

AP Economics Book Study Projects

Each book study project requires a similar set of tasks. First, you must read the book. That's a given.

The paper itself must be typed. It must be single-spaced, and submitted in Times New Roman 12pt font, black type only. It must have one-inch (1") margins on each side. The paper must be two pages in length, at least. I will not consider space taken up for headers and titles as part of the two pages, nor will I consider blank spaces between paragraphs as part of the two pages' length minimum.

If the paper isn't long enough or there are problems with the font, I will assess a ten-point penalty against the paper. If there are significant deficits in length, I will deduct more than ten points. If the font is really really bad, I will also deduct more than ten points.

I will also take off points if I do not like your style of writing. Excessive grammatic or spelling errors, inappropriate usage of first or second person point of view, flippant language, and other stylistic high crimes and misdemeanors will result in either small point deductions or outright failing grades handed down. If you're not sure how to write for me, come see me and I'll show you what I am looking for.

How to Lie with Statistics

For this paper, you will need to find four examples of statistical lies told in advertising, news, or political reports. Each statistical lie needs to be specifically identified and correlated to a type of lie described in the book. The four lies need to be different from each other: do not find four examples of bad bar graphs and think that will be sufficient. Identify the lie and show or describe the proper way of presenting the information. Each lie is worth 10 points. If you are looking for additional credit or hoping to avert disaster with bad examples, include other examples of statistical lies - the more comprehensive, the better.

Choose examples from recent history - within the previous six weeks. Anything older smells fishy to me and may be you just copying someone else's work. Choose unique examples: too much similarity with other authors may cause me to rubbish your paper as simply not worth reading in the light of having read the same information elsewhere. Be imaginative and impress me.

Economics in One Lesson

Hazlitt takes a hard, unforgiving look at practices that are sold as being highly beneficial, but in truth include hidden, unacceptable costs. He wrote this book back in 1946, yet his observations are valid today. Find four examples of government programs, agencies, or laws that benefit a small group of people at the expense of the rest of the nation. These need to be programs currently in place and you need to identify their costs, not just to taxpayers, but to other businesses, consumers, and foreign markets.

Whatever you do, don't misread the book and think he's actually *supporting* these boondoggles. He's against things being unfair. I can't pass a paper that misses the mark by that much.

Introducing Keynesian Economics

Pugh and Garratt are very pro-Keynesian. VERY pro-Keynesian. After you read this book, do a little more research into classical, neo-classical, and monetarist schools of economics. Summarize each of the four main schools of economic thought and then compare their pitfalls and virtues in your conclusion. If you do not put a critical eye to the conclusions of the authors, but agree with them without qualification, I will not be able to pass your paper.

Other Books and Other Studies

If you want more ideas on how to get more learning in your head, let me suggest first and foremost *Strategy in Poker, Business, and War* by John McDonald and *Give and Take* by Chester A. Karrass. These are awesome books and you should read them if you want to know how to maneuver through life. If you can see me during 6th period, 1st period, or luck out and catch me before school, I can have you watch and learn from the series *Yes, Minister* - you can also catch it on PBS from time to time in their British comedy blocks. It's one of the best shows, ever.

Outside of those, I have other suggestions. But those are where you should start.