

Writing a researched web story assignment 2

Type: Short assignment

Learning objectives

- Students learn to write for the web, and recognize how that differs from other writing styles.
- Students learn to search for relevant literature and apply source criticism to online sources.

Assignment suggestion

Read carefully the “How to write an academic story for the web?” manual and the excerpts of the *Web content style Guide* by Garry McGovern. Create a 150-word historically inspired web story about a technological object that you find on *Inventing Europe*, either in the tours or via the “What’s like this?” section below each of the stories in each of the tours. The resulting story needs to be inherently different from the way it was categorized originally. Use the newspaper search engine at www.kb.nl and JStor to find RELEVANT articles for your topic. The story needs to be based on at least one source that has been critically examined and needs to respond to the requirements for stories as explained in the manual. – Eindhoven University of Technology, Netherlands,

Approach

For this assignment we suggest either an online or an offline approach. Accompanying the options you could pursue, you find helpful tools and search suggestions:

Offline approach:

1. In case you want your students to learn to write for the web, then you might want to distribute the “How to write an academic story for the web” manual.
2. In case of the above, it might be helpful to lecture about the differences between writing for the web and writing for reading from paper, which is inherently different. To this end, see the informative PowerPoint provided under Tips for Use.
3. Let your students search for objects on *Inventing Europe* by either looking through the [1000+ objects page](#), by [browsing the tours](#), by using the “What’s like this?” section below each of the stories in each of the tours, or using the search function in the bar placed at the top right of the website.

4. Make them contextualize their objects in new ways, posing questions to the object that invites them to research their object from a European and transnational perspective.
5. Via literature research your students will need to examine their questions. Under Tips for Use teachers who worked with this assignment provide optional search engines.
6. Students write the 150-word story and proceed in a way desirable for your course.

Online approach:

1. In preparation for the assignments, your students would benefit considerably from reading the “How to write an academic story for the web” manual.
2. Let your students [sign up](#) to MyEurope. Let them fill out their profile and instruct them to ‘Create new tour’ Under Tips for Use you find an instruction manual for MyEurope that explains in detail how MyEurope works and what options students have in creating tours, stories, and searching for objects.
3. Make your student scroll down on the ‘Create your tour’ page to the “Edit your tour unit” part. Each unit stands for one story with one accompanying object. By working in one unit your student fulfills his or her assignment online. The student clicks on the “Edit” button.
4. The student uploads the selected object and drag & drops the object in the tour unit. (Read the MyEurope manual for instructions how to upload objects to the object collection and how to drag and drop the objects in the tour units).
5. The student writes the max 200 word story and adds the used sources (consulted literature).
6. In case you desire your student to hand in their assignment, he or she can click on the “Include in Export” button and select the unit he or she worked on. The student can then export his or her work as pdf, print it directly or send it to you as pdf.
7. In case of presentation in class of the assignment, the student can easily show his or her object and story by clicking on the ‘preview’ button on the ‘Create your tour’ page.

Tips for use

- Want to know more about all the functions of MyEurope? Then read the MyEurope manual where you can find more detailed instructions on how to use this platform. You can find this under the Student material on the [Short assignments](#) page (<http://www.inventingeurope.eu/education/short-assignments/>).
- Let your students watch [Johan Schot's lecture](#) on the new vision and historical narrative that forms the basis of *Inventing Europe*.
- Why don't you use (elements of) this PowerPoint on [How to Write for the Web](#) to show students how to write web stories?

Fellow teacher tips

- At Eindhoven University of Technology we made our students work with some of the most important national and international online search engines. We recommend:
 - De Nederlandse Centrale Catalogus [PiCarta](#) (<http://picarta.pica.nl>) for literature and articles.

- The newspaper database of the Royal Dutch Library, www.kb.nl, where students can explore national and international newspaper articles online.
- The scholarly database: [JStor](http://www.jstor.org/) (<http://www.jstor.org/>).

Reading suggestions

- Gerry McGovern, Rob Norton, Catherine O'Dowd, *The Web Content Style Guide* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Financial Times Prentice Hall, 2001).
- Take a look at the six volume book series [Johan Schot and Philip Scranton ed., 'Making Europe: Technology and Transformations, 1850-2000' \(Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013-2016\)](#). Each *Inventing Europe* exhibition is inspired by one of these volumes and allows you to explore in-depth with your students the themes of consumers, infrastructures, governance, media, knowledge societies and Europe in a global world. Examine www.makingeurope.eu for more details and table of contents of the already published volumes.

Are you planning on using this suggestion and teach with *Inventing Europe*? Then we invite you to join our teaching community. You then keep up-to-date on activities, have ample opportunity to share your materials and experiences, and to be in touch with other teachers.

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