

Writing Assignment for the Erik Larson Text

Part 1. Read the note below.

Note: Telling me that the text is boring or that the assignment is boring or that the teacher is boring does not satisfy the requirements of this or any assignment. In fact, resorting to complaints generally indicates that you haven't read the text or that you haven't understood the text. If any facet of this statement pertains to you, especially the first half, then you should consider dropping this course as there is a direct correlation between doing the work and passing the test. Remember, this is a college-level, academic class. In order to excel, you must actively engage in the process. I'll do my best for you, but learning is ultimately a personal commitment. That said, many of the texts that I will ask you to read this year are quite difficult. If you don't understand what you are reading the first time, then you need to go back and try again. You will get it, but you have to work at it. Please talk to me if you have any concerns.

Part 2. Due No Later Than Oct. 1

Points: Up to 20 | 2 separate paragraphs

Write one paragraph in which you describe some piece of new technical or historical information that you learned as a result of reading the Larson text.

Write one paragraph in which you analyze Larson's style. I know that we haven't had any instruction on style yet, so just do your best. You can think about tone, diction, syntax or anything else that helps to describe Larson's writing.

- Each paragraph should be at least 120 words in length.
- Each paragraph must be free of any "be" verbs.

Examples of "be" verbs* in various situations:

Holmes **is** a killer.

The U-boat **was** hunting the *Lusitania*.

Isaac and his family **were** trying to escape the storm.

Hitler and his followers **were** determined to take over Germany.

Marconi **was** brilliant.

*Rules for verbs are plentiful and complex. I am simplifying greatly. Your goal is to write your paragraphs without using any form of the verb "be."

Example:

(with "be" verb)

H.H. Holmes **was** a notorious and ruthless serial killer who stalked the ladies of Chicago in the late nineteenth century.

(without "be" verb)

H.H. Holmes **stalked, seduced, and murdered** unsuspecting young women of Chicago in the late nineteenth century making him America's first serial killer.