A research analysis synthesizes and analyzes the research sources. First, the sources are synthesized into a discussion that incorporates paraphrases and quotations, comparisons and contrasts, and fluid transitions. Second, the sources are analyzed to break down the elements, identify patterns, and support the researcher’s overall thesis.

- Len Understand and practice communication as a process in which researching, drafting, and editing stages may need to be completed repeatedly.
- Demonstrate a course-level ability to locate, use, acknowledge, and synthesize appropriate, credible content/evidence from sources to support and enrich your communication-related work.

Length: 2,000 words minimum
Value: 200 points
Include the follow components in the order listed:
- Title Page
- Outline
- Annotated Bibliography (1st page should have a header)
- Research Analysis Paper (1st page should have a header)
- Bibliography (Works Cited or References)
- All pages should have a running head (page number and author’s last name (MLA) or page number and the title (APA).

For the research analysis part of this assignment, you will do the following:

1. Use the focused topic and six research sources from the bibliography and annotated bibliography assignment.

2. Develop a thesis statement that is the overarching main idea for your research analysis. The thesis should not merely focus on the topic. Instead, it should focus on the sources.
   - Topic-driven thesis – To combat the problem of prescription painkiller abuse, doctors must limit over-prescribing opioid drugs and expand rehabilitation programs.
   - Source-driven thesis – While some authors focus on addiction rehabilitation and others on ways to prevent addiction, they all agree that the United States is experiencing an opioid epidemic and that the medical community needs to more closely monitor patients’ health to ensure pain problems do not morph into deadly addictions.

3. Synthesize the sources to put them into a conversation/discussion with one another. Synthesize of the sources requires brief summary statements that present the sources’ essential information in order to compare and contrast the sources. These mini-summaries should include quotations interspersed with your own commentary which puts the sources into conversation with one another. Your commentaries are the explanations that hold the paper together and support your assertions and observations about the central idea that the sources have in common. This
synthesis should incorporate paraphrases and quotations, comparisons and contrasts, and fluid transitions. Use the synthesis chart to help you while planning your essay.

4. Acknowledge/cite the sources in the text according to the citation convention that is appropriate to either MLA or APA.

5. Analyze the sources by breaking down the most important elements (main idea(s) from the synthesis) to show the overall conversation that the sources create. The body of the paper should identify and explain patterns among the sources. Use the sources (paraphrases and quotations) to support your thesis about the overall conversation between the sources. The thesis statement and topic sentences should maintain the focus on the sources.

   a. Topic: prescription painkiller addiction (overarching idea derived from the sources)
   b. Main ideas: (derived from the common elements/most important idea identified in the sources to create the structure for the analysis paper)
      i. Definition and types of prescription painkillers
      ii. Abundance of prescription painkillers
      iii. The problem of prescription painkiller addition
      iv. Fighting prescription painkiller abuse
         1. Treatments for addiction
         2. Fighting over-prescription

Within this outline, the first body paragraph will be informative. Do not just jump into the topic itself with the topic sentence, such as: The most common prescription painkillers are oxycodone (e.g. OxyContin) and hydrocodone mixed with acetaminophen (e.g. Vicodin) (Johnson 5).

Instead, keep the topic sentence focus on the conversation among the sources, such as: While only one academic source from a medical journal assumes reader knowledge about opioids, the other sources fully educate readers about what constitutes these powerful drugs.

Continue the paragraph by blending (synthesizing) multiple sources into the same section and using transition words, like “similarly,” to create connections between the sources, such as: Addison and Trent provide a helpful list of medications that fall into the categories of oxycodone and hydrocodone-plus-acetaminophen, such as…(provide examples and cite the sources). Similarly, Kelley outlines the slight differences between oxycodone and hydrocodone-plus-acetaminophen…(provide quotations and citations). Therefore, within this community of writers, there is a high priority on educating readers about what these drugs actually contain and how they affect the human body.
**Synthesis Matrix**

To synthesize sources, do not organize paragraphs by single sources. Instead, organize paragraphs by the main idea patterns that emerge across sources. The synthesis matrix helps to visualize the way the sources’ ideas are related to one another.

Start by listing the sources down the rows, and listing the theses and main ideas across the top of the chart. When a source addresses a main idea, write a brief note with page numbers in the appropriate box. The matrix below is to help you get started. It may need more columns as main ideas emerge or more rows if you have more than six sources.

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<tr>
<th>Source Title</th>
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Combating the Opioid Epidemic

Opioid drugs have taken center stage in today’s society. Some people argue that opioids are medically necessary. Others see the obvious downfalls of overprescribing opioid medications and argue for solutions. While some authors focus on addiction rehabilitation and others on ways to prevent addiction, they all agree that the United States is experiencing an opioid epidemic and that the medical community needs to more closely monitor patients’ health to ensure pain problems do not morph into deadly addictions.

While only one academic source from a medical journal assumes reader knowledge about opioids, the other sources fully educate readers about what constitutes these powerful drugs. Addison and Trent provide a helpful list of medications that fall into the categories of oxycodone and hydrocodone-plus-acetaminophen, such as “OxyContin” and “Vicodin” (235 and 137). Similarly, Kelley outlines the slight differences between oxycodone and hydrocodone-plus-acetaminophen, “They are both relatively powerful narcotics used for the treatment of pain” (35). When patients take any opioid medication, it affects “their central nervous system and prevents the sending of pain signals to the brain” (Kelley 36). Therefore, within this community of writers, there is a high priority on educating readers about what these drugs actually contain and how they affect the human body.