

Preparing for Critical Essay (Summary, Synthesis, and Research)

General Directions:

Choose one of the topics below to develop into an essay of 850-1500 words.

The film *The Gleaners and I* serves as a starting point for this essay. Your readers have not seen the film, so you are to summarize the film as well as explore in a little more depth one of the ideas Varda introduces in her film (as identified in the topics). The sources for your essay should be Varda's film and **at least one other article from an online database** accessed through CTC's Oveta Culp Hobby Library database. You might also use an open Internet source, but that source must be reasonably reliable.

Your essay will inform your readers about Varda's film and also about some of the ideas that Varda explores in her film.

1. In her film, Varda profiles several people who “glean” for food, people who eat the discarded scraps of others or who gather food from the countryside. What reasons do these people give for “gleaning” for food? Identify those reasons, and discuss each reason, providing examples from the film and examples from other sources.

Possible search terms: gleaning, Freegans, dumpster diving, recycling and food

2. Varda interviews people in her film who glean for art: that is, artists pick up discarded material and use that material to create art. Discuss the ways that people use discarded material to create art in Varda's film. Can you find other sources that describe ways that people use discarded material to create art? What kinds of materials do these artists use? What art terms are used to describe art created with discarded or found materials?

Possible search terms: found objects, recycled art, recycling and art

3. Varda shows how we waste so much in our western societies, from the tons of potatoes dumped in the fields because they aren't the right shape or size to be sold commercially to the food we discard because we buy more than we need or because the expiration date is past due. Describe the ways the film illustrates that food is wasted and then discuss how that waste can be avoided. The film suggests some ways that discarded food can be recycled or reclaimed. What kinds of things are other people and organizations doing to diminish food waste?

Possible search terms: food scrap, food waste, food and recycling

Avoiding plagiarism:

When you use information from other sources, you must inform your readers that the information is not original with you. That is, you must cite your sources. Any time you use the direct words of another writer, you must put quotation marks around the words and identify the writer. However, you must also identify the source of information that you get from another writer but that you summarize or paraphrase in your own words. We will discuss in class how to identify sources within the text of your essay and in a works cited page at the end of the essay.