

Argument Assignment Guidelines

How we explore storyworlds has transformed as rapidly as the media that build them. Books, music, video, games: each present different possibilities and restrictions when it comes to imagining storyworlds. Your final assignment is open-ended: record a podcast about the cultural politics of some aspect of storyworlds across media. You will choose your own focus – this could be something as particular as a storyworld such as the solar system of *The Expanse*, an approach to world building such as iterative collaboration as in *Fantasy High*, or a critical issue like the role of narrator in non-narrative world creation as in *In the Wake* – and argue something interesting about it. Your argument should be able to argue for the significance of your topic (why it matters and to whom). Present your argument as a podcast (maximum 10 minutes), using the audio medium to your advantage. You are free to include sound effects, clips, music, and so on as needed.

Proposed Learning Goals

Upon completion of this assignment you should be able to:

- Create a brief audio recording that is concise, engaging, and thoughtful
- Develop a sense of the generative possibilities of language
- Argue a convincing point about worlds/world-building
- Unpack the complications with making this particular argument

Assignment Resources

- The course material
- Your general knowledge
- Assignment guidelines (below)
- A means of audio recording of your choice / writing your assignment
- A means of audio editing of your choice (e.g. "[link to audacity](#)")
- IT Equipment Booking ("[Link to IT Equipment Booking](#)")
- Chapter on oral assignments (forthcoming)

Assignment Details

Due date: 28 Nov 2024

Weight: worth 30% of your final grade

Length: 10-20 minutes / 1500-3000 words

Time to Complete: 6 hrs - 22 hrs: Selecting a topic (15 mins - 2 hrs), researching the topic (1-5 hrs), outlining the key points and organizing your knowledge (1-5 hrs), writing your

script/drafting an outline (1-5 hrs), rehearsing your script/writing your paper, (1-2 hrs), recording/revising (45 mins - 1.5 hrs), editing/proofing (45 mins - 3hrs)

Components

the record of your argument, whether written or recorded via audio or video

Grading

The podcast will be graded based on selection of the topic, how it is framed and explained, and where the discussion leads. Try to be as specific as possible. Avoid being overly proscriptive. Embrace the ideas that this argument makes possible. Consider your audience. Some marks will be awarded for clarity of presentation.

Guidelines

I have described step-by-step what you need to do to complete the assignment. It looks like much more than it is! Don't be discouraged. Take it one section at a time and everything should be clear. These guidelines assume a recorded version of your assignment. Adjust as needed if you opt to write something.

Select Idea

- \1. Think about what we have discussed in class to date
- \2. Brainstorm some topics that seemed strange at first but have a deep meaning as you become more familiar with them
- \3. Try to narrow your topic down

Pro Tip: Check in with yourself to determine whether you have the cultural background and knowledge to do this topic proper justice

Research Topic

- \1. Do some digging in the appropriate places
- \2. Has anyone written about this topic before? What is their approach to it? Do you have something else in mind?
- \3. Use the research to help situate yourself

Organize your Knowledge

- \1. Outline the key points you'd like to make
- \2. Decide what others will need to know to make full sense of your argument
- \3. Start to make an outline of what has to be included in your recording
- \4. Consider the correct order for your argument

Write your Script

- \1. Your script could be bullet points or word-for-word what you will say
- \2. It should have some performance notes in it because how you sound will matter almost as much as what you say
- \3. Consider when to leave pauses, when to speak quickly or slowly, when to speak up and when to be quiet
- \4. Consider any additional audio (e.g. sounds, music, clips, etc.) and plan when you might include it

Pro Tip: Include additional audio during editing rather than during recording for better sound quality

Rehearse your Script

- \1. Spend some time rehearsing your script
- \2. Get to really know it and know what feels right
- \3. Make adjustments to the language or the performance
- \4. Move on when you feel confident

Record

- \1. Make sure you are in a quiet environment
- \2. Using a recording method of your choice record your performance, and anything goes whether you have a mic setup at home or just use your phone

Pro Tip: IT offers equipment booking through My Trent and you can get an audio recorder there

- \3. Listen to your recording using several audio sources to ensure it is audible
- \4. If you are happy with it, move on to the next step.

Edit (optional)

- \1. You may choose to spend some time tweaking the audio
- \2. There are many guides available online with suggestions about what to adjust

Pro Tip: Save the audio file separately from the file you make adjustments to

- \3. Once you are happy with the recording you are ready to submit it!

Submit

- \1. If you want to share your work with the class, add your finished audio file and script using [this link to a onedrive folder](#)
- \2. Submit your script and audio file here for grading.