

Annotation Triathlon: A Weeklong Training on How to Read Secondary Sources

Triathlon: a competition with three continuous and sequential endurance races

For your next two essays, you will be required to incorporate secondary sources into your academic writing. Before you can begin, though, it is necessary to learn *how* to read, deconstruct, and synthesize arguments in scholarly essays. Like reading literary texts, there are a number of ways you can achieve this goal. Keeping that in mind, the Annotation Triathlon assignment is a 3-class event that will train you how to read scholarly sources and demystify the approach in the process.



Warm-up: Over the weekend, you will be assigned two scholarly articles to read over the weekend:

- Scott Maisano, “Shakespeare’s Last Act: The Starry Messenger and the Galilean Book in *Cymbeline*”
- Elizabeth Spiller, “‘To Depart from the Earth with Such Writing’: Johannes Kepler’s ‘Dream’ of Reading Knowledge”

You will be then divided randomly into two teams: Team A and Team B. The catch? You won’t know until the following class what article your team will be assigned for that week’s activity, so you’re responsible for **reading and annotating both articles** over the weekend. The **good news** is that when you show up for Day 1/Exercise 1, you’ll be able to work with your group to **crowd source** ideas. **It is exceptionally important to come to class prepared to discuss both articles.**

[**Note: Never fear!** I will circulate between each group during every step of the weeklong assignment to facilitate discussion, provide feedback, give advice, and answer any lingering questions students may still have about the article(s).]

Day 1/Exercise 1: 15 min: Teams will flip a coin to determine who gets which article. Each Team will discuss the major points of their article, deciding the 8 most important elements of the article’s argument.

10 min: Each group will be provided with a large printout of a March Madness-style bracket and will write in the 8 agreed-upon major takeaways from the article.

10 min: Group A will provide a rationale for why they chose the 8 elements as the most important.

10 min: Group B will provide a rationale for why they chose the 8 elements as the most important.

5 min: Flexible time

Annotation Triathlon cont'd

Day 2/Exercise 2: 15 min: Each group trades articles/brackets. Group A will determine which 4 major elements are most important to move into the next stage of Group B's article, and vice versa.

15 min: Group A will provide a rationale for why they chose the 4 elements as the most important from Group B's article.

15 min: Group B will provide a rationale for why they chose the 4 elements as the most important from Group A's article.

5 min: Flexible time

Day 3/Exercise 3: 10 min: Each group will return to their original article from Day 1/Exercise 1. They will decide which 2 elements of the 4 are the most important from the article.

15 min: Each group will develop a short thesis statement that encapsulates the article's major argument and write it in the final bracket.

25 min: We will come together as a class and discuss:

- What worked;
- What didn't;
- How to approach other articles in a similar fashion;
- How to incorporate these habits into other writing assignments for this FWIS class and beyond.



Prep for M 10/7 + Writing/Editing group meeting

Oct 4, 2019 at 3:24pm

[Alexander McAdams](#)

Class—

GREAT work today. I really appreciate how active you guys made the seminar today. I'm looking forward to seeing how next week's activity goes.

On that note, as I mentioned in class, you will read **two essays for Monday**: [Spiller](#)  and [Maisano](#) .

Use the pink packet that I distributed in class today to help with analyzing the main points of each paragraph. Once you've read each essay, you will meet with your writing/editing groups (i.e., Galileo, Kepler, Hubble, Saga) **over the weekend**.

In your writing group, you will do the following:

- Designate someone to keep notes of your meeting (different than the last person)
- Discuss the main takeaways of each article and answer the following questions (**whoever is taking notes**: make sure each person in your group answers these questions and note them in your status report)
 - What did you learn?
 - What are some things you struggled with?
 - What needs more clarification?
 - How might one of these articles assist in writing your next essay?
- Have the note-taker email me your status report (alm14@rice.edu (<mailto:alm14@rice.edu>)) **within 24 hours** of your meeting.

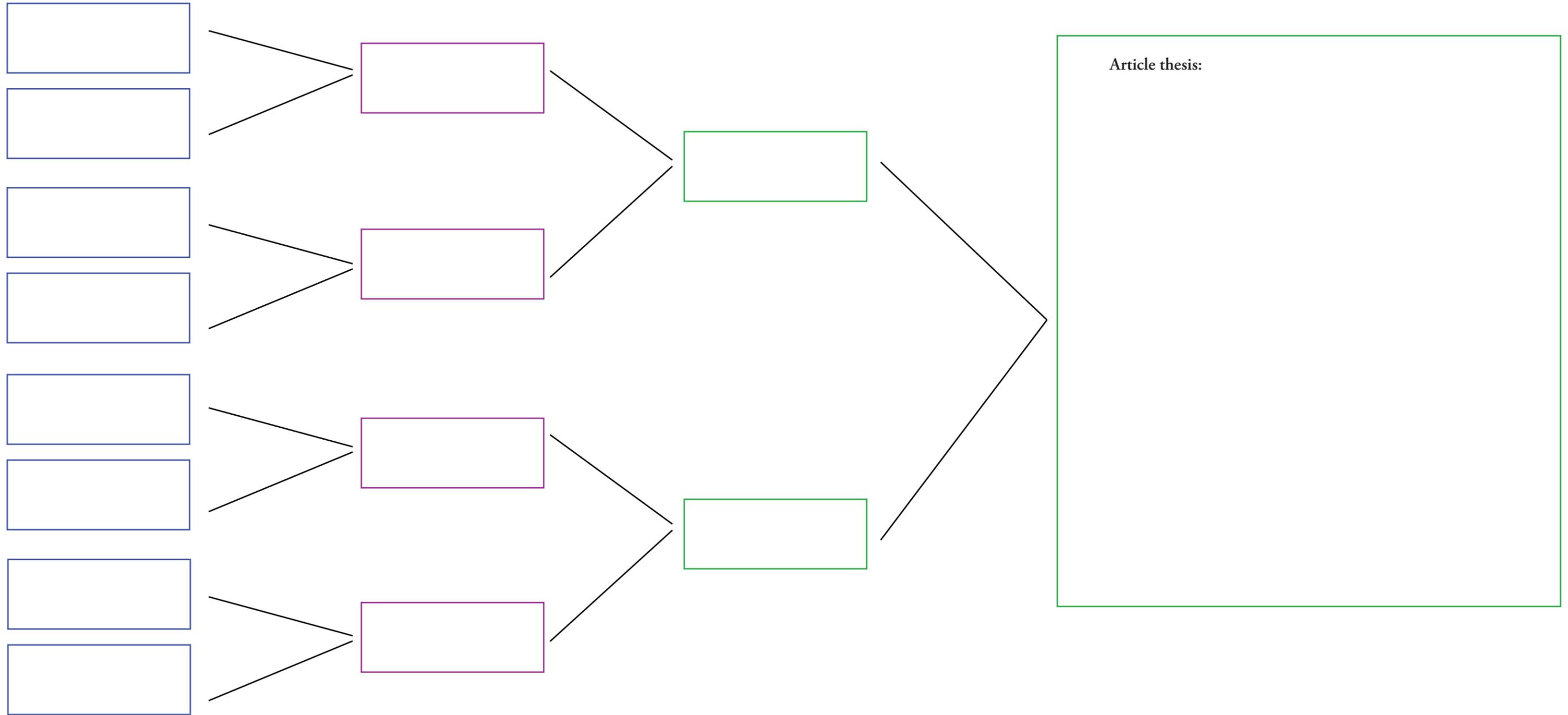
Happy reading and brainstorming!

ALM

Annotation Triathlon Bracket

Group: A

Article title:



Day 1/Exercise 1
Group A brainstorm
Group A will write 8 major
takeaways above.

Day 2/Exercise 2
Group Switch
Group B writes 4 major takeaways
for Group A, and vice versa.

Day 3/Exercise 3
Group A re-convenes
Group A writes an overarching thesis statement,
summarizing the scholarly article

Annotation Triathlon Bracket

Group: B

Article title:

Article Thesis:

Day 3/Exercise 3
Group B re-convenes
Group B writes an overarching thesis statement,
summarizing the scholarly article

Day 2/Exercise 2
Group Switch
Group A writes 4 major
takeaways for Group B.

Day 1/Exercise 1
Group B brainstorm
Group B will write 8 major takeaways above.