

Essay 2

Scholarly Essay on Alien Contact

Assignment: Ted Chiang's short story, "Story of Your Life," is about aliens from outer space visiting our planet Earth. How likely is that? Making reference to the essays on alien contact and SETI by Cohen and Stewart, Aldiss, Berg, and Trotman that we discussed in the past two units, write an essay on the plausibility of alien contact and our current efforts to contact or hear from them. Consider such questions as: are we alone in the universe or are there other intelligent beings out there? Why haven't they visited us? How do we contact them? Should we devote money and scientific resources to trying to find or hear space aliens?

This assignment is a test of your ability to use quotes, paraphrases, and summaries with proper parenthetical citation style, as well as your ability to write a thesis and organize a scholarly argument. Thus, you must include the following kinds of textual evidence in your essay:

1. Summaries of the secondary scholarly sources that you use, where necessary.
2. A minimum of **four quotes** from your scholarly sources.
3. A minimum of **two paraphrases** from your scholarly sources.

Content:

- Your essay must begin with a fully-developed introduction that contains your thesis.
- Your essay must end with a fully-developed conclusion.
- You may use your scholarly sources in two ways: as support for your argument or as a position you argue against.
- You must refer to at least **three** of the assigned scholarly essays in your own essay. If you wish, you can also refer to Chiang's short story, but keep in mind that Chiang's story is a work of fiction, not a scholarly essay.
- Write authoritatively in the third person; avoid editorializing and using terms such as "I think" and "I believe."

Format:

- Include the following in the upper right hand side of the first page: your name; a title for your project; the number of words in your essay; the name, number and time of your class; and your professor's name.
- You must write a minimum of **seven** fully-developed paragraphs and **1000** total words. A fully-developed paragraph is a minimum of five sentences long.
- Your essay must be written in Standard American English, making use of proper grammar, diction, and spelling. Essays that exhibit a trend (3 instances) of a single serious grammar, mechanical, or style error cannot receive a grade higher than a 70. Serious errors consist of errors such as fragments, comma splices, run-ons, and poor sentence structure, as well as errors in verb tense, verb forms, subject-verb agreement, pronoun agreement, pronoun case, diction, and parallelism.
- Number each page. Center page numbers at the bottom of each page.
- Type your essay with double spacing and 1" margins; use 12 pt. Times font and left justify your body paragraphs.
- You do not need to include a works cited page with this particular assignment.
- **You must upload an MS Word file containing a properly formatted draft of your essay to the Essay 2 assignment folder by the assignment due date.**