As a precursor to your research-based essay, the source profile assignment gives you a chance to evaluate the sources that you have collected. In profiling sources, you will summarize and assess the source's content/argument; moreover, you will explain your search methodology, explaining how, specifically, you located your sources.

**REQUIREMENTS:** Your source profile assignment should include a bibliography of all the sources that you have found so far, but you don't need to write a profile all of them; adding sources to a working bibliography helps you keep track of what sources you have found and keeps you from finding the same source twice. You must write profiles (see sample below) for two of your sources. Since this bibliography should both demonstrate your knowledge of the research process as well as summarize the sources, each profile should describe (a) how (specifically) you found the source (What search type did you do? Where did you find the source?), (b) what kind of source it is, (c) a 3-5 sentence summary of the source's contents (the summary is the most important part of the profile; to be able to use a source, you have to understand its argument and content), and (d) how you think it will be helpful to your project. All citations should be in MLA style, and the profile should immediately follow the citation. See sample on reverse side of this handout. Write your two profiles on sources you found on your own rather than on sources from *Citizenship, Responsibility, and Community*.

**SOURCE TYPES:** If you look at the project 3 assignment sheet, you will notice that you have to use a variety of source types for your research-based essay, so your bibliography should include a variety of source types and detail some varied search techniques.

**GRADE WEIGHT:** Since this assignment requires more writing than most of our in-class or out-of-class responses, it will be weighed more in the homework grades category. Each profile will be graded separately, so you are essentially doing two one-page assignments, and I will give the bibliography an overall grade. Therefore, three grades will be calculated for this assignment, making it count proportionally more than the regular one to two page responses we have been doing.

**EVALUATION STANDARDS:** Your source profile assignment will be evaluated for its: (a) completeness, (b) the comprehensiveness of your profiles, (c) your variety of source types, (d) the correctness of technical matters, and (e) your adherence to MLA conventions.

**MANUSCRIPT REQUIREMENTS:** Your assignment must be prepared according to MLA manuscript guidelines; see chapter 21 of the *Penguin Handbook* for MLA style guidelines.

**SAMPLE:** In the following sample, notice how the first part of the profile quickly details specifically how I located this source and mentions the source type. Next, notice how the sample uses active verbs to describe Gibson's (the source's author's) argument.

I wrote this profile, and I understand that yours might be shorter, but try to understand the basic principles of summarizing a source's content/argument; you should be summarizing without interpreting, and when necessary, you can give short examples.

At the end of the profiles, please add a few lines about how you can apply the sources in your essay. Since I'm not using this article for a project right now, I wasn't able to do that in the example.
SAMPLE PROFILE OF SOURCE:


In the Literature Online (LION) MLA database, I did a subject search for “Douglass, Frederick AND narrative”; LION had a link to this journal article in JStor, so I found a PDF version to use.

Gibson argues that Frederick Douglass's *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave* achieves its status as the “best among many slave narratives” due to the author's ability to merge his telling of public history with the facts of his private life (549). According to Gibson, Booker T. Washington, Benjamin Quarles, Marion Wilson Starling and Stephen Butterfield have misread the autobiography's psychological climax—Douglass's encounter with Covey—because they read narratives like Douglass’s only to uncover its public and abolitionist aims. Whereas these reviewers view the fight scene with Covey as a symbolic representation of the slave defeating the slaveholder, Gibson maintains that readers must see both dimensions of Douglass—public and private—in order to comprehend that Douglass’s fight with Covey parallels his psychological struggle “between the aggressive impulse to strike against the monster and an alternative impulse not to strike at all” (562).

After reiterating Douglass’s allusion to Hamlet, Gibson contends that Douglass’s internal struggle mirrors Hamlet’s; therefore, like Hamlet, Douglass must restrain from premature action, and Gibson claims that Douglass's control in squeezing Covey's throat “only so hard” illustrates the balance between thought with action that forms his ability to merge public and private (563). For Gibson, this balance guides both the writing of the narrative, where Douglass merges his personal story with a wider representation of slavery, and Douglass's life, where he waits until the opportune time to escape slavery—an escape, as Gibson notes, that does not serve as a climax for Douglass's story.