

Your Room for Debate Project

Genre: Remediation of the NYT Room for Debate feature

Audience: Educated, curious, sometimes-skeptical readers

Learning Outcomes: [Rhetorical Knowledge](#); [Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing](#); [Knowledge of Conventions](#); [Processes](#)

Your Room for Debate Remediation Project has **two parts**: first, collecting and summarizing sources, and then composing your own Room for Debate format:

How to Find & Summarize Your Sources

- **Choose four sources** that you are seriously considering for your issue. At least one must be scholarly. The others may be credible non-academic sources, such as newspapers like the *NYT*, well-regarded trade publications, *The Atlantic*, *Harper's*, etc. The opinions in the sources should differ from each other—they should take different positions--to reveal the complexity of the debate and the ongoing conversation.
- **Create an annotated bibliography** in MLA format
- **Summarize the articles** in 5-10 sentences each, using direct quotes of words and/or phrases.

Summary Format

- 1) Begin your summary sentence(s) with the writer's full name and a rhetorically active verb that both puts the article into some context—the type of journal or book in which it appears—and describes what the writer is doing with the text (“suggests that,” “argues that,” “implies that,” “urges that,” “claims that,” etc.). See P. 279 in St. Martin's Handbook for a chart of active "Signal Verbs."
- 2) **Describe** how the writer develops, structures, and supports the argument. This is usually done by comparing and contrasting, illustrating, defining, or putting the article into context.
- 3) **Describe** the writer's purpose, followed by an “in order to” clause, which explains the intended effect on the audience.
- 4) **Summarize** how the writer weighs in on your topic. What's her or his angle?
- 5) **Explain** in 2-4 sentences how this source is useful for your understanding of the topic.

EXAMPLE:

[1] Kitwana, Bakari. "Walking the Tight Rope: The Art and Reality of Tupac Shakur." *Tough Love: The Life and Death of Tupac Shakur*. Ed. Michael Datcher and Kwame Alexander. Alexandria, VA: Alexander Publishing Group, 1996: 31-33.

[2] In this essay, part of a collection designed to reflect on and celebrate Tupac Shakur's life and career, Kitwana argues that Shakur and his music are misunderstood by many of his fans and critics. **[3]** Kitwana reviews some of Shakur's musical releases, showing how they were both a part of, and a response to, changes in the rap-music industry in the 1980's and 1990's. **[4]** Because Shakur was a controversial artist, Kitwana puts rap music in its cultural and economic contexts in order to make distinctions between entertainment and the realities of black culture. **[5]** *Tough Love* contains critical commentary, poetry, and personal responses to Shakur's life and career, and is aimed toward an academic audience of music and cultural critics.

Remediating the Room for Debate

On a new page, create a Room for Debate using your four sources; using tables in Microsoft Word or another program of your choice, recreate the Room for Debate look.

Remember the qualities of the Room for Debate we came up with in our Discussion Board? Follow those, and since this is a remediation, feel free to be creative and put your own stamp on the Room for Debate genre!

Let your voice become your fifth source; imagine yourself joining the conversation. When you enter into the conversation, give your credentials and connection with the topic as well. Readers need to know why they should listen to you. The goal is to make your voice rise above the conversation and bring some clarity to it.