Breaking Down the Dialectical Analysis Paper

1. Identify a philosophical question that interests you. If you are struggling to find a question, reference the list of questions on the class website or the list of Big Questions (10 Major Problems) from the reading we looked at on the first day.
2. Find at least FOUR sources that answer your question, expand upon the topic, offer historical information, contextual information, etc. At least ONE of these sources should be a class source.
3. Look into your sources and find at least 3 quotes/pieces of direct evidence from each source. Write this down, then put it into your own words. Explain what you think this quote means and define anything you are unfamiliar with.
4. For each source you will need to introduce it in your DA. Answer: what is the purpose/goal of this source? What answer(s) are you understanding from each source? Put into your own words.
5. What is the MLA citation for each source? PLEASE CITE IT CORRECTLY.
6. What are the points of agreement between sources?
7. What are the points of disagreements between the answers?
8. Whose ideas do you find most convincing? Why?
9. Conclusion: You need at least one paragraph that shows me the connections/disagreements you see between the two answers you’ve found in your two sources AND tells me your conclusions about your question in light of those two answers and their connections.
10. Finish with your own thoughts on your question. Saying there is “no one answer” is stating the obvious, and thus is useless. Saying you don’t have an answer isn’t going to work either. Instead, take a stab at an answer in light of your two sources + your own life experience.
11. Depending on your concluding paragraph it may make the most sense to split it into two paragraphs that work together to conclude your paper.

REMEMBER:

* YOU MUST INCLUDE YOUR QUESTION SOMEWHERE IN THE INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH. You must also contextualize your choice of that question.
* Tell me your personal interest in the question.
* Explain the historically or culturally significant events that prompted or have been prompted by this question.
* You DO NOT need to summarize the two sources you’re about to cover. You should not reveal the answer you have to your question. Why would I keep reading your essay if you answer the question in the first paragraph?