Invention
For this essay, you are going to summarize and respond to ONE ARTICLE of your choice. Be sure to choose a topic that has an issue/controversy worthy of academic attention at the center of it. Your essay should provide an explanation of the issue and a detailed summary of the article early on to orient your reader, but the majority of the paper should focus on an in-depth rhetorical analysis, including your responses to the writer’s claims.

Creation
The overall purpose of this paper is to show your analysis and evaluation of an author’s ideas. Think of the paper as a way to discuss the strong and weak points of a particular piece of writing by analyzing the rhetorical situation (purpose, audience, claim, reasons, evidence, opposition, tone, and organization). You will also have the opportunity to evaluate whether the author’s argument is strong. In short, this is an essay that analyzes and critiques the merits of an argument to show how effectively an author supports his/her argument, claims, and reasons.

You should develop and present your own opinions on the article, and you should support those opinions with reflection and detail—this is the response portion of the essay. State your judgments clearly and support your evaluation with persuasive points that could influence your reader to your way of thinking, or at the very least, have your reader see your viewpoint clearly. Since this essay involves working with a source, you should rely on quotes and paraphrases and use correct MLA documentation. You will also need to include a Work Cited page the lists your one source (Note: I say “Work Cited” instead of “Works Cited” because, for this essay, you will only be using one source. When you use multiple sources, your last page will be a Works Cited).

Audience
Imagine your audience is peers and scholars who might be interested in your subject and could be interested in your analysis and/or findings. Also imagine that your audience is somewhat informed but possibly undecided about the subject and might take an opposing viewpoint from your own.

A Successful Rhetorical Analysis Essay
- Provides a concise and accurate summary of the article early on to orient reader
- Has a thesis that makes an evaluative judgment about the effectiveness of the author’s argument
- Offers strong support for its thesis by using specific details and critical analysis of how the author effectively or ineffectively supports his or her argument
- Uses analytical tools appropriate to the argument he or she is evaluating
- Paraphrases and integrates quotations from the article effectively, smoothly, and ethically through appropriate signal phrases and parenthetical citations in MLA style
- Uses third-person voice to analyze the article, not first- or second-person voices