

## English 9 Miss K

### A Multi-Genre Research Assignment

Your assignment is to conduct a short research project about a topic of your choice and to report results in a visually appealing way that combines narrative, informative, and persuasive genres—a multi-genre approach. To clarify, please read this handout carefully and begin thinking about real people you actually know who have compelling stories worth telling. This story could be something as dramatic as overcoming a serious disease or completing a noteworthy accomplishment or as “every day” as having an interesting job or hobby. Regardless, this person and his/her story is, arguably, a logical starting point for the research project (more on that later). Note: Miss K’s classmates at CMU will also be doing this assignment, and a sharing day is planned with them during the school day. More details to come.

#### Real-World Publications/Multi-Genre Approach

What do *Thrive* (a UM Cancer Center magazine), the Penzeys Spice catalogue, and *Themis of Zeta Tau Alpha* all have in common? Even though their topics and readers dramatically differ, they all share the same text feature: the editors/writers write articles that combine multiple genres (narrative, informative, and persuasive), along with photographs and other visually appealing graphics. Additionally, each editor directs readers to related, online venues, such as webpages, Facebook shells, and twitter accounts, for additional information. All of these print and visual genres work together to promote the overarching goal/mission of the publication and the more specific purpose of the individual articles found within the pages or pixels. Most relevant here, the two- to four-page spreads required editors/writers to conduct a short research projects in order to write.

Let’s look more closely at an example from each of the three publications listed above:

- The Summer 2014 issue of *Thrive* includes a cover story about Jennifer Kelley, a woman who was “unprepared for the rare diagnosis of leiomyosarcoma at age 52, especially since it was her third experience with cancer in a mere 30 months (“When Cancer Comes Back” 6). The four-page spread is grounded in **NARRATIVE** because it primarily chronicles story of how Kelley is living with cancer, but the story is stronger and more effective because it is thoughtfully combined with interesting photographs of Kelley and her daughter and, most relevant here, other genres. A textbox, for example, provides a bulleted list of six **INFORMATIVE** tips to help patients cope while living with advanced cancer, and then a short, Q & A is included with a member of the UM Patient and Family Advisory Board to **PERSUADE** readers to learn more about the board and to consider membership. Readers can learn even more by going to [mCancer.org/thrive](http://mCancer.org/thrive).
- The Back to School 2014 issue of Penzeys Spice catalogue includes a two-page spread about cinnamon. The primary text is a **NARRATIVE** regarding Pauline Arpin, an elementary teacher who loves cooking with Penzeys spices (14-15). In addition to a narrative piece, however, the editors include photographs of Pauline and her cookies and, most relevant here, an **INFORMATIVE** text (Pauline’s recipe for Secret Cinnamon Chocolate Chip Cookies) and two types of **PERSUASIVE** genres (a short explanation regarding the two kinds of cinnamon, with special emphasis on the high quality cinnamon that Penzeys stocks, and a list of nine different cinnamons that Penzeys sells—each with an enticing sales pitch). The Penzeys webpage address ([www.penzeys.com](http://www.penzeys.com)) directs readers to place their order.
- The Fall 2014 issue of *Themis of Zeta Tau Alpha* (ZTA) features a tribute to Deb Ensor, who served as executive director of ZTA (a national sorority) for nearly forty years. The tribute is six pages long, and the primary text is a **NARRATIVE** of Deb’s life, beginning when she pledged ZTA, continuing with her years of service to ZTA, and ending with her hard-fought battle with cancer. In addition to several photographs, the editors thoughtfully complement the narrative with an **INFORMATIVE**, year-by-year timeline showcasing highlights of Deb’s ZTA involvement and then a series of quotes about Deb written by past ZTA presidents. The quotes are **PERSUASIVE** because they provide evidence for Deb’s “loyal and dedicated ... leadership style” (11). No online resources are provided.

These three publications provide models of the kind of multi-genre approach that the assignment requires. Where and how do you think the editors or writers researched their topics? Also, can you think of other print and digital publications that combine narrative, informative, and persuasive genres to convey an overarching message to readers?

## Getting Started

As previously indicated, the first step in this short, multi-genre research project is to **choose a person with a compelling story to tell**. After conducting an **interview**, you will **research** additional topics and information. Then, you will create a **visual layout** that contains a **narrative** of the person you choose, an **informative article**, and a **persuasive article or ad**.

For example, let's say that your neighbor is into ice fishing, which you think is either totally understandable or completely crazy; either perspective is fine. You know of (or imagine) a magazine designed to promote Wilson State Park to Michigan residents, so working as a freelance writer, you put together a two-page spread for the Winter 2015 issue that features a narrative and photographs of your neighbor on a recent ice fishing expedition, along with two textboxes, one listing the steps for obtaining an ice fishing license (informative) and the other identifying the kinds of fish typically caught in Bud Lake, with *enticing* descriptions (persuasive). You also reference online venues where readers can obtain more information about Wilson State Park. Overall, then, your two-page spread should be a satisfying and accessible, researched "read" that encourages Michigan residents to come to Wilson State Park to go ice fishing, which achieves the mission of the publication. Note: All of the writing stems from a short research project: the narrative is based upon the interview with your neighbor (primary source), and you will use credible print or online sources (secondary sources) to generate the content of your informative and persuasive textboxes.

## As the Drafting Continues

As a group, we'll negotiate rough and final draft due dates. Until then, here are some considerations:

Genre	Narrative	Informative	Persuasive
Definition			
Examples			

- Digital Software: We will be using Microsoft Word/Publisher to create these documents. A tutorial will be given in class.
- Interviewing: The interview is the starting point for this assignment. Your interview should contain **at least 5 content questions**. Good interview questions will lead you to topics for further research. Here are 4 tips for effective interview questions
  1. Pick a focus before the interview.
  2. Have specific yet open-ended questions (avoid yes/no responses).
  3. For this project, it will be helpful for 1 question to ask about a memory or story.
  4. Use follow up questions to get complete answers

Remember, we will be sharing our final products with students at CMU! ☺

## Rubric

**Turn it in:** When you turn in this assignment, place this rubric on top, next should go your interview questions and notes, then your 2-4 page spread, and last your works cited list.

Using the lines provided next to each genre, write the title of your work within that genre.

### Interview

Contains at least 5 content questions and notes /5

### Narrative: \_\_\_\_\_

Tells a story (Fits Freytag's Pyramid) /15

### Informative: \_\_\_\_\_

Gives unbiased information /10

### Persuasive: \_\_\_\_\_

Is convincing or enticing /10

### Visual

Contains at least 3 clear pictures /5

Layout is easy to understand

(Incorporates color and text boxes without distracting from content) /5

### References

Uses reliable sources /5

Points the reader towards online resources /5

Cites all sources in Works Cited list /10

### Conventions

Proper grammar and spelling are used throughout /5

**Bonus Content (One additional article can be added for extra credited, given all other requirements are met)**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Genre: \_\_\_\_\_ /0

<b>Total</b>	<b>/75</b>
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## Interview Example

### Question 1: How did you start playing softball?

My older sisters played softball, so it was kind of a family thing.  
I enjoyed playing/was pretty good so I stuck with it

### Question 2: What's your favorite memory from playing softball?

The first year on Frankfort Fusion, 7<sup>th</sup> out of 80 teams at Nationals.  
Hamilton County, IN. 14U, but we were all 13 y.o.  
It was our first year as a team together, so for all of us to come together and do so well, it was a good memory for me.

*Do you have any specific moments from that tournament that were memorable?*

When we got knocked down into the losers bracket, we won 4 games in a row in one day by slaughter rule.  
No one gave up just bc we were in the loser's bracket  
Winning the last game guaranteed we would move on to the final 8.  
We played the last game against a local rival, who people had been saying were better than us all season.  
Tinley Park Rockers

### Question 3: Why did you start playing travel ball?

When I was playing in-house, it was starting to become easy and I wanted to challenge myself more.

### Question 4: What is the most important thing you've learned from playing travel?

"No matter where you play or who you're playing, you can't judge your competition based on reputation. You have to stay humble about you and your opponents."

### Question 5: What are some of your other hobbies?

I liked to stay involved in school events by going to football games, taking part in Best Buddies, and participating in the Be the Change program for anti-bullying

*What is the best thing about playing on the team?*

If you are having a bad game or are doing bad, your teammates are always there to pick you up

You can always rely on your teammates and your teammates can rely on you

Make closer friendships, sometimes closer than friends I make in school

*Is there anything you'd like to add?*

Not only being able to play with some of my closest friends, but I like meeting people and making friends from other places too

*\*Italicized questions were follow-up questions I added during my interview. These are great tools for getting more detailed information!*

*\*\*Notice how I abbreviated my notes. This helped me get down as much information as possible.*