

Geology in the News - Assignment

Introduction

Applying knowledge to understand the world around you is an important aspect of learning. This assignment is intended to direct your focus on events and topics in the news concerning earth science, and to show your understanding of the processes involved. You may have to research beyond the information presented in the articles.

Due Date

Due No later than Nov 21. For those wishing to turn their assignment in early I will accept them anytime before this date. A paper turned in and graded early can be **rewritten** for a better grade. However, all comments must be addressed and the original paper must be submitted as a word document through **WebCt**. **I retain the right not to regrade papers** if the rewrite is only a superficial attempt.

Do not wait until the last week to complete the assignment. I will deduct 5 points from any paper turned in late regardless of the excuse.

Directions

Step 1: Choose two geologic events or topics reported in the news between **July 1** and **Nov 21** 2007.

Step 2: Find articles

a. Collect and read a minimum of **3 articles** about each event from a range of sources.

These 3 articles must be current (fall within the time period given in step 1). Auxiliary information required to understand your topic is not considered an article. However, your efforts to obtain such information will be considered in calculating your grade. You will be graded on your choice of articles. They should be more than a brief newswire announcement. *The same news feed repeated on different news sources **do not count** and separate articles.*

b. Remember to record the **source, date, and author** for the **bibliography**. (See below.)

• Where to find articles:

- Internet news services, government site, etc.
- Magazines
- Newspapers

• Potential Topics:

- Earthquakes, landslides, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, natural resources, public policy and politics concerning geologic events or resources, planetary geology, groundwater pollution, global warming and geology, coastal erosion, and water resources are some examples.

Step 3. Read and Discuss.

Read the articles several times before attempting to write your discussion. Address the following in your discussion.

- a. **Describe** the event and discuss the underlying causes.
- b. **Discuss** how is the event relates to geology if not immediately obvious.
- c. **Describe** and discuss the socioeconomic ramifications of the event.
- d. **Discuss** any controversy or lessons learned from the event.

Warnings:

1. Do not **quote** sections or **paraphrase** text from articles. Quoting and paraphrasing is an indication that you haven't taken the time to fully understand the material. Read your articles several times until you feel comfortable with the content, then write.
2. **An F** will be given to anyone found copying material from an unreferenced source.
3. **Don't include articles you haven't read.** If you include an article and it's clear you didn't read it 5 points will be deducted from the grade for that topic. *I read your articles and your papers very carefully.*
4. An **automatic zero** will be given if any text is found to be copied directly from the Internet and not included in the references.
5. If your prose is deemed **unreadable** then your paper will be returned without a grade for rewriting. You must take it to the **Writing Skills Center** before resubmitting it.
6. **Outdated articles** can be used only for auxiliary content. Otherwise 2 points will be deducted each of your three articles that are not within the specified time.

Step 4: Organize

General Format: A header including the **title** and your **name** must be typed, and centered at the top of the first page. Each discussion must be neatly typed, well structured with the following **type and format:** Times Roman or similar font @ 12 pts, 1 inch margins. **Spacing** must be 1x or 1.5x. **Check spelling** and paragraph structure. Each paragraph must have a **topic sentence** introducing the content of the paragraph.

Length of each discussion should be no less than 1.5 pages (@1.5x spacing) and no more than 4 pages. Content, structure, and understanding is more important than length.

Bibliography: At the end of each discussion reference the **articles** used **and** any **auxiliary documents** used to understand the topic in your discussion. See syllabus for format.

General guidelines referencing formats	
Online Stand-alone document with no author or date given	<i>document name, (n.d.). date retrieved, from site page url.</i>
Online Articles	<i>Author(s), date of publication if available, title, date retrieved, site URL.</i>
Periodical	<i>Author(s), date of publication, title, journal, volume, pages.</i>
Book	<i>Author(s), date of publication, title, edition, publisher, location, pages.</i>

Step 5: Submit. You can submit a **hard copy** of your assignment **OR** an **electronic Word.doc** via the assignments dropoff box on **WebCT**.

Hard Copy: Neatly organize and staple your paper, the articles, and bibliography together for each topic (event). Place all three stapled packages in a manila envelope with your name on it. **Do not use a binder. or folder.**

Electronic Submission through WebCT: Submit each paper as a Microsoft Word doc through WebCT. You can save internet articles as either html or pdf files and submit them with your discussions. Magazine or newspaper articles that are not in electronic format should be placed in a manila envelope with your name on it and a note stating that the rest of the project was submitted through WebCT.

Advice

1. If you have problems using WebCT call the helplines listed below. Assume you will have a problem and plan to to submit early in case you do.

Days 8:30am - 5:00pm Call the SSC I.T. Helpdesk 978-542-2036

Evenings 5:00pm - 8:30am Call 1-800-569-6505

2. If you have problems understand a topic **see me** for help and direction. Again the sooner you start your project the less this will become a problem.

3. If you have problems with organizing your writing, sentence structure, and paragraph structure then make an appointment with the **Writing Skills Center**. The center is a great asset and many can benefit from its services.

Location: Meier Hall 220, North Campus

Phone: 978-542-6491

Some online sources for articles:

Geology.com

brightsurf.com

Discover

BBC Science

[Earth Observatory News \(Headlines\)](http://Earth.Observatory News (Headlines))

CNN Space and Science

Nova

MSNBC.Science

Planet Ark

ScienceDev.Net

Scientific American

Science Friday

ScienceTech Daily

Science News

TerraDaily World Science

Grading Rubric

Each article will be graded with the following > [rubric](#)