your JAWS or journal about writing should encompass experiences involved in the process of thinking, learning, and writing.

The following assignments must be completed before the paper is submitted.

Write a JAWS entry as you work on your paper. The entries will provide a reference for you as well as a record of weekly activities. These JAWS will be collected when the paper is due.

Topic chosen--2/23/93

Sources listed--2/25/93 (bibliographic format is not necessary, but include ALL information.

Write from one to four major questions about the topic.

Write general questions about your topic (from seven to ten) which you'll consider in your paper.

Write a working thesis statement based on the major question.

Take notes on the information. Even though notes don't have to be handed in with the paper, they must be available in case I have questions about authenticity of paraphrases and quotes.

Write a preliminary outline.

Write a thesis statement and a final outline.

Write a list of lead sentences as well as the thesis statement and matching statement(s) in the closing.

List all sources in alphabetical order on cards or on separate pieces of paper.

Complete draft #1--two copies of the paper March 18

Complete draft #2--two copies due April 6

Complete draft #3--Due April 13--ALL dated and numbered drafts must be submitted with the paper plus the JAWS written during this period of time. Conferences should be helpful to you, and I will be available during the regular times as well as all day on March 24 and again on March 30. Classes will not be in session on March 25 or on March 30.

RESEARCH ESSAY

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Date: April 17, 1993  
Course: CPN 101-541

## Maternal Employment

1. Should a mother who has just given birth go back to work? For the past few decades mothers have been working full-time or part-time, and at the same time bringing up their children. Some mothers in the 1960's-1970's had no choice because they were single parents with a single wage, and they had to support their children. Today some mothers still have to work, while others work because they want to. Since maternal employment has increased, there has been some concern for these working mothers' children and their development. Although some psychologists think that working mothers have a negative effect on their children's development, I think that maternal employment has a positive effect.

2. Why do mothers of dual-wage families want to leave their lovable children and return to work after birth? Well, for one thing, many mothers want more than doing food shopping, cooking, laundry, house cleaning, and taking care of their children. A mother works because it makes her more useful at another place besides home. Also, working gives the mother a chance to "use her time to earn money for the family-money that the family often needs to maintain an acceptable standard of living" (Hoffman 284).

3. Despite the benefits women get from work, according to Hoffman, employed mothers become stressed because they "have [plenty of] concerns about 'not enough time,' about whether their work is dysfunctional to their children, and about finding adequate child care arrangements" (285). What Hoffman is saying is that when mothers are stressed out, they are not providing a good climate for their children's development, and the stress also interferes with the way the mothers bring up their children. In contrast, work can help a mother deal with stress. Hoffman's studies have shown, for example, "that employment provided a buffer for mothers of 'difficult' infants and enabled them to function more effectively than the nonemployed mothers of 'difficult' infants" (285). Working mothers are able to relax more, avoid depression, and handle situations well. All of these positive qualities will be needed in bringing up their children.

4. Easterbrooks and Goldberg argue that work prevents parents from spending more time with their children. To some extent, I agree, but

Some seem to forget that employed mothers are typically with their babies in the mornings, evenings, weekends, and holidays, which for the most fully employed workers constitute about half of the child's waking time. (Scarr, Phillips, and McCartney 1407)

Scarr's studies show that when the mothers are with their children after work on weekdays and on weekends, they spend more time with their children than nonemployed mothers who are with their children all day. So the children do not lose any maternal attention from their working mothers.

5. Some psychologists (for example, Yudkin and Holmes (1963) and Moore (1963) argue that working mothers lose their tight attachment to their children and are less sensitive to their needs (Shubert, Bradley-Johnson, and Nuttal 246). Schubert, Bradley-Johnson, and Nuttal disproved this claim with an experiment on mother and child communication and attachment. In this experiment,

30 mothers and their 15-17 month old infants were video taped in a 12-min. free play session. Vocal and non-vocal communication patterns were observed between 3 groups of mother-infant pairs including (1) homemakers who prefer not to work (2) homemakers who prefer to work, and (3) working mothers. (246)

The homemakers' infants did vocalize and look to their mothers more, but the working mothers vocalized more, demonstrated how to use the toys more, and showed more interaction. In other words, working mothers maintain attachment and are sensitive to their children's attachment needs.

6. There are numbers of positive effects from mothers working. Working mothers have a big influence on their children's sex roles. Many children in the past have had a stereotyped idea of what women's and men's roles were in the family. Fathers are supposed to be the bread winners and the role models for the young sons, and mothers are supposed to take care of the household and the children. Today, working mothers have ended the sex role traditionalism. According to Hoffman,

Children of employed women have [been] found to be more likely than children of nonemployed to reject the restricting aspects of the traditional sex-role ideology and more likely to believe that women, like men, can be competent. Not only is this effect stronger for daughters than for sons but it is more important for their own self-esteem. (288)

7. Another complaint of some psychologists is that maternal employment has a negative effect on children's grade school achievements and I.Q. tests. But Hoffman's studies have shown that maternal employment has had a positive influence, especially

on boys. "Sons of employed mothers have generally obtained higher scores on measures of cognitive development and socio-emotional adjustment" (Hoffman 283). Daughters get higher scores on adjustment measures, too; therefore, maternal employment probably has no negative effect on the children's I.Q. tests and socioemotional adjustments.

8. When a mother works, she spends less time at home. Since the mother is not at home all day doing house work and taking care of her children, the children are put into child care services. Some psychologists (for example, Belsky and Rovine (1988) question whether the child will lose his or her attachment to the mother and will have a negative development due to the child care centers. However, studies have shown that if a child is put into good high-quality child care, then the child will become more assertive, which is a positive trait for children. Also, "bonds formed between children and their caregivers [in the child care centers] did not replace the mother-child attachment relationship" (Scarr, Phillips, and McCartney 1406).

9. Another benefit is that working mothers have a positive effect on their children because of their well-being.

Studies with infants as well as older children have shown that a mother's satisfaction with her employment status relates positively to the quality of mother-child interaction and also to various indexes of the child's adjustment and abilities. (Hoffman 284)

Since the mother is satisfied with herself, she would act positively towards her children. Working mothers tend to stress independence training, which helps their children to grow up independent and strong. Also, working mothers are role models to their young daughters.

10. Maternal employment does have an effect on children's development, but a positive one. True, a working mother is not home all the time, but this does not mean that the children will later grow up to be latch key kids. As the children get older, they may have a babysitter with whom they may develop a strong relationship and become good friends. Maternal employment has a positive effect because working mothers tend to be less stressful which helps in their children's development and makes a better household environment for the children to grow up in. Young sons learn to be sensitive and supporting to women's needs, and young daughters learn that there is a place for them in this "man's" world. The children of working mothers seem to do better socially and academically, and they are more assertive. And the mothers themselves become better mothers by spending more time with their children. With all these positive outcomes, mothers do not have to worry about their working having a negative implication on their children. The mothers can work at ease and feel more comfortable and confident that their children's development will not suffer from their employment.

## Works Cited

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Developmental Psychology 21 (1985): 774-783.

Hill, C.R., and Stafford, F.P. "Parental Care of Children: Time Diary Estimates of Quantity, Predictability, and Variety."

Journal of Human Resources 15 (1980): 219-189

Hock, E., Demis, D.K. "Depression in Mothers of Infants: The Role of Maternal Employment." Developmental Psychology 26 (1990): 285-291.

Hoffman, L.W. "Effects of Maternal Employment in the Two-Parent Family." American Psychologist 44 (1989): 273-292.

Scarr, S., Phillips, D., and McCartney, K. "Working Mothers and Their Families." American Psychologist 11 (1989): 1402-1409.

Schubert, J.B., Bradley-Johnson, S., and Nuttal, J. "Mother-Infant Communication and Maternal Employment." Child Development 51 (1980): 246-249.