

Spring 2009

Assignments/Presentations

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Repository Citation

Graves, Diane J. and Fischer, Michael, "Assignments/Presentations" (2009). *Information Literacy Resources for Curriculum Development*. 71.

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Forever Young: The life and times of Bob Dylan

Information Literacy assignment ideas:

I. From *Chronicles*, volume 1:

Choose a name he mentions from his early days in New York City.

Research that person, using library resources. Keep a research log. What works? What doesn't? What leads you to additional information?

Create citations (MLA style) to the information you found, using RefWorks. Be prepared to do an in-class presentation on the individual. (May assign multiple names to each student.)

II. Using Academic Search Premier (+ MLA bibliography?)

Find 3 articles on Bob Dylan, all published in the same year. One should be from the popular press. Two should be from scholarly sources. Create citations for them.

Compare the three articles: Write a short annotation/summary of each, and then compare the nature of the articles. What was the author's intent? For what audience was s/he writing? What are the author's credentials?

III. Find a book about Bob Dylan in the library's online catalog.

Create an MLA citation for it.

Locate reviews of the book in the popular literature and in the scholarly. Cite the reviews.

Write a short essay: what is the intent of each review? How is it helpful? What is the purpose of the review in the popular press? What is the purpose of the scholarly review? How could the reviews help you as a student of Bob Dylan?

IV. Select one of Bob Dylan's albums. Create a citation for it.

Find a contemporary review of it in the popular press, at the time of the album's release. Cite it.

Find a later, scholarly treatment of the album. Cite it. (Hint: this may not be an article in a journal. You may find it in a collection of essays in a monograph.)

Consider: How does the scholarly treatment approach the album? From a literary/textual point of view? Musical? Both? Historical? Biographical? What is the context for the scholarly treatment? Is the album compared to others? By whom—Dylan or other artists?

Compare the two critical treatments. What is the difference between them? How might a scholar use the two sources?

V. (Do same thing with film?)

VI. Select a Bob Dylan album from the 1960's or 1970's. Cite it.

Using the Historical *New York Times* and Historical *Washington Post*, find out what was going on politically at the time of the album's release.

Cite the articles you used to determine what was happening.

Be prepared to do a presentation on that year for class. Use Dipity.com to show a timeline that includes these events.

VII. Additional assignment. Bob Dylan's work has been covered by multiple artists over the years. Find some of these covers, and create a discography, including the original and the work as it has been recorded by others. See how many of his songs have been covered by artists in other genres (not folk), and those from other countries.

VIII: Final paper.

Consider Dylan's body of work. Using it, as well as his interviews, Dylan's autobiography *Chronicles Vol. 1*, and the films you have viewed (Pennebaker, Scorsese), answer one of the following two questions. Support your argument with sources from the library—both popular and scholarly sources are acceptable. Cite them accurately in MLA style.

1. Is Bob Dylan a reliable narrator? Can we trust him as an autobiographer?
2. Bob Dylan was awarded a Pulitzer Prize in April 2008, and he has been nominated multiple times for the Nobel Prize in Literature. Does he deserve the honor? Why or why not?