

# 09-08 Class: Computers and Technology, AstroTurfing, and Research Paper

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## Class Administration and Grades

- **\*\*Daily Exercises:\*\***Only about six students completed the daily exercise. Missing these has cost some students a cumulative 55 points already this quarter. Each daily exercise is worth five points.
- **Classroom Rules:**
  - Phones and earbuds must not be visible.
  - Do not turn off computers.
  - Violations will result in being sent to Mr. Naughton.

## Daily Exercise Review: Crowds on Demand

- **\*\*Service Definition:\*\***Crowds on Demand hires actors to serve as crowds for impactful advocacy campaigns, demonstrations, PR stunts, crowds for hire, and corporate events.
- **How It Works:**
  - Professional actors and models can be deployed nationwide within 24 hours.
  - Clients can specify attire, signs, and behavior. They get paid about \$20 or \$30 an hour.
- **Cost Structure:**
  - \$50 per person.
  - A minimum event cost of \$25,000 is required to bring people to events, which for a crowd of 500 people at \$50 per person would cover one hour. For 100 people, the cost would be \$5,000 for an hour.
- **\*\*Use Case Example:\*\***One person paid \$25,000 to hire a crowd to follow him for a day as paparazzi to appear like a celebrity.
- **Ethical and Practical Considerations:**
  - Can artificially boost the perceived popularity of a politician, product, or social issue.
  - If exposed as a paid crowd, backlash can occur; people may feel manipulated and angry, potentially causing a political candidate to lose an election. For instance, a mayoral candidate spending

\$50,000 to hire a crowd could face public anger and manipulation accusations, potentially losing the election.

## Daily Exercise Assignment: What is AstroTurfing?

- **\*\*New Assignment:\*\*** A second daily exercise, “What is AstroTurfing?”, was assigned for immediate completion.
- **\*\*Instructions:\*\*** Research the meaning of “AstroTurfing” (not the artificial grass) and write the definition in your own words—no copy-pasting from sources like ChatGPT. The research should also cover whether it is legal or not.
- **Legal Context:**
  - **\*\*Illegal Activities:\*\*** The FTC prohibits deceptive advertising, including fake online reviews, false endorsements, and undisclosed paid promotions.
  - **\*\*Legal Activities:\*\*** Hiring crowds (e.g., via Crowds on Demand) for rallies and demonstrations is legal in the political arena.

## Research Paper: First Paragraph Exercise

- **Assignment Purpose:** “Writing the First Paragraph” helps you draft an opening that makes readers want to learn more about your topic.
- **Completion Options:**
  - **\*\*High-Quality Path:\*\*** Follow detailed instructions to craft a strong, engaging opener.
  - **\*\*Minimum-Effort Path:\*\*** Follow basic instructions to produce a paragraph sufficient for a passing grade.
- **\*\*Value and Logistics:\*\*** Worth 10–20 points. Copy your final paragraph and save it in a Google Doc for your paper.

## Student-Specific Updates and Instructions

- **\*\*Mariano:\*\*** Your grade is in good standing. Keep placing completed work in your folder for grading.
- **\*\*Marco:\*\*** After two weeks absent, you are significantly behind. You will remain in this class. You must complete the work and pass, or you will need to retake the course next semester or next year (potentially with 8th graders). The teacher will help, but catching up is your responsibility.
- **\*\*General Status:\*\*** With only a few minutes left in class, only two students had submitted the First Paragraph exercise.

## Next Arrangements

- ☐ Complete the “What is AstroTurfing?” daily exercise.
- ☐ Finish the “Writing the First Paragraph” exercise (10–20 points) and copy it into your research paper Google Doc.
- ☐ Finish the graphing assignment if it is not yet complete.
- ☐ Continue working on the “Favorite Thing Research Paper” project.
- ☐ Note that the “Bumper Cars” daily exercise is posted for the next class period.
- ☐ Marco: Focus on completing missed assignments to catch up and pass the class.
- ☐ Mariano: Continue submitting all work in the designated folder for grading.