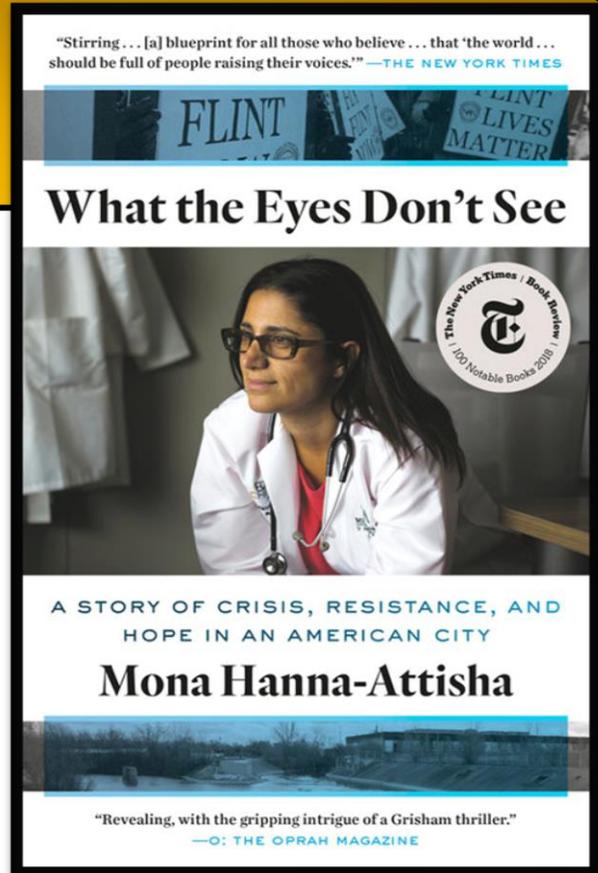


The Otterbein Common Book 2022

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About the Common Book Author



Otterbein’s Common Book Program, one of the University’s signature programs, offers a shared reading experience for all incoming first-year students, and for faculty, staff, and other members of the Otterbein community.

The 2022 Common Book, *What the Eyes Don’t See*, is the harrowing retelling of the 2015-2016 Flint, Michigan, water crisis. Pediatrician Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha and her team of researchers, parents, friends, and community leaders discovered that the children of Flint were being exposed to lead in their tap water—and then battled her own government and a brutal backlash to expose the truth to the world.

As much as it is an account of a shameful disaster caused by governmental neglect, misguided austerity, and bureaucratic indifference, Dr. Hanna-Attisha’s account is also a love song to the people of Flint, Michigan. It is a riveting tale of hope and resiliency in the face of uncontestable odds and the power of the community to fight for justice.

Common Book Assignment

Respond to this prompt in an essay of multiple paragraphs:

In *What the Eyes Don't See*, Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha frequently brings up the concept of "environmental injustice." In your own words, what is environmental injustice? Using examples from the text, discuss whether or not the Flint water crisis is an example of environmental injustice. You may focus on any part of the definition of environmental injustice and the particulars of the Flint water crisis presented in *What the Eyes Don't See*. Features you might discuss could include policies, legislation, historical information, economic pressures, and more.

Rubric

A well-written essay will demonstrate the following characteristics:

1. The introduction effectively identifies and contextualizes the book and engages the reader.
2. The thesis statement presents the main idea of the essay.
3. The essay deploys complete paragraph structure, which means each paragraph has a clear topic sentence which ties the idea to the thesis, and each topic sentence is defended by relevant and appropriate supporting evidence from the book.
4. The essay is an analysis, not merely a summary. This means that the essay uses reasoning to support its thesis, and that the organization and structure aid the writer in developing their ideas logically and with appropriate and effective connections between them.
5. Supporting details from the book demonstrate the writer's ability with the different forms of reporting (summary, paraphrase, and at least 3 direct quotations).
6. Quotations are chosen carefully and judiciously, appropriately introduced and punctuated, and correctly cited according to MLA guidelines.
7. The Work Cited entry is complete and correct.
8. Sentences are varied in length and structure, and demonstrate the author's mastery of Academic English syntax.
9. Writing is economical; word choice is precise.
10. The writer is consistent in tense, number, and person. Mechanics, usage, and grammar are standard. The essay has been carefully proofread prior to submission.

Document Design

Essays submitted to your professors should be written according to a standard format: font, spacing, margins, headings, page numbering, and documentation style are all prescribed. The following page is an example that illustrates these features according to one style of documentation, the MLA 9th edition.

Frequently Asked Questions

How long should the essay be? The essay should be about 750-1000 words, which will typically be three or four printed double-spaced pages.

What if I don't take my FYS until spring? You still need to complete the essay before you come to Otterbein. Your essay will be collected at First Flight and given to your FYS instructor, even if your FYS course isn't until the Spring semester.

Who reads my essay? Your FYS instructor, who might grade your essay, using your writing to begin discussion of the book, or simply offer comments.

What supplemental materials are available? The Otterbein University library, Courtright Memorial Library, creates and curates a Libguide dedicated to each year's Common Book. You can find this year's [Common Book Libguide here](#).

Who can I contact with questions? If you have other questions or concerns, please contact Colette Masterson, cmasterson@otterbein.edu.

Important Dates to Remember, Fall 2022

Your essay will be the first writing that you submit to your FYS instructor. Bring a **printed copy** of your essay to First Flight. The printed copy of your assignment will be collected and discussed during your **FYS course meetings**:

- First Flight – August 17-21, 2022
- FYS Meeting 1 – August 18, 2022
- FYS Meeting 2 – August 19, 2022
- Classes begin **Monday, August 22, 2022**.

The Common Book Convocation ceremony and virtual author visit will be held on Tuesday, October 25. There will be additional virtual visits with Dr. Hanna-Attisha on October 26.

Your Name

Professor

FYS 1000

17 August 2022

Sample Essay

Academic writing follows certain conventions. These rules are typically dictated by a style manual, such as that published by the Modern Languages Association and commonly cited as the MLA Style Manual or simply MLA. These rules dictate form to ensure that essays are clear and readable as well as professional.

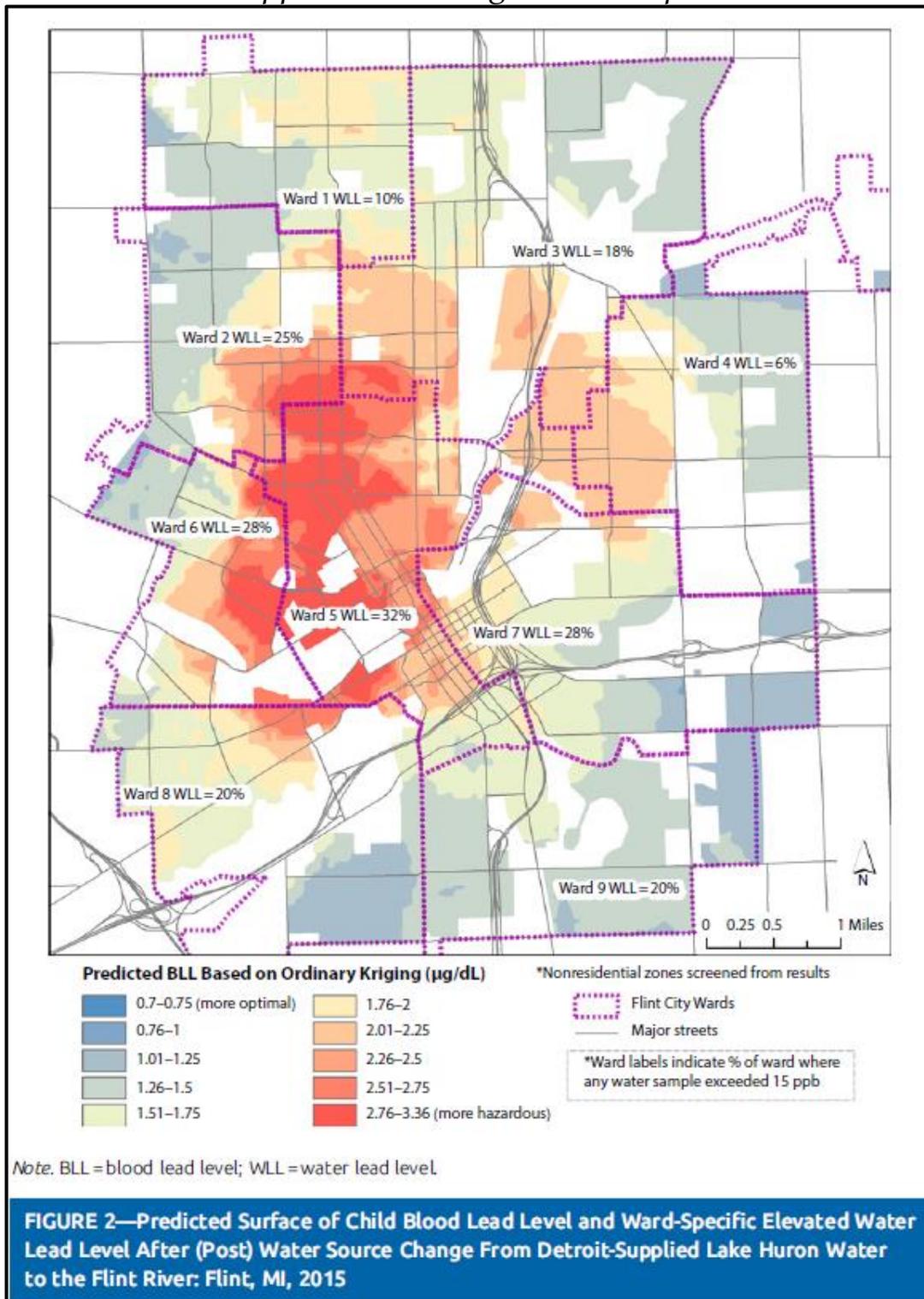
Typical rules for font choices will dictate not only the typeface to use, but also its size, spacing, and indenting. A common standard is 12-point Times New Roman font, double spaced, with one-inch margins on all sides. That style is demonstrated here.

Another fundamental concern in research and rationale for the development of style manuals is the incorporation and attribution of outside resources. Quotations are the most commonly seen of these, and demonstrate knowledge of the text. Here is an example: Five hundred years ago, my family, like many Chaldeans and Assyrians—ethnically the same people—were members of the Nestorian Church, or “Church of the East,” once the dominant Christian sect from the Mediterranean to India and China (Hanna-Attisha, 211). Often a few words or a single phrase will be enough to illustrate your point. Your ideas and analyses of the quotations you choose to include are the most important part of the essay. You will need to list all the sources you reference in a Work(s) Cited page. Your Work(s) Cited page will usually go on its own page, but it is shown here for simplicity.

Work Cited

Hanna-Attisha, Mona. *What the Eyes Don't See: A Story of Crisis, Resistance, and Hope in an American City*. New York: One World, 2019.

Supplemental Images and Graphs



This image is a visual representation of the estimated blood lead level data shown in the table above, visualizing the geographic “hotspots” of elevated water lead levels and blood lead levels. Though the entire city shows likely elevated blood lead levels, Wards 5, 6, and 7 were the most hazardous regions. Remember that no amount of lead in the blood is considered safe. This data, though estimated, closely matches the measured findings in sampled children (note table above, “Change in predicted” column, far right). From Hanna-Attisha, M., LaChance, J., Sadler, R.C., and Schnepf, A.C. (2016). Elevated blood lead levels in children associated with the Flint drinking water crisis: A spatial analysis of risk and public health response. *American Journal of Public Health*, 16(2), 283-290. <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2015.303003>

Aggressive Reading

Reading at the college level can be demanding. This is true of *What the Eyes Don't See*, which discusses concepts, uses terminology, and addresses issues you might not have encountered before. As a college student, you can expect **more** reading, reading that **challenges** your thinking, reading that **broadens** your view of the world, reading that **transforms** you. If you are going to read effectively at the college level, you cannot read passively; you must be a **proactive**, engaged reader. This means interacting with your text in ways you might not have before. To help you become that successful, **aggressive** reader, we recommend this strategy:

Locate: Choose a time when and a place where you are alert and focused.

Survey: Look at chapter titles, section headings, intros, topic sentences, words in bold type, graphics, and footnotes or endnotes.

Question: Prepare to interrogate your text with your assignment, your prompt, or your research question in mind.

Read: Armed with a view of the layout of the text and with questions you're reading to answer, read in chunks of 10 pages. Try to read 100 pages at a sitting. Your readings will be more efficient if you chunk the assignment into these more manageable parts.

Write: As you read, write—annotate the text, taking notes in the margin. This is your book to keep, so make the most of it! Use a pen or pencil, not a highlighter; ask questions, circle unfamiliar words, connect with prior knowledge or other parts of the text, list names, underline key passages, and make marks to remind you of the importance of a part of the text.

Annotations work in the present, to help you engage with the text, and in the future, when you review the reading for a test or collect information for a paper.

Outline or Summarize: Outlining as you read helps you situate what you are reading into a larger context of information. Summarizing after you read a chapter, using your own words, is a good measure of your understanding of the text.

Journal: To help you read the Common Book actively and productively, keep a reading journal in which you note observations, reflections, and questions as you read. Pause to write every so often—using your reading journal as your ten-page break is a good start. Keep your outlines and summaries, as well as images, patterns, connections, significant people, and new ideas here. The journal will help you interact with the information in the text as well as serve as a record of your reading. This can be helpful for class discussions, assignments, and program events during the author's visit. The reading journal also consolidates your ideas into one place for your reference when you write your First Flight essay.

The Common Book Program is made possible by a generous gift from Mary B. Thomas, class of 1928.

Our gratitude to Beth and Gary Daugherty for their gift to the Thomas Endowment.

