

**Assignment Sheet: Annotation—
Dr. Martin Luther King’ s “Letter from Birmingham Jail”**

Driving Question: Did the nonviolent direct action, which King describes in his “Letter from a Birmingham Jail,” successfully transform Birmingham, Alabama from a segregated to a just society in 1963?

Purpose: Since we argue all the time with our relatives, friends, and teachers, this unit may seem unnecessary; however, imagine presenting an argument to a hostile group or to the Supreme Court, your argument would probably be quite different. In order to understand one method of persuasion, you will analyze and annotate MLK’s “Letter...”. By analyzing the letter, you will become more familiar with rhetorical devices and strategies. By practicing annotation, you will focus on succinctness, cohesion, and clarity before writing your own argument.

Resources: Be mindful of—

- Your reading response entry to the letter
- Notes on Rhetorical terms/devices and Sample Analysis modeled in-class
- Notes on the form of Annotation
 - One to two sentences describing the argument.
 - Five to six sentences describing the rhetorical elements used for support.
 - Two to three sentences evaluating the effectiveness of these elements.

Directions:

In groups of three, you will discuss “Letter...” and use prewriting strategies to—

- determine the argument and
- rhetorically analyze how he supports that argument.

On your own you will use this information to—

- evaluate and synthesize how these elements worked together in order to produce an effective argument and
- compose a draft of your Annotation.

Reconvene in your groups to—

- peer review and revise entries for submission.

Criteria:

- Did you identify the argument?
- Did you identify the use of rhetorical devices and use examples from the text that demonstrate them?
- Are you mindful of your audience(For this assignment, your teacher is the audience.)?
- Did you use rhetorical terms appropriately?
- Is your paper one page?
- Did you cite according to MLA guidelines?