The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate how biographical, historical, and critical information relevant to the novel Little Women by Louisa May Alcott can aid readers in understanding one of its core themes, which is that women are important, whether

Format:  
--12 point font  
--Times New Roman style  
--Double-spaced  
--Correct heading w/a header at the top of each page  
--One inch margins all around  
--Proper MLA format in all areas  
--Thesis statement must be underlined and appear as the last line of the introduction  
Length: Must be at least seven full pages long, not including the works-cited page, and not much longer than ten pages.  
Required Sources:  
The essay must use at least seven secondary/outside sources in addition to using the primary source you are researching (the  
novel). Also, you may use more than seven sources if you wish, as long as the sources do not dominate the paper. Your voice and  
ideas should dominate the paper. Only use your sources to support the points you make in your own words first. Of the seven  
required outside sources, you need the following:  
--At least three articles from scholarly journals, magazines, or newspapers (search the CTC online databases for these first  
three), articles from books/anthologies (use the library catalog to find these), or articles from credible websites found on the  
World Wide Web (sites w/.edu or .org addresses are usually more authoritative than .com sites)  
--At least two books (whole thing is by only one or two authors)  
--And at least two more sources (These can be more scholarly articles or books or something different  
like interviews, documentary videos, or other acceptable kinds of sources.)  
Assignment: Using a structure similar to what you used in your group project, write a paper that addresses its points. Structure the  
paper as follows:  
I. Introduction (1 paragraph): hook reader’s interest, briefly introduce topic, and state your thesis or overall purpose in the paper.  
Your thesis should state the one main theme of the novel that you have decided to focus everything on in the paper. A theme for  
this paper is a universal lesson involving a specific social issue. The theme involves the position (for or against) that the author  
seems to be taking on that issue through the story.  
II. Historical approach (1-2 pages): Thoroughly explain the novel’s setting and the important details of the historical climate. Tell  
the reader the exact year the novel was first published. What major events were occurring and what social issues were important?  
Focus primarily on historical details that relate to the one main theme of the novel that you chose. Explain briefly in your own  
words how these details relate to the one main theme of the novel that you chose to focus on.  
Use at least two direct quotations (not paraphrases) from authoritative historical sources per body paragraph. Make sure  
these paragraphs are about 6-10 sentences long each. Do not stretch the paragraphs out super long so that you have less  
quotations to find.  
III. Biographical approach (1-2 pages): Explain any biographical details from the author’s life that relate to the historical details  
above as well as to the novel and its theme. Explain briefly in your own words how these details relate to the one main theme  
of the novel that you chose to focus on.  
Use at least two direct quotations (not paraphrases) from authoritative biographical sources per body paragraph. Make  
sure these paragraphs are about 6-10 sentences long each. Do not stretch the paragraphs out super long so that you have less  
quotations to find.  
IV. Critical approach (4-6 pages): Explain in full detail what the one main theme of the novel is that you have chosen to focus on  
and how the novel relates to the points made above regarding the historical events and the author’s life. Discuss in detail all major  
characters, events, symbols, etc. that relate to your thesis and the theme here. Use critical sources (articles, books, websites, etc. that  
are about the novel) as well as quotations and paraphrases from the novel itself to support your points.  
Note: Use at least two direct quotations (not paraphrases) from the novel itself per body paragraph in this section (cite the  
page numbers for these quotations using the Planetebook.com website versions that I linked on Blackboard) and try to quote  
from outside relevant critical sources that are about the novel at least once per body paragraph. For your critical sources,  
you need critical literary analyses of your novel.  
Note: Do not include book reviews here (reviews that were written around the time the novel was published where people  
give their opinion of the novel, whether they liked it or not). That is not what we mean by critical sources. You need critical  
literary analyses where scholars discuss themes, symbols, and other literary elements of the novel itself in an effort to help  
readers understand the novel better. You need to use sources by authors that interpret the novel's theme the same way you  
do. You are using these sources to lend credibility to your interpretation and make it seem more persuasive. If you can  
show that published scholars interpret the novel's theme the same way you do, it makes your interpretation seem more  
valid.  
Also, about half of the entire research paper should be dedicated to this section. Again, you need at least 4-6 pages on this  
part of the assignment. If you decided to go beyond the minimum requirement and make this paper ten full pages long, at  
least five pages of that should be dedicated to this section of the assignment.  
V. Conclusion: Tie up loose ends, discuss the universal relevancy of the novel to society today using at least one quotation from  
one outside source (preferably a source that involves a real life modern day current event that is somehow applicable to the  
lesson of the novel), and restate your thesis.  
VI. Works Cited: cite all sources actually used in the paper. Do not include annotations (short summaries) on regular works cited  
page. Just include the MLA citations themselves. Alphabetize all sources on this list by the author's last name or if there is no  
author by the first major word of the first title that appears in the citation.