

# Freeman High School

## English Handbook

# Freeman High School English Department Mission Statement

The mission of the English Department at Freeman High School is to inspire an appreciation for the English language and its literatures while cultivating its effective use in creative expression and day-to-day life. This gives students opportunities to explore such subjects as British, American, and World literature; rhetoric, composition, and professional writing.

- The study of literature fosters creative and critical abilities, promotes multiculturalism and tolerance in a globalized world, and fosters understanding of cultural, historical, ethical, aesthetic, and linguistic forces that shape our lives.
- Effective writing makes social and professional engagement possible. The study of rhetoric, composition, literacy, and professional writing enhances facilities in writing, communication, and technology much valued by local communities, industry, and organizations.
- Creative writing merges an interest in literary studies with the art of writing, providing a hands-on experience of literature, encouraging students to create literary texts in a variety of media and genres, and emphasizing the power of the individual to respond to human experience in a changing world.

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# Style Section

# Smiley Face Tricks

**MAGIC THREE:** Three items in a series, separated by commas that create a poetic rhythm or add support for a point, especially when the items have their own modifiers.

"In those woods, I would spend hours <sup>1</sup>**listening** to the wind rustle the leaves, <sup>2</sup>**climbing** the trees and spying on nesting birds, and <sup>3</sup>**giving** the occasional wild growl to scare away any pink-flowered girls who might be riding their bikes too close to my secret entrance." (*Todd, college freshman*)

**FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE:** Non-literal comparisons add "spice" to writing and can help paint a more vivid picture for the reader. Include examples of similes, metaphors, hyperbole, onomatopoeia, personification, symbolism, irony, alliteration, assonance, etc.

"When we first moved into the house on Orchid Street, I didn't like it. My room was hot, cramped, and **stuffy as a train in the middle of the Sahara**. And the **looming skeleton-like gray and white frame** of the place scared me." (*Teri, grade 7*)

**SPECIFIC DETAILS FOR EFFECT:** Add vivid and specific information to your writing to clarify and create word pictures. Use sensory details to help the reader visualize the person, place, thing, or idea that you are describing.

"It's one of those experiences where you want to **call a radio station** and tell your problems to **some guy who calls himself Dr. Myke**, but how isn't more of a doctor than your pet hamster is, one of those experiences where you want to **read a sappy Harlequin novel** and **listen to Barry Manilow** with a box of bonbons as your best friends, one of those experiences where you wouldn't be surprised if someone came up to you and asked **exactly what time yesterday you were born**. Yeah, one of those." (*Heana*)

**REPETITION FOR EFFECT:** Repeat a symbol, sentence starter, important word, etc. to underline its importance.

The veranda is your way only shelter **away from** the sister in bed asleep, **away from** the brother that plays in the tree house in the field, **away from** your chores that await you." (*Leslie*)

**EXPANDED MOMENT:** Take a moment that you would ordinarily speed past, and develop it fully to make your reader take notice.

"But no, I had to go to school. And as I said before, I had to listen to my math teacher preach about numbers and letters and figures...I was tired of hearing her annoying voice lecture about 'a=b divided by x.' I glared at the small black hands on the clock, silently threatening them to go faster. But they didn't listen, I caught myself wishing I were on white sand and looking down at almost transparent pale-blue water with Josh at my side...I don't belong in some dumb math class. I belong on the beach, where I can soak my feet in caressing water and let the wind wander its way through my chestnut-colored hair and sip Dr. Pepper all day long." (*Shelly*)

**HUMOR:** Whenever possible and appropriate, inject a little humor to keep your reader awake.

"He laughed? I'm nothing. I'm the rear end of nothing, and the devil himself smiled at me." (*Andrew*)

**HYPHENATED MODIFIERS:** When you connect two adjectives or adverbs together with a hyphen, it lends an air of originality and sophistication to your writing.

She's got this blond hair, with dark highlights, parted in the middle, down past her shoulders, and straight as a preacher. She's got big green eyes that all guys admire and all girls envy, and this I'm-so-beautiful-and-I-know-it body, you know, like every other super model." (*Ilena*)

**FULL-CIRCLE ENDING:** When you include an image or phrase at the beginning of a piece of writing and then mention it again at the end, it gives your piece a sense of closure.

*Beginning:*

"Hey you, with the **green and neon-orange striped shoelaces, you who always pulled my old frazzled white one in math**. Hey you, who always added your **versions of 'art' to my math problems** for Mrs. Caton's class so that  $9 \times 7 = 64$  turned out to be a train with Puffs of smoke and two boxcars and made me get an 83 instead of a 93 since Mrs. C. doesn't count locomotives as correct answers."

*Ending:*

"Now Justin still sits behind me in **math with his neon-green and orange striped shoelaces and pulls on my old white frazzled ones**. He still **draws zombies on my homework**, but he hasn't dumped another pitcher of Kool-Aid on me - - not yet at least. Oh, and by the way, in case you're wondering, his first words when he opened his eyes were, 'It was James Kenton who hid your clothes and made you walk around in a chicken suit...I'm not that mean.'" (*Liz*)

## Varying Sentence Openers-Periodic Sentences

OPENER	EXAMPLE
Adjective	Amused, we allowed her to finish her wildly exaggerated tale.
Adverb	Frantically, hundreds of ants scurries in all directions trying to escape
Participial phrase	Hearing strange noises, we crept downstairs to investigate.
Infinitive phrase	To prepare for a short-answer test, Ellen makes flash cards
Adverb clause	Because the train was traveling so quickly, it vanished in seconds.
Several adverbs	Quickly and smoothly, the swimmers dove into the pool.
Transition	Nevertheless, you are still required to complete four years of English.
Inverted	Out of the sky came a mystery.

### Exercise

Each item below begins with a sentence model from literature that has an interesting sentence opener. Combine the sentences that follow into a single sentence that matches the structure of the literature model. You may omit words or change their forms as you combine sentence parts.

**Sample** Conscience-stricken, Leo rose and brewed the tea.  
Bernard Malamud, "The Magic Barrel"

- Beth was satisfied.
- Beth pushed her chair back from the dinner table and excused herself.

---

**Example:** Satisfied, Beth pushed her chair back from the dinner table.

---

**1. Fumbling with both hands, he once more stuck the knife into the sheath.**

Isak Dinesen, "The Ring"

- The members of the band sounded as good as ever.
- They were playing together for the first time in years.

---

**2. In his room, he plays his guitar.**

John Updike, "Son"

- Nate paints watercolors.
- He paints them in his mother's studio.

---

**3. Creaking, jerking, jostling, gasping, the train filled the station.**

Nadine Gordimer, "The Train from Rhodesia"

- The tractor pushed against the heavy log.
  - The tractor was grinding, growling, whistling, and hiccupping.
-

**4. Eyes narrowing, he thought for a few moments about what to do.**

Jack Finney, "Contents of the Dead Man's Pocket"

- The yacht headed out to open sea.
  - Sails were billowing.
- 

**5. Gaunt, bruised, and shaken, he stumbled back to his village.**

Lame Deer, "The Vision Quest"

- The dog was well-fed, energetic, and happy.
  - The dog headed outside to play.
- 

**6. Frightened, everyone in the village fled into the canes.**

Paule Marshall, "To Da-duh, in Memoriam"

- The bull was angered.
  - The bull charged the matador.
- 

**7. The staircase window having been boarded up, no light came down into the hall.**

Elizabeth Bowen, "The Demon Lover"

- The bicycle tire had been punctured.
  - Jasmine had to walk the bicycle home.
- 

**8. Patient, cold, and callous, our hands wrapped in socks, we waited to snowball the cats.**

Dylan Thomas, "A Child's Christmas in Wales"

- The producer accepted the Oscar for best picture.
  - She was wide-eyed, joyful, and proud.
  - Her head was lifted high.
- 

**9. Slowly, taking my time, I began the final ascent.**

Arthur C. Clarke, "The Sentinel"

- Leo ran toward the goal line.
  - He ran swiftly.
  - He was holding the football firmly in his arms.
-



**Wordiness** results from many sources. Many of us have learned to pad our writing with all sorts of empty phrases to reach length requirements for academic writing. Wordiness also tends to occur when we're struggling to clarify our ideas or when we're tired and not thinking clearly. Regardless of the reason for padded writing, we can achieve concise writing if we incorporate several strategies during the writing process and if we're aware of the individual patterns of wordiness typical of our own writing.

### **Strategies for Eliminating Wordiness**

You can eliminate wordiness in your writing if . . .

- You mark sections of your writing that you struggled to produce. If you had a hard time getting your ideas down on paper, chances are you included some "false starts" or filler phrases in your writing, something like the "ahems," "uhs," and "okays" that occur when we're speaking and formulating our ideas at the same time. This is natural. Don't worry about fillers when you're writing. But after you're done with your draft, pass through your paper once, focusing only on eliminating unnecessary language. Pay particular attention to sections you struggled to get out.
- Before editing, give yourself a breather. Even if you just get yourself a cup of coffee or work on something else for a while, getting away from your paper will help give you the distance you'll need to see what language is needed and what's not.
- Learn what wordiness patterns are typical of your writing. Most people tend to fall into two or three patterns of wordiness when they write. Learn what your patterns are, and edit with those patterns in mind.

### **Patterns of Wordiness**

As you read the following list, consider which patterns are typical of your writing:

- **Omit the filler phrases "it is," "there is," and "there are" at the beginning of sentences; these often delay the sentence's true subject and verb.**

- **Wordy**  
It is expensive to upgrade computer systems.
- **Concise**  
Upgrading computer systems is expensive.

- **Omit "this" from the beginning of a sentence by joining it to the preceding sentence with a comma.**

- **Wordy**  
Chlorofluorocarbons have been banned from aerosols. This has lessened the ozone layer's depletion.
- **Concise**  
Chlorofluorocarbons have been banned from aerosols, lessening the ozone layer's depletion.

- **Change "which" or "that" constructions to an "-ing" word.**

- **Wordy**  
The committee, which meets monthly, oversees accounting procedures and audits.
- **Concise**  
The committee, meeting monthly, oversees accounting procedures and audits.

- **Omit "which" or "that" altogether when possible.**

- **Wordy**  
Because the fluid, which was brown and poisonous, was dumped into the river, the company that was negligent had to shut down.
- **Concise**  
Because the brown, poisonous fluid was dumped into the river, the negligent company had to shut down.

- **Replace passive verbs with active verbs. In passive constructions, the subject of the sentence is being acted upon; in active constructions, the subject is the actor.**

- **Wordy**  
Rain forests are being destroyed by uncontrolled logging.
- **Concise**  
Uncontrolled logging is destroying rain forests.




- **Change "is" or "was" when they occur alone to a strong verb.**

- **Wordy**  
A new fire curtain is necessary for the stage.
- **Concise**  
The stage needs a new fire curtain.
- **Replace "is," "are," "was," "were," or "have + an -ing word" to a simple present or past tense verb.**
  - **Wordy**  
The South African government was undergoing significant changes.
  - **Concise**  
The South African government underwent significant changes.
- **Replace "should," "would," or "could" with strong verbs.**
  - **Wordy**  
The environmental council could see several solutions.
  - **Concise**  
The environmental council saw several solutions.
- **Substitute strong verbs for "-tion" and "-sion" words whenever possible.**
  - **Wordy**  
I submitted an application for the job.
  - **Concise**  
I applied for the job.
- **Replace prepositional phrases with one-word modifiers when possible.** Prepositional phrases, those little relationship words like "of," "from," "after," etc., tend to bring in a lot of "-tion" and "-sion" words too.
  - **Wordy**  
The President of the Student Senate was in charge of the lobbying against the merger at the Minnesota Congress.
  - **Concise**  
The Student Senate President oversaw lobbying the Minnesota Congress against the merger.
- **Use a colon after a statement preceding a sentence of explanation, and leave out the beginning of the next sentence**
  - **Wordy**  
The theater has three main technical areas. These areas are costumes, scenery, and lighting.
  - **Concise**  
The theater has three main technical areas: costumes, scenery, and lighting.
- **Combine two closely related short sentences by omitting part of one.**
  - **Wordy**  
The director is concerned about problems. Typical problems may occur with lighting, sound, and props.
  - **Concise**  
The director is concerned about typical problems with lighting, sound, and props.

# Active and Passive Voice

## Active Voice




In sentences written in active voice, the subject performs the action expressed in the verb; the subject acts.

 The dog <i>bit</i> the boy.
 Pooja <i>will present</i> her research at the conference.
 Scientists <i>have conducted</i> experiments to test the hypothesis.

In each example above, the subject of the sentence performs the action expressed in the verb.



## Passive Voice

In sentences written in passive voice, the subject receives the action expressed in the verb; the subject is acted upon. The agent performing the action may appear in a "by the . . ." phrase or may be omitted.

 The boy <i>was bitten</i> by the dog.
 Research <i>will be presented</i> by Pooja at the conference.
 Experiments <i>have been conducted</i> to test the hypothesis. (agent performing action has been omitted.)

## Choosing Active Voice

In most nonscientific writing situations, active voice is preferable to passive for the majority of your sentences. Even in scientific writing, overuse of passive voice or use of passive voice in long and complicated sentences can cause readers to lose interest or to become confused. Sentences in active voice are generally--though not always-- clearer and more direct than those in passive voice.

passive (indirect)	active (direct):
 The entrance exam <i>was failed</i> by over one-third of the applicants to the school.	 Over one-third of the applicants to the school <i>failed</i> the entrance exam.

 <b>The brakes</b> <i>were slammed on by her</i> as the car sped downhill.	 <b>She</b> <i>slammed on the brakes</i> as the car sped downhill.
---	---

Sentences in active voice are also more concise than those in passive voice because fewer words are required to express action in active voice than in passive.

passive (more wordy)	active (more concise)
 <b>Action on the bill</b> <i>is being considered by the committee.</i>	 <b>The committee</b> <i>is considering action on the bill.</i>
 By then, <b>the soundtrack</b> <i>will have been completely remixed by the sound engineers.</i>	 By then, <b>the sound engineers</b> <i>will have completely remixed the soundtrack.</i>

### Changing passive to active

If you want to change a passive-voice sentence to active voice, find the agent in a "by the..." phrase, or consider carefully who or what is performing the action expressed in the verb. Make that agent the subject of the sentence, and change the verb accordingly. Sometimes you will need to infer the agent from the surrounding sentences which provide context.

Passive Voice	Agent	Changed to Active Voice
 <b>The book</b> <i>is being read by most of the class.</i>	most of the class	 <b>Most of the class</b> <i>is reading the book.</i>
 <b>Results</b> <i>will be published in the next issue of the journal.</i>	agent not specified; most likely agents such as "the researchers"	 <b>The researchers</b> <i>will publish their results in the next issue of the journal.</i>

### FIX THE PASSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS

1. Before the semester was over, the new nursing program had been approved by the Curriculum Committee and the Board of Trustees.
2. With five seconds left in the game, an illegal time-out was called by one of the players.
3. The major points of the lesson were quickly learned by the class, but they were also quickly forgotten by them.

## Instead of "Said"

When you want to say that someone said something, try using one of these words...instead!  
If you are unsure about what one of these words means, look it up in the dictionary.

acknowledged	demanded	proclaimed
added	denied	promised
admitted	disclosed	proposed
advised	divulged	protested
affirmed	emphasized	quipped
agreed	estimated	ranted
announced	explained	related
answered	gasped	reminded
argued	growled	repeated
asserted	grunted	replied
assured	hinted	reported
avowed	insisted	revealed
bellowed	interjected	shouted
blurted	interrupted	Sighed
bragged	joked	Speculated
cautioned	lied	Stated
challenged	maintained	Stipulated
claimed	mentioned	Theorized
conceded	mumbled	Threatened
concluded	murmured	Uttered
confessed	offered	Volunteered
continued	ordered	Warned
corrected	panted	Whimpered
cried	pleaded	Whispered
decided	pointed out	Wondered
declared	prayed	Yelled

# Essay Section

# DEFINITIONS/PURPOSES FOR THE MODES OF WRITING

Source: [kimskorner4teachertalk.com](http://kimskorner4teachertalk.com)

Modes of writing, forms of writing, types of writing, domains of writing. Whatever you want to call them, there are different categories for writing. Each mode has a specific purpose. There are five basic modes, descriptive, narrative, expository, and persuasive. These basic modes can then be broken down into subcategories.

## **BASIC MODES:**

### **Creative Writing**

The primary purpose of creative writing is to entertain the reader.

### **Descriptive Writing**

The primary purpose of descriptive writing is to describe a person, place, or event so that the topic can be clearly seen in the reader's mind. The writer must use vivid details that paint a picture for the reader.

### **Expository Writing**

The primary purpose of expository writing is to provide information such as an explanation or directions.

### **Narrative Writing**

The primary purpose of narrative writing is to describe an experience, event, or sequence of events in the form of a story.

### **Persuasive Writing**

The primary purpose of persuasive writing is to give an opinion and try to influence the reader's way of thinking with supporting evidence.

## **SUBCATEGORIES:**

### **Argumentative Writing**

This form of persuasive writing has a primary purpose of making a statement that the reader will disagree with, then supporting the statement with specific details that will convince the reader of the truth of the statement

### **Business Writing**

This form of expository writing has a primary purpose of communicating with others in the work place.

### **Comparison and Contrast Writing**

This form of expository writing has a primary purpose of showing the similarities and differences

between two subjects.

### **Expressive Writing**

This form of creative writing has a primary purpose of sharing thoughts, ideas, and feelings on the topic.

### **Informative Writing**

This form of expository writing has a primary purpose of providing information in a clear, concise manner.

### **Literary Response**

This form of expository writing has a primary purpose of providing a personal reaction to a piece of literature.

### **Personal Narrative Writing**

This form of narrative writing has a primary purpose of sharing an experience or event from the author's own life.

### **Poetry**

This form of creative writing has a primary purpose of imaginatively reflecting on a subject, idea, or event. This is usually done in stanzas rather than paragraphs.

### **Process Writing**

This form of expository writing has a primary purpose of explaining the steps or procedure of something.

### **Research Writing**

This form of expository writing has a primary purpose of reporting new information that has been learned by studying available resources.

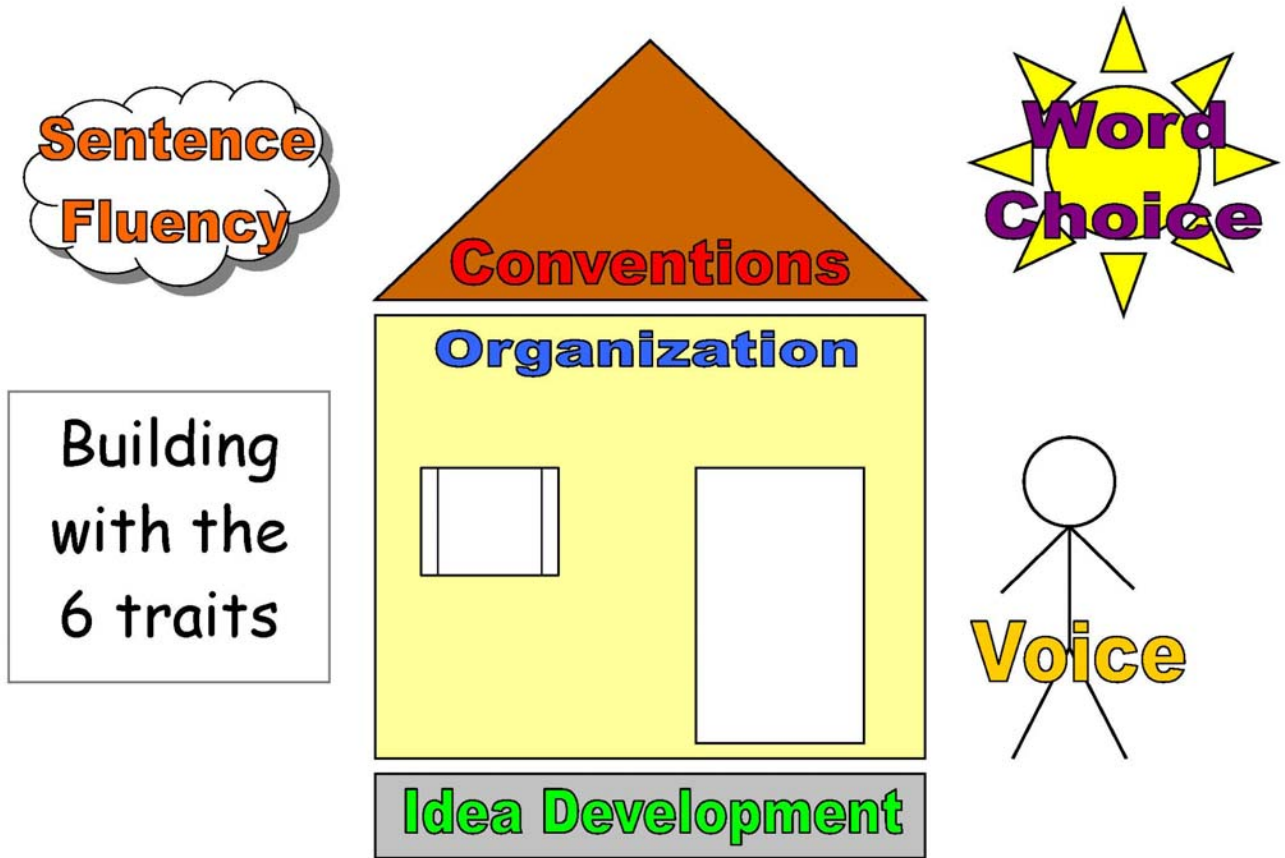
### **Technical Writing**

This form of expository writing has a primary purpose of conveying technical information in a simple, no-nonsense manner.



# 6-Trait Writing Handouts

The building blocks of good writing:



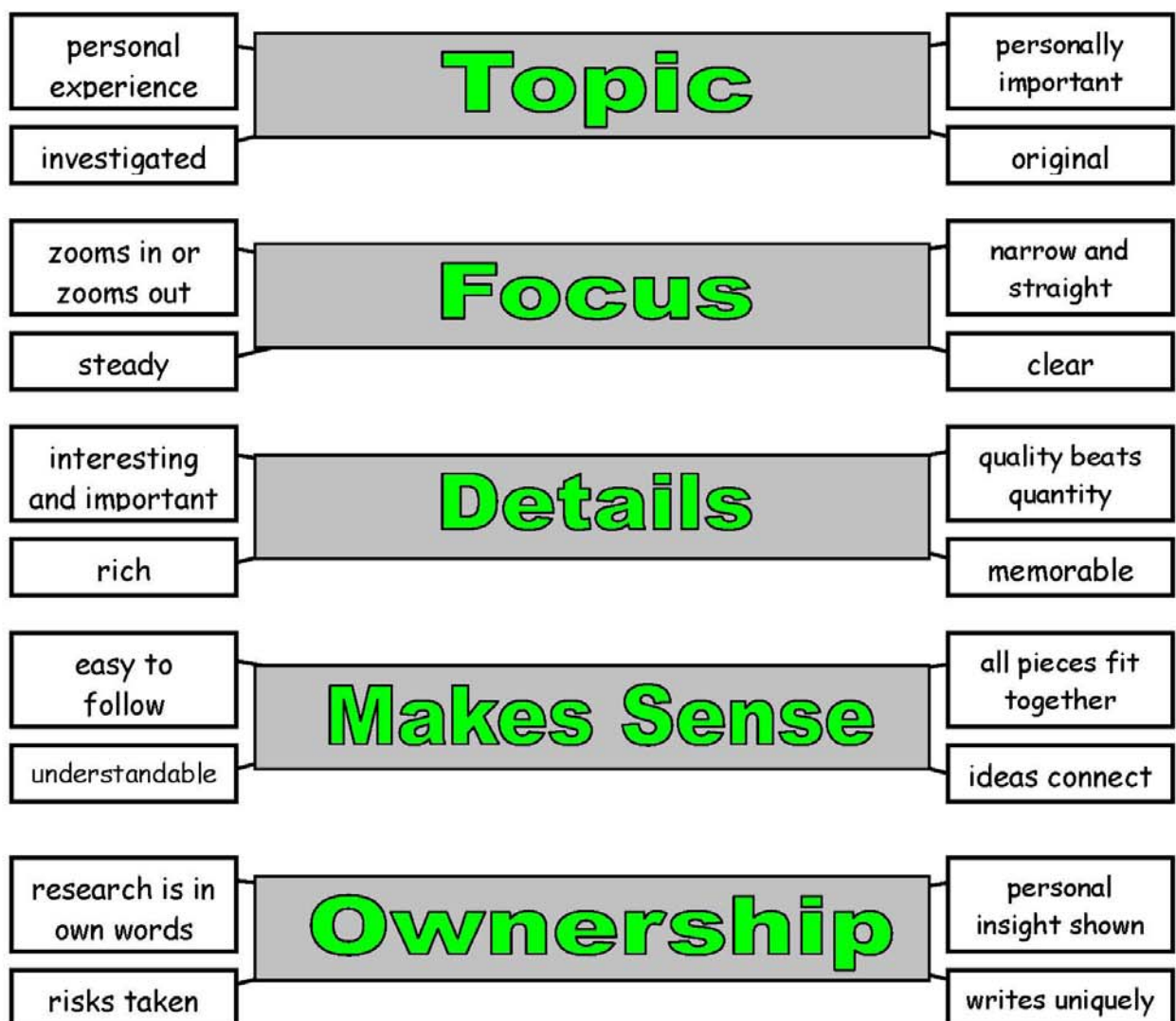
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# 6-Trait Writing Handouts

The building blocks of good writing:

## Idea Development

Like the foundation of a house, IDEA DEVELOPMENT serves as the solid base on which a good piece of writing rests. If you start with a solid idea, your writing can grow as big as you want.



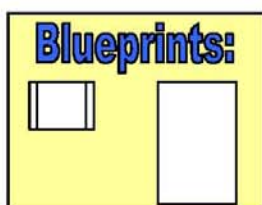
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# 6-Trait Writing Handouts

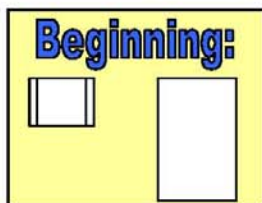
The building blocks of good writing:



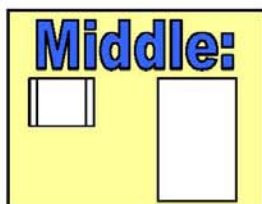
ORGANIZATION is the structure of writing. Just as a house has an entrance, an exit, hallways that connect, and a sensible layout, so too does a piece of good writing. Blueprints are drawn before a house is built; writing should be "blue-printed" too!



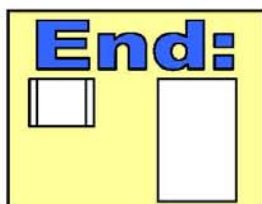
- ☐ appropriate graphic organizer used to plan writing
- ☐ the order of the writing makes sense
- ☐ the most important ideas receive the most attention
- ☐ transitions sound natural



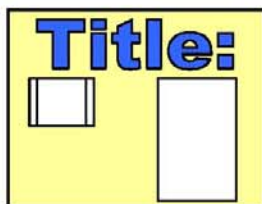
- ☐ hooks or grabs the reader
- ☐ an inviting lead
- ☐ effective topic sentence
- ☐ shows where writing is going



- ☐ parts fit together smoothly
- ☐ subtopics or parts are clearly separated
- ☐ ideas connect
- ☐ contains the "heart" of the writing



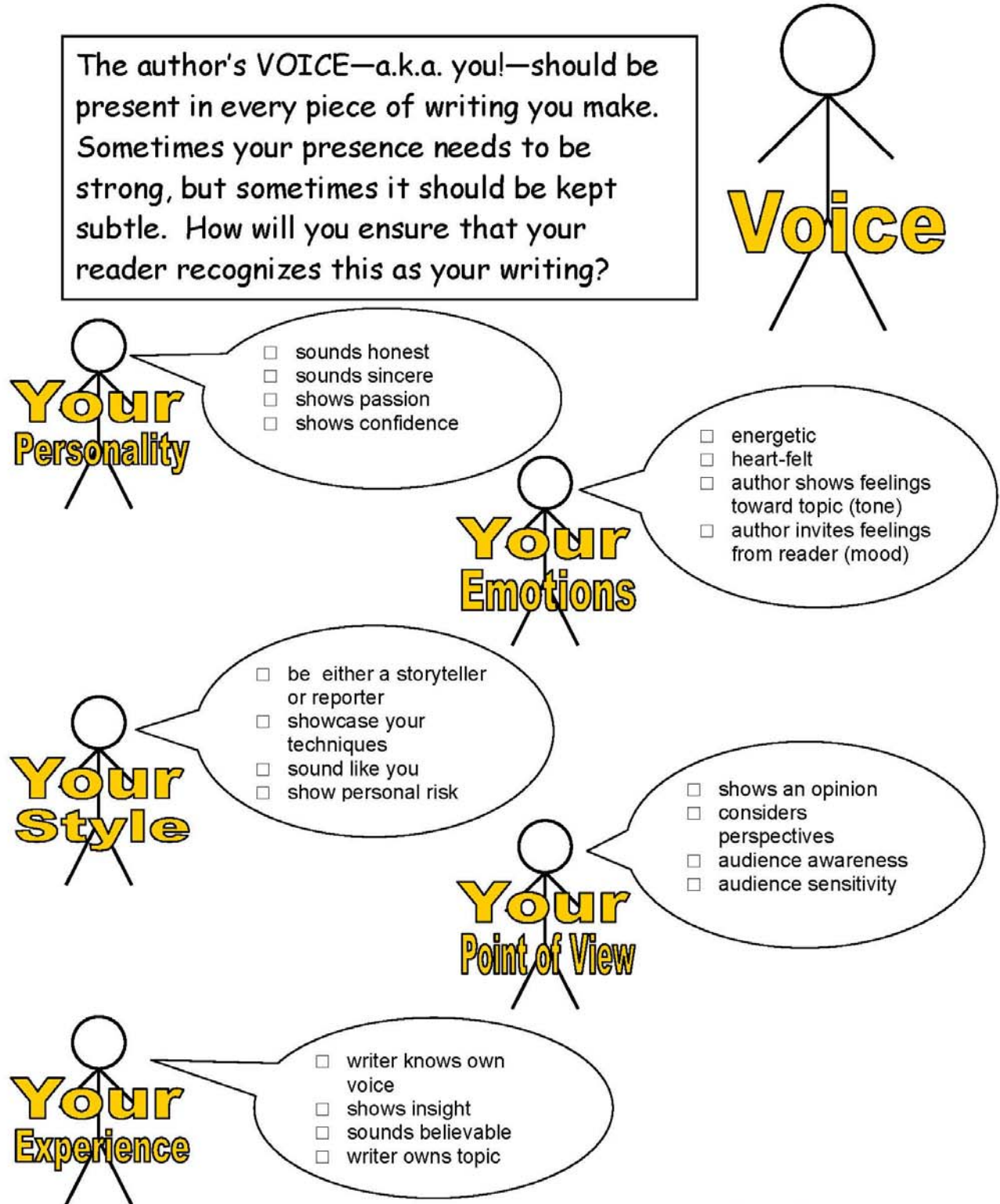
- ☐ might leave you thinking or wondering
- ☐ makes the writing feel complete
- ☐ leaves the reader feeling satisfied
- ☐ ties things together



- ☐ hints at the writing's big idea
- ☐ is catchy
- ☐ makes sense
- ☐ is memorable

# 6-Trait Writing Handouts

The building blocks of good writing:



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# 6-Trait Writing Handouts

The building blocks of good writing:

The roof of a house—though planned from the beginning—is not built first. Think about **CONVENTIONS** near the end of your process.

**Conventions**

**Spelling**

- ☐ Know your “sight words”!
- ☐ Use the dictionary!
- ☐ Abbreviate correctly!
- ☐ Double-check your vocabulary words!

**Punctuation**

- ☐ Check end punctuation! (periods, question marks, exclamation points)
- ☐ Check middle punctuation! (commas, apostrophes, semi-colons)
- ☐ Check dialogue punctuation!
- ☐ Check your hyphens!

**Capitalization**

- ☐ Capitalize proper names!
- ☐ Capitalize sentence beginnings!
- ☐ Capitalize titles!
- ☐ Don't mis-use/overuse capitals.

**Grammar**

- ☐ Check your noun and verb agreement!
- ☐ Check your noun and pronoun agreement!
- ☐ Check appropriateness: “gonna” versus “going to”!
- ☐ Double check verb tense!

**Spacing**

- ☐ Indent those paragraphs!
- ☐ Use the right amount of space between words!
- ☐ Don't put blank space between paragraphs!
- ☐ Use appropriate margins!

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# 6-Trait Writing Handouts

The building blocks of good writing:

## Sentence Fluency

Just as white clouds float peacefully in the sky, or thunder clouds arrive with alarm, sentences and phrases float through a piece of writing. Do you want your SENTENCE FLUENCY to be subtle or alarming?

### Variety of Sounds

- repetition
- natural sounding
- rhythm and cadence
- experiments with language

### Variety of Beginnings

- prepositions
- conjunctions
- participial phrases
- question words

### Variety of Sentences

- complex and simple
- declarative and interrogative
- exclamatory and imperative
- short and long

### Variety of Connectors

- transitions
- connecting words and phrases
- sentence flow together
- experiments with colons and semi-colons

### Has Readability

- carefully crafted
- smooth and flowing
- sounds natural when read aloud
- parallelism

# 6-Trait Writing Handouts

The building blocks of good writing:

**WORD CHOICE**—like the sun in the sky—can accomplish many things: comfort or sunburn, thirst or relaxation. The words you choose to include in your writing have profound impact on your reader.



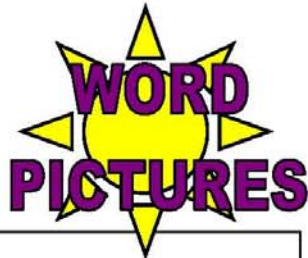
- precise verbs
- unique verbs
- writer considers synonyms
- balance of action and linking verbs



- precise nouns
- unique nouns
- purposeful use of pronouns
- correct noun and pronoun agreement



- precise adjectives
- unique adjectives
- writer considers synonyms
- using fewer quality adjectives is better than using a string of weak adjectives



- sensory images
- memorable phrases
- uses word pictures when appropriate
- verbs, adjectives, and nouns work together



- personification
- tries new vocabulary
- onomatopoeia
- effective similes and metaphors
- alliteration

# 6-Trait Writing Handouts

## Definitions of 6-Traits of Writing

**Ideas:** The main message of the piece, the theme, with supporting details that enrich and develop that theme.

**Key Question:** *Did the writer stay focused and share original and fresh information or perspective about the topic?*

**Organization:** The internal structure, thread of central meaning, logical and sometimes intriguing pattern or sequence of the ideas.

**Key Question:** *Does the organizational structure enhance the ideas and make it easier to understand?*

**Voice:** The unique perspective of the writer evident in the piece through the use of compelling ideas, engaging language, and revealing details.

**Key Question:** *Would you keep reading this piece if it were longer?*

**Word Choice:** The use of rich, colorful, and precise language that moves and enlightens the reader.

**Key Question:** *Do the words and phrases create vivid pictures and linger in your mind?*

**Sentence Fluency:** The rhythm and flow of the language, the sound of word patterns, the way in which the writing plays to the ear, not just to the eye.

**Key Question:** *Can you FEEL the words and phrases flow together as you read it aloud?*

**Conventions:** The mechanical correctness of the piece; spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and paragraphing.

**Key Question:** *How much editing would have to be done to be ready to share with an outside source?*

☐ A whole lot? Score in the 1-2 range.

☐ A moderate amount? Score in the 3 range.

☐ Very little? Score in the 4-5 range.



## 6-Trait Writing Rubric

Title of Essay \_\_\_\_\_ Intended Audience \_\_\_\_\_ Purpose of Essay \_\_\_\_\_

<p><b>Ideas:</b> The main message of the piece, the theme, with supporting details that enrich and develop that theme. <b>Key Question:</b> <i>Did the writer stay focused and share original and fresh information or perspective about the topic?</i></p>	<p><b>Organization:</b> The internal structure, thread of central meaning, logical and sometimes intriguing pattern or sequence of the ideas. <b>Key Question:</b> <i>Does the organizational structure enhance the ideas and make it easier to understand?</i></p>	<p><b>Voice:</b> The unique perspective of the writer evident in the piece through the use of compelling ideas, engaging language, and revealing details. <b>Key Question:</b> <i>Would you keep reading this piece if it were longer?</i></p>
<p><b>Personal Summary:</b></p>	<p><b>Personal Summary:</b></p>	<p><b>Personal Summary:</b></p>
<p><b>5</b> <i>This paper is clear and focused. It holds the reader's attention. Relevant anecdotes and details enrich the central theme.</i></p> <p>A. The topic is narrow and manageable B. Relevant, telling, quality details go beyond the obvious C. Ideas are crystal clear and supported with details D. Writing from knowledge or experience; ideas are fresh and original E. Reader's questions are anticipated and answered. F. Insightful topic</p>	<p><b>5</b> <i>The organizational structure of this paper enhances and showcases the central idea or theme of the paper; includes a catchy introduction and a satisfying conclusion.</i></p> <p>A. An inviting introduction draws the reader in; a satisfying conclusion leaves the reader with a sense of closure and resolution. B. Thoughtful transitions connect ideas. C. Sequencing is logical and effective. D. Pacing is well controlled. E. The title, if desired, is original. F. Organizational structure is appropriate for purpose and audience; paragraphing is effective.</p>	<p><b>5</b> <i>The writer of this paper speaks directly to the reader in a manner that is individual, compelling, engaging, and shows respect for the audience.</i></p> <p>A. Uses topic, details, and language to strongly connect with the audience. B. Purpose is reflected by content and arrangement of ideas. C. The writer takes a risk with revealing details. D. Expository or persuasive reflects understanding and commitment to topic. E. Narrative writing is honest, personal, and engaging.</p>
<p><b>3</b> <i>The writer is beginning to define the topic, even though development is still basic or general.</i></p> <p>A. The topic is broad B. Support is attempted C. Ideas are reasonably clear D. Writer has difficulty going from general observations about topic to specifics E. The reader is left with questions F. The writer generally stays on topic</p>	<p><b>3</b> <i>The organizational structure is strong enough to move the reader through the text without too much confusion.</i></p> <p>A. The paper has a recognizable introduction and conclusion. B. Transitions sometimes work. C. Sequencing shows some logic, yet structure takes attention away from the content. D. Pacing is fairly well controlled. E. A title, if desired, is present. F. Organizational structure sometimes supports the main point or story line, with an attempt at paragraphing.</p>	<p><b>3</b> <i>The writer seems sincere, but not fully engaged or involved. The result is pleasant or even personable, but not compelling.</i></p> <p>A. Attempt to connect with audience is earnest but impersonal. B. Attempts to include content and arrangement of ideas to reflect purpose. C. Occasionally reveals personal details, but avoids risk. D. Expository or persuasive writing lacks consistent engagement with the topic. E. Narrative writing reflects limited individual perspective.</p>
<p><b>1</b> <i>The paper has no clear sense of purpose or central theme. The reader must make inferences based on sketchy or missing details.</i></p> <p>A. The writer is still in search of a topic B. Information is limited or unclear or the length is not adequate for development C. The idea is a simple restatement or a simple answer to the question D. The writer has not begun to define the topic E. Everything seems as important as everything else F. The topic may be repetitious, disconnected, and contains too many random thoughts</p>	<p><b>1</b> <i>The writing lacks a clear sense of direction.</i></p> <p>A. No real lead or conclusion present. B. Connections between ideas, if present, are confusing. C. Sequencing needs work. D. Pacing feels awkward. E. No title is present (if requested). F. Problems with organizational structure make it hard for the reader to get a grip on the main point or story line. Little or no evidence of paragraphing present.</p>	<p><b>1</b> <i>The writer seems uninvolved with the topic and the audience.</i></p> <p>A. Fails to connect with the audience. B. Purpose is unclear. C. Writing is risk free, with no sense of the writer. D. Expository or persuasive writing is mechanical, showing no engagement with the topic. E. Narrative writing lacks development of a point of view.</p>

## 6-Trait Writing Rubric

<p><b>Word Choice:</b> The use of rich, colorful, and precise language that moves and enlightens the reader. <b>Key Question:</b> <i>Do the words and phrases create vivid pictures and linger in your mind?</i></p>	<p><b>Sentence Fluency:</b> The rhythm and flow of the language, the sound of word patterns, the way in which the writing plays to the ear, not just to the eye. <b>Key Question:</b> <i>Can you FEEL the words and phrases flow together as you read it aloud?</i></p>	<p><b>Conventions:</b> The mechanical correctness of the piece; spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and paragraphing. <b>Key Question:</b> <i>How much editing would have to be done to be ready to share with an outside source?</i></p>
<p><b>Personal Summary:</b></p>	<p><b>Personal Summary:</b></p>	<p><b>Personal Summary:</b></p>
<p><b>5 Words convey the intended message in a precise, interesting, and natural way.</b></p> <p>A. Words are specific and accurate. B. Striking words and phrases create imagery. C. Natural, effective and appropriate language. D. Lively verbs, specific nouns and modifiers. E. Language enhances and clarifies meaning. F. Precision is obvious by choice of words and phrases.</p>	<p><b>5 The writing has an easy flow, rhythm and cadence. Sentences are well constructed.</b></p> <p>A. Sentences enhance the meaning. B. Sentences vary in length as well as structure. C. Purposeful and varied sentence beginnings. D. Creative and appropriate connectives. E. The writing has cadence.</p>	<p><b>5 The writer demonstrates a good grasp of standard writing conventions (e.g., spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, paragraphing)</b></p> <p>A. Spelling is generally correct. B. Punctuation is accurate. C. Capitalization skills are present. D. Grammar and usage are correct. E. Paragraphing tends to be sound. F. The writer may manipulate and/or edit for stylistic effect; and it works!</p>
<p><b>3 The language is functional, even if it lacks much energy.</b></p> <p>A. Words are adequate and correct in a general sense. B. Familiar words and phrases communicate. C. Attempts at colorful language. D. Passive verbs, everyday nouns, mundane modifiers E. Language functions, with one or two fine moments. F. Occasionally, the words and phrases show refinement and precision</p>	<p><b>3 The text hums along with a steady beat, but tends to be more pleasant or businesslike than musical.</b></p> <p>A. Sentences get the job done in a routine fashion. B. Sentences are usually of similar length, yet constructed correctly. C. Sentence beginnings are sometimes varied. D. The reader sometimes has to hunt for connective clues. E. Parts of the text invite expressive oral reading; other parts may be stiff, awkward, choppy, or gangly.</p>	<p><b>3 The writer shows reasonable control over a limited range of standard writing conventions</b></p> <p>A. Spelling is usually correct or reasonably phonetic on common words. B. End punctuation is usually correct. C. Most capitalized words are correct. D. Problems with grammar and usage are not serious. E. Paragraphing is attempted. F. Moderate, inconsistent editing (a little of this, a little of that).</p>
<p><b>1 The writer struggles with a limited vocabulary</b></p> <p>A. Words are nonspecific or distracting. B. Many of the words don't work. C. Language is used incorrectly. D. Limited vocabulary, misuse of parts of speech. E. Language is unimaginative and lifeless. F. Jargon or clichés, persistent redundancy.</p>	<p><b>1 The reader has to practice quite a bit in order to give this paper a fair interpretive reading.</b></p> <p>A. Sentences are choppy, incomplete, rambling, or awkward. Phrasing does not sound natural. B. No "sentence sense" present. C. Sentences begin the same way. D. Endless connectives, if any present. E. Writing does not invite expressive oral reading.</p>	<p><b>1 Errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, usage and grammar and/or paragraphing repeatedly distract the reader and make text difficult to read.</b></p> <p>A. Spelling errors are frequent. B. Punctuation missing or incorrect. C. Capitalization is random. D. Errors in grammar or usage are very noticeable. E. Paragraphing is missing. F. Little, if any, editing; the reader must read once to decode, then again for meaning.</p>

TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_/30

## Persuasive/Argumentation Rubric

	5	3	2	0
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> Background/History Define the Problem	Well-developed introduction engages the reader and creates interest. Contains a clear explanation of the problem.	Introduction creates interest and contains some background information.	Introduction adequately explains the problem, but may lack detail.	Background details are a random collection of information, unclear, or not related to the topic.
<b>THESIS</b>	Thesis clearly states a significant and compelling position.	Thesis clearly states the problem.	Thesis states the problem.	Thesis and/or problem is vague or unclear.
<b>MAIN POINTS</b> Body Paragraphs	Well developed main points directly related to the thesis. Supporting examples are concrete and detailed. Elaboration is logical, and well thought out.	Main points are related to the thesis, but one may lack details. Commentary is present.	Three or more main points are present.	Development of ideas is poor. Elaboration is not present.
<b>REFUTATION</b>	Refutation acknowledges opposing view logically and clearly.	Refutation paragraph acknowledges the opposing view and summarizes points.		Refutation missing or vague.
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	Conclusion effectively wraps up and goes beyond restating the thesis.	Conclusion effectively summarizes topics.		Conclusion does not summarize main points.
<b>ORGANIZATION</b> Structure Transitions	Logical progression of ideas with a clear structure that enhances the thesis. Transitions are mature and graceful.	Logical progression of ideas. Transitions are present equally throughout essay.	Organization is clear. Transitions are present.	No discernable organization. Transitions are not present.
<b>MECHANICS AND STYLE</b> Sentence flow, variety Diction Spelling, punctuation, capitalization	Writing is smooth, skillful, and coherent. Sentences are strong and expressive with varied structure. Diction is consistent and words well chosen. Punctuation, spelling, capitalization are correct. No errors.	Writing is clear and sentences have varied structure. Diction is consistent. Punctuation, spelling, capitalization are generally correct, with few errors. (1-2)	Writing is clear, but sentences may lack variety. Diction is appropriate. A few errors in punctuation, spelling, capitalization. (3-4)	Writing is confusing, hard to follow. Contains fragments and/or run-on sentences. Inappropriate diction. Distracting errors in punctuation, spelling, capitalization.

TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_/35

## Expository Essay Rubric

	Extraordinary (4 pts)	Adequate (3 pts)	Competent (2 pts)	Unsatisfactory (1 pt)
<b>Introduction and Thesis</b>	Distinct tone; unmistakable intent; uniform specificity; stylish opening; solid thesis	Clear tone; evident intent; limited specificity; effective opening; confident thesis;	Restatement of prompt as opening statement; mechanical thesis statement; some specificity; limited attempts at tone	Objective, dull tone; vague or absent thesis; general statements; lack of specificity; lifeless, ordinary language
<b>Ideas and Argument</b>	Interesting; clear; thought-provoking; reasoned; sophisticated; insightful	Thoughtful; mature; reasoned; interesting; understandable	Sound; limited in depth; appropriate but inadequately developed	Obvious; shallow; unsound; inaccurate; clichéd
<b>Support</b>	Accurate; forceful; rich in detail; extensive; convincing; specific	Thorough; persuasive; specific; clear; complete	Appropriate; sufficient; relevant; clear; mostly general	Inappropriate; vague; incomplete; general
<b>Organization</b>	Stylish transitions; unity; coherence of sentences and paragraphs; clear focus; careful and subtle organization subordinate to meaning and ideas	Effective transitions; coherent paragraphs; unmistakable focus; careful organization subordinate to meaning and ideas	Clear transitions; mostly coherent paragraphs; reasonable focus; ideas subordinate to organizational devices	Vague or unclear focus; random, loose, choppy structure; limited attempt to organize
<b>Syntax and Expression</b>	Varied sentence beginnings and lengths; command of stylistic techniques; interesting, original delivery; no wasted words	Sentence variety; some attempts at style; clear, noteworthy delivery; few wasted words	Effective sentence structure; some variety; some lapses in syntax; wordy	Simplistic dull, ordinary syntax and expression; repetitious; fragments and run-ons; wordy
<b>Diction and Usage</b>	Rich, precise and effective vocabulary; fresh and intense language and imagery; use of strong action verbs; confident active voice	Effective vocabulary; accurate word use; use of action verbs and active voice	Adequate vocabulary; reliance on verbs of being and passive voice; thesaurusitis; some problems with usage	Inappropriate or immature vocabulary; incorrect word choice; word omissions; errors in agreement; inconsistent tenses
<b>Conclusion</b>	Stylishly and subtly culminates by further developing main idea; effective specificity; leaves a pleasing impression on the reader	Returns to thesis and summarizes main points clearly; some specificity; solid sense of finality	Ends effectively; summarizes previously stated materials; at least briefly returns to thesis or main idea	Fails to conclude; repeats previously stated information; adds nothing new in many words
<b>Voice</b>	Command of voice appropriate to audience and topic; strong; authoritative; authentic; distinctive	Clear; authentic; appropriate to audience and topic; confident; consistent	Consistent but somewhat mechanical; uninteresting; basic and typical	Inconsistent; indefinite; unauthentic; inappropriate to audience and/or task
<b>Mechanics</b>	Error free	Mostly error free	Some bothersome errors in spelling and punctuation	Mechanical errors which interfere with communication and/or meaning

TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_/36

# Personal Narrative Essay Rubric

## **Personal Narrative Rubric**

### **Stimulating Ideas**

**1            2            3            4            5**

- Focuses on a specific event or experience
- Presents an engaging picture of the action and people involved
- Contains specific details and dialogue
- Makes readers want to know what happens next

### **Logical Organization**

**1            2            3            4            5**

- Includes a clear beginning that pulls readers into the essay
- Presents ideas in an organized manner
- Uses transitions to link sentences and paragraphs
- Flows smoothly from one idea to the next

### **Engaging Voice**

**1            2            3            4            5**

- Speaks knowledgably and/or enthusiastically
- Shows that the writer is truly interested in the subject
- Contains specific nouns, vivid verbs, and colorful modifiers

### **Grammar/Conventions**

**1            2            3            4            5**

- Sentence structure and variety
- Spelling, punctuation, capitalization
- Word choice and usage

**TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_/20**

## Narrative Essay Rubric

	<b>Distinguished</b> (from the ELA Standards)	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Developing</b>	<b>Needs Improvement / Beginning</b>
<b>Engaging the reader</b>	Engages the reader with an interesting introduction that makes the reader connect with the story and the character.	Adequately engages the reader.	Makes an attempt to engage the reader but is not successful.	Does not try to engage the reader or establish the context of the story.
<b>Establishment of the plot and characters</b>	Establishes a situation, plot, persona, point of view, setting, conflict, and resolution; Develops complex characters.	Provides an adequately developed plot, but not quite good enough to rate it as distinguished. Characters are adequately developed.	Barely develops the plot and characters are superficial.	The plot is difficult to follow or understand and requires further development. Characters show little to no development.
<b>Organization</b>	Creates an organizational structure that balances and unifies all narrative aspects of the story.	Shows a clear attempt at organization that comes close to unifying the story; digressions are rare.	Lacks focus and a controlling idea; however, digressions and/or abrupt shifts in the response may interfere with meaning.	There is little or no organization present; frequent digressions and/or abrupt shifts in the response interfere with meaning.
<b>Style and Fluency</b>	The ideas are clearly and effectively developed; writing is fluent and polished with effective transitions.	Most ideas are clearly expressed; writing is generally fluent, with some use of transitions.	Some ideas may not be clearly expressed; fluency and transitions may be lacking.	Many ideas are difficult to understand; fluency and transitions are lacking.
<b>Grammar, Spelling and Proofreading</b>	Demonstrates mastery of the rules of the English Language including punctuation, spelling, and grammar.	Makes good attempt to revise with only a few errors in punctuation, spelling, grammar.	Efforts to revise are made but with many errors in punctuation, spelling, grammar remaining.	Shows little to no evidence of proofreading, with many punctuation, spelling, grammatical errors.

TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_/20

## Research Essay Rubric

Category	Exceeds Standard -4	Meets Standard -3	Nearly Meets Standard -2	Does Not Meet Standard-1	No Evidence -0
<b>Thesis Statement/ Purpose</b>	Clearly and concisely states the paper's purpose which is engaging, and thought provoking.	Clearly states the paper's purpose in a single sentence.	States the paper's purpose in a single sentence.	Incomplete and/or unfocused.	Absent, no evidence
<b>Introduction</b>	The introduction is engaging, states the main topic and previews the structure of the paper.	The introduction states the main topic and previews the structure of the paper.	The introduction states the main topic but does not adequately preview the structure of the paper.	There is no clear introduction or main topic and the structure of the paper is missing.	Absent, no evidence
<b>Body</b>	Each paragraph has thoughtful supporting detail sentences that develop the main idea.	Each paragraph has sufficient supporting detail sentences that develop the main idea.	Each paragraph lacks supporting detail sentences.	Each paragraph fails to develop the main idea.	Not applicable
<b>Organization- Structural Development of the Idea</b>	Writer demonstrates logical and subtle sequencing of ideas through well-developed paragraphs; transitions are used to enhance organization.	Paragraph development present but not perfected.	Logical organization; organization of ideas not fully developed.	No evidence of structure or organization.	Not applicable
<b>Conclusion</b>	The conclusion is engaging and restates the thesis.	The conclusion restates the thesis.	The conclusion does not adequately restate the thesis.	Incomplete and/or unfocused.	Absent
<b>Mechanics</b>	No errors in punctuation, capitalization and spelling No errors sentence structure and word usage..	Almost no errors in punctuation, capitalization and spelling. Almost no errors in sentence structure and word usage.	Many errors in punctuation, capitalization and spelling. Many errors in sentence structure and word usage.	Numerous and distracting errors in punctuation, capitalization and spelling. Numerous and distracting errors in sentence structure and word usage.	Not applicable
<b>Citation</b>	All cited works, both text and visual, are done in the correct format with no errors.	Some cited works, both text and visual, are done in the correct format. Inconsistencies evident.	Few cited works, both text and visual, are done in the correct format.	Absent	Not applicable
<b>Bibliography</b>	Done in the correct format with no errors. Includes a minimum of 5 major references.	Done in the correct format with few errors. . Includes 5 major references	Done in the correct format with some errors. Includes 4 major references	Done in the correct format with many errors. Includes 3 major references	Absent
<b>MLA Adherence</b>	Headings: Title, Your Name, Teacher's Name, Course Period, Date, Neatly finished-no errors (12 pt font, 1" margins	Evidence of four	Evidence of 3	Evidence of 2 or less	Absent

TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_/36

## Basic Research Presentation Rubric

\_\_\_\_\_ 50 pts: Typed, double-spaced *speech* (organized by slides or speaker, depending on best fit for your presentation)

\_\_\_\_\_ 20 pts: includes *annotated* works cited

\_\_\_\_\_ 10 pts: 5-10 minutes

\_\_\_\_\_ 10 pts: teaches class about your topic

\_\_\_\_\_ 10 pts: explains what happened or what topic is

\_\_\_\_\_ 10 pts: Explains how topic is related to the *subject*

\_\_\_\_\_ 10 pts: All Group members spoke

\_\_\_\_\_ 30 pts: Visual aid relevant to presentation info, and carries throughout presentation

\_\_\_\_\_ 20 pts: 2 book references

\_\_\_\_\_ 10 pts: 2 periodical references

\_\_\_\_\_ 10 pts: 2 reputable, verifiable website references

\_\_\_\_\_ 10 pts: all pictures and clip art cited

\_\_\_\_\_/200pts Total grade

Minus 1 point for each English Error:



# Formal Writing

## What NOT To Do In *Formal Writing*!

### **No contractions--Do not use words such as: don't, weren't, can't**

- It is okay to use possessive pronouns. Don't confuse the two different uses of apostrophes.

### **No abbreviations unless explained.**

- ***This is okay:*** The United Nations (UN) did not support the forceful removal of Hussien. On Monday, the UN discussed his poor leadership and failure to follow UN sanctions.
- ***This is NOT okay:*** The UN (United Nations) or ... The UN did not support...

### **No vague words**

- Remove these words from your writing vocabulary: get, got, put, go, going, said, stuff, things, goes, putting, etc.

### **Remove the following phrases (or anything like them): "I think that," "I believe," "I will tell you about," "I thought," "This paragraph is about"**

- You are the writer – Of course, You THINK! If you didn't think it, you wouldn't write it!

### **Avoid using questions in your writing.**

- This is usually by very young (3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> grade) or very advanced writers (12<sup>th</sup> graders or college.) You only use questions IF you answer them in your essay; generally avoid them if possible.

### **No first or second person!**

- "You" is second person...use only THIRD person in formal writing.

### **Write out numbers that are less than ten, or numbers that start a sentence.**

- One, two, three, four, and so on are not hard to write. Spell them out! If a large number is starting a sentence then you must spell it out completely. i.e. Two million, four hundred fifty two thousand, two hundred eleven rabbits were found on the field.

### **Do not END a sentence with a preposition: above, about, to, from, etc.**

### **Avoid using parentheses in your text.**

- Parenthetical citations (in-text citations) are GREAT, WONDERFUL! They are what parentheses are used for in formal papers.
- You can use parentheses to explain an abbreviation as shown above.

### **Correctly format and ATTACH your works cited page when in-text citations are used.**

# Introductions

## Why bother writing a good introduction?

**1. You never get a second chance to make a first impression.** The opening paragraph of your paper will provide your readers with their initial impressions of your argument, your writing style, and the overall quality of your work. A vague, disorganized, error-filled, off-the-wall, or boring introduction will probably create a negative impression. On the other hand, a concise, engaging, and well-written introduction will start your readers off thinking highly of you, your analytical skills, your writing, and your paper. This impression is especially important when the audience you are trying to reach (your instructor) will be grading your work.

**2. Your introduction is an important road map for the rest of your paper.** Your introduction conveys a lot of information to your readers. You can let them know what your topic is, why it is important, and how you plan to proceed with your discussion. It should contain a thesis that will assert your main argument. It will also, ideally, give the reader a sense of the kinds of information you will use to make that argument and the general organization of the paragraphs and pages that will follow. After reading your introduction, your readers should not have any major surprises in store when they read the main body of your paper.

**3. Ideally, your introduction will make your readers want to read your paper.** The introduction should capture your readers' interest, making them want to read the rest of your paper. Opening with a compelling story, a fascinating quotation, an interesting question, or a stirring example can get your readers to see why this topic matters and serve as an invitation for them to join you for an interesting intellectual conversation.

## Strategies for writing an effective introduction

• **Start by thinking about the question.** Your entire essay will be a response to the assigned question, and your introduction is the first step toward that end. Your direct answer to the assigned question will be your thesis, and your thesis will be included in your introduction, so it is a good idea to use the question as a jumping off point. You will probably refer back to this question extensively as you prepare your complete essay, and the question itself can also give you some clues about how to approach the introduction.

• **Try writing your introduction last.** You may think that you have to write your introduction first, but that isn't necessarily true, and it isn't always the most effective way to craft a good introduction. You may find that you don't know what you are going to argue at the beginning of the writing process, and only through the experience of writing your paper do you discover your main argument. It is perfectly fine to start out thinking that you want to argue a particular point, but wind up arguing something slightly or even dramatically different by the time you've written most of the paper.

• **Don't be afraid to write a tentative introduction first and then change it later.** Some people find that they need to write some kind of introduction in order to get the writing process started. That's fine, but if you are one of those people, be sure to return to your initial introduction later and rewrite if necessary.

• **Open with an attention grabber.** Sometimes, especially if the topic of your paper is somewhat dry or technical, opening with something catchy can help. Consider these options:

1. **an intriguing example** (for example, the mistress who initially teaches Douglass but then ceases her instruction as she learns more about slavery)
2. **a provocative quotation** (Douglass writes that "education and slavery were incompatible with each other")
3. **a puzzling scenario** (Frederick Douglass says of slaves that "[N]othing has been left undone to cripple their intellects, darken their minds, debase their moral nature, obliterate all traces of their relationship to mankind; and yet how wonderfully they have sustained the mighty load of a most frightful bondage, under which they have been groaning for centuries!" Douglass clearly asserts that slave owners went to great lengths to destroy the mental capacities of slaves, yet his own life story proves that these efforts could be unsuccessful.)
4. **a vivid and perhaps unexpected anecdote** (for example, "Learning about slavery in the American history course at Frederick Douglass High School, students studied the work slaves did, the impact of slavery on their families, and the rules that governed their lives. We didn't discuss education, however, until one student, Mary,

raised her hand and asked, 'But when did they go to school?' That modern high school students could not conceive of an American childhood devoid of formal education speaks volumes about the centrality of education to American youth today and also suggests the significance of the deprivation of education in past generations.")

**5. a thought-provoking question** (given all of the freedoms that were denied enslaved individuals in the American South, why does Frederick Douglass focus his attentions so squarely on education and literacy?)

- **Pay special attention to your first sentence.** Start off on the right foot with your readers by making sure that the first sentence actually says something useful and that it does so in an interesting and error-free way.
- **Be straightforward and confident.** Avoid statements like "In this paper, I will argue that Frederick Douglass valued education." While this sentence points toward your main argument, it isn't especially interesting. It might be more effective to say what you mean in a declarative sentence. It is much more convincing to tell us that "Frederick Douglass valued education" than to tell us that you are going to say that he did. Assert your main argument confidently. After all, you can't expect your reader to believe it if it doesn't sound like you believe it!

### Other Introduction Options:

Suppose you are introducing a friend to your brother Joe. Would you say "Hey, Joe, this is Tina," and then walk away leaving them there together? Of course not! You would tell Joe a little about Tina's background: where she's from, where she went to school, where she works, and any other important information that will make Joe want to get to know Tina better, right? Well, introducing your paper to your reader is the exact same thing. You want the reader to want to know more about your paper. You want to get the reader interested in what you might have to say. An introduction should lead naturally into the rest of your paper and be appropriate to its subject and tone. Some suggestions for openings follow, but use judgment in applying them. Although beginning with an anecdote can be effective for some papers, don't force one where it doesn't belong. A story about your indecisive father is not the best way to begin a paper analyzing the character of Hamlet.

- **Use a relevant quotation from the work you are discussing.**

**Example:** "I am encompassed by a wall, high and hard and stone, with only my brainy nails to tear it down. And I cannot do it." Kerewin Holmes, one of the main characters in Keri Hulme's novel *The Bone People*, describes herself as both physically and emotionally alone in a tower she has built by the New Zealand Sea. Throughout the novel Hulme uses concrete images—the tower, muteness, physical beatings, the ocean—to suggest her characters' isolation from each other and the community around them.

- **Provide background or context for your thesis statement.**

**Example:** Until the second half of this century, Americans spent the country's natural resources freely. They mined for minerals, diverted rivers, replaced wilderness with cities and towns. In the process they cut down forests that had been in place for thousands of years. Now, as the twenty-first century approaches, the reality that progress has its price is obvious to almost everyone. Only ten percent of old-growth forests in the United States remain intact, with demand for wood products expected to grow by fifty percent in the next fifty years. The country is in danger of losing its forests altogether unless citizens pursue solutions from everyday recycling to using wood alternatives to actively supporting government regulations.

- **Ask a question that leads to your thesis statement.**

**Example:** Is the United States still a country where the middle class thrives? Strong evidence suggests that the traditional American view of a successful middle class is fading. At the very least, the prospects for someone who stands in the economic middle have significantly changed since the 1970s. Twenty-five years ago middle-class people expected to own their own homes in the suburbs and send their children to college. Today, for many people, these expectations have become more like distant dreams. Two factors—a growing disparity in wages within the labor force and rising prices for real estate and goods—suggest that the middle class is a less comfortable place to be than it was for the previous generation.

- **Begin with a relevant anecdote that leads to your thesis statement.**

**Example:** Doug was the star in my high school senior class. He captained the football team, dated the best looking girls, charmed the teachers, and managed to get A's and B's seemingly without studying. When he headed off to a big Midwestern university, we weren't surprised. But when he was home again a year later on academic probation, many of us wondered what could have happened. Doug told me candidly that his year at the university was far removed from anything he'd experienced in high school. Quite simply, his small, noncompetitive high school classes hadn't prepared him for a large, impersonal university where the professors didn't know his name, let alone his role as a big man on campus. I believe programs to help students like Doug make the transition from high school to college could help reduce the high failure rate among college freshmen.

# More Ideas for Writing Introductions

The introduction is the first sentence of your essay and it plays the dual role of setting the theme of your essay and engaging the reader. **Create Mystery or Intrigue in your Introduction.** It is not necessary or recommended that your first sentence give away the subject matter. Raise questions in the minds of your reader to force them to read on. Appeal to their senses and emotions to make them relate to your subject matter.

## Action Introduction

An Action Introduction takes the reader into the middle of an action sequence. By not building up to the story, it forces the reader to read on to find out not only the significance of this moment in time, but what led up to and followed it. It is perfect for short essays where space must be conserved or for narrative essays that begin with a story.

### Examples:

*I promised God I would eat all my peas, but He didn't care. A confused eleven-year-old girl, I sat and listened to my father pace. With each heavy step echoing loudly throughout the silent house, my family's anxiety and anticipation mounted while awaiting news of my grandfather's health. My heart racing, I watched the clock, amazed that time could crawl so slowly. Finally, the telephone interrupted the house's solemn silence. I heard my father repeating the words "yes, yes, of course." He then hung up the receiver and announced my grandfather's death and cancer's victory.*

This is the kind of introduction that will immediately intrigue your reader because it begins with a very unusual declaration. The image of a little girl eating peas and hoping to acquire God's help is charming while hinting at the solemnity of the situation described.

## Dialogue Introduction

Like the action introduction, the dialogue introduction brings the reader directly into the action, only this time in the form of dialogue. If you are writing about an influential figure in your life, you can mention a quote from this person that exemplifies the importance that he or she had on your life.

### Examples:

*"You must stop seeing that Russian girl," I ordered my brother when he returned home last summer from the University of Indianapolis. Echoing the prejudiced, ignorant sentiment that I had grown up with, I believed it was wrong to become seriously involved with a person who does not follow the Hindu religion and is not a member of the Indian race.*

*On the verge of losing consciousness, I asked myself: "Why am I doing this?" Why was I punishing my body? I had no answer; my mind blanked out from exhaustion and terror. I had no time to second-guess myself with a terrifying man leaning over my shoulder yelling: "You can break six minutes!" As flecks of spit flew from his mouth and landed on the handle bar of the ergometer, I longed to be finished with my first Saturday rowing practice and my first fifteen-hundred-meter "erg test."*

The power of this introduction comes from its attention to detail. The question "Why am I doing this?" gains support from every horrible detail: the exhaustion, the terrifying man, and the specks of spit flying from his mouth! With such strong supporting evidence, the quotation takes on a life of its own. Your reader will find himself thinking, "Why would anyone do that? I'd like to find out..."

## Overarching Societal Statements

This can be very effective if the statement is unique, but can be detrimental if your statement is debatable or unclear. Make sure that if you use this form of introduction that no member of the audience will take offense to it. That is unless you are trying to stir an audience.

### Examples:

*High school is a strange time. After three years of trying to develop an identity and friends in middle school, students are expected to mature immediately on the first day of ninth grade.*

*To this day, the United States remains driven by the American Dream, and we often hear of immigrants who come to this country to search for opportunities that their native countries lack. In these tales, immigrants succeed through hard work, dedication, and a little luck. As idealistic as the story may seem, I have been fortunate enough*

to experience its reality in the life of one very important man. His example has had great impact on my personal expectations and goals, and the manner in which I approach my own life.

## Personal Introduction

The Personal Introduction takes the reader directly into your mind. It says, "This is what it is like to be me.

### Examples:

*At times, I think the world around me is crumbling to the ground, but it never does. Like most people, I face the crunches of deadlines and endless demands on my time, but I have never encountered the type of adversity that can crush people, that can drive people crazy, that can drive them to suicide. I chuckle to myself every time I think about this. I am perceived as a mild-mannered, intelligent individual until I mention that I am involved in riflery.*

Did the first sentence of this introduction confuse you? This was no doubt its intention. By creating a little mystery in the first sentence, the reader is forced to keep reading and keep wondering, "what is this kid's secret?" until the final word, which pops in the reader's mind, sort of like a gunshot: "riflery."

## Question Introduction

Many essays begin with a question. While this is an easy way to begin an essay, the audience may perceive it as a "lazy introduction." No one wants to read an essay that begins with such tacky material as: "To be or not to be?" or "Are you looking for an applicant who has drive and determination? Well, I'm your guy." If you are going to use a question, make sure that it is an extremely compelling one and that your experiences provide answers.

### Example:

*Influence? Why is it that the people who influence us most influence us in ways that are not easily quantified? Through her work with abused children, my mother has shown me the heroism of selfless dedication to a worthy cause.*

## Quotation Introduction

Many writers are tempted to start their essay with a quote. You should try to resist this temptation, as most quotes will look forced. Readers will be turned off if it is apparent that you searched through a book of famous quotes and came up with a quote from some famous philosopher about whom you know nothing. The quotation introduction is most effective when the quote you choose is unusual, funny, or obscure, not too long, and from those to whom you are closest. Choose a quote with a meaning you plan to reveal to the reader as the essay progresses.

### Examples:

*John F. Kennedy said, "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country." I see academics as a similar two-way interaction: in the classroom, I will do much more than take up valuable space. Because of the broad range of experiences I have had, my knowledge of many subjects is thorough. These experiences will help me perform well in any class, as I have learned how to use my time efficiently.*

This is a risky quote with which to begin an essay. After all, it is difficult to imagine a more time-worn or oft-repeated statement. However, this introduction goes on to apply this quote in a relatively unique manner. The contrast between such a standard quotation and such an interesting application will likely catch your reader's attention.

*"Experience is what you receive when you don't get what you want." I remembered my father's words as I tried to postpone the coming massacre. Just as during the fall of the Roman Empire, my allies became enemies and my foes turned into partners. In fast and furious action with property changing hands again and again, I rested my fate on the words of one man, hoping he would rescue me from this dangerous tailspin. Do these experts realize the heartbreak they are inflicting on my young life? While the uncertainty of tomorrow's attire is the most pressing concern for many seventeen-year-olds, I must worry about much greater issues! It is August 31, the market is down over 300 points and the value of my stock portfolio is falling fast.*

Quoting a person with whom you enjoy a close relationship is generally preferable to quoting a famous source. This passage's strength comes from the brief, understated role that the quote plays. The short statement introduces the rest of the paragraph and presents the fundamental point, and then the essay moves on to examine specific details. This is the ideal role of a quotation.

## Types of introductions to avoid:

- 1. The Dictionary Definition:** Many papers begin "Webster's defines X as..." and then continue to discuss the topic. This type of introduction has become very stale with faculty who have seen it thousands of times.
- 2. The "Cinema scope" Intro:** These often crop up in introductory history classes. Avoid sweeping panoramas such as "Throughout the march of history, one thing has been true..." or "Many novels have considered the ways in which good people become corrupted by money."
- 3. Cutting to the Chase too quickly:** It is too easy to go too far while avoiding overly general introductions. Avoid jumping right into a **thesis statement** and do not try to cover every topic in the first paragraph. It is difficult to say how specific to be in an introduction, but consider the idea that this part of a paper provides "the lay of the land" for a reader who will then know why the paper is worth finishing.
- 4. Memorable Quotations:** Some readers do not like papers to start with another's words. This overused strategy may be acceptable if a direct quotation sets the stage for what follows and its relevance is discussed in the introduction.

# Conclusions

Introductions and conclusions can be the most difficult parts of papers to write. While the body is often easier to write, it needs a frame around it. An introduction and conclusion frame your thoughts and bridge your ideas for the reader. Just as your introduction acts as a bridge that transports your readers from their own lives into the "place" of your analysis, your conclusion can provide a bridge to help your readers make the transition back to their daily lives. Such a conclusion will help them see why all your analysis and information should matter to them after they put the paper down. Your conclusion is your chance to have the last word on the subject. The conclusion allows you to have the final say on the issues you have raised in your paper, to summarize your thoughts, to demonstrate the importance of your ideas, and to propel your reader to a new view of the subject. It is also your opportunity to make a good final impression and to end on a positive note. Your conclusion can go beyond the confines of the assignment. The conclusion pushes beyond the boundaries of the prompt and allows you to consider broader issues, make new connections, and elaborate on the significance of your findings. Your conclusion should make your readers glad they read your paper. Your conclusion gives your reader something to take away that will help them see things differently or appreciate your topic in personally relevant ways. It can suggest broader implications that will not only interest your reader, but also enrich your reader's life in some way. It is your gift to the reader.

## Strategies for writing an effective conclusion

1. **Answer the question "So What?":** Show your readers why this paper was important. Show them that your paper was meaningful and useful.
2. **Synthesize, don't summarize:** Don't simply repeat things that were in your paper. They have read it. Show them how the points you made and the support and examples you used were not random, but fit together.
3. **Redirect your readers:** Give your reader something to think about, perhaps a way to use your paper in the "real" world. If your introduction went from general to specific, make your conclusion go from specific to general. Think globally.
3. **Create a new meaning:** You don't have to give new information to create a new meaning. By demonstrating how your ideas work together, you can create a new picture. Often the sum of the paper is worth more than its parts.
4. **Echoing the introduction:** Echoing your introduction can be a good strategy if it is meant to bring the reader full-circle. If you begin by describing a scenario, you can end with the same scenario as proof that your essay was helpful in creating a new understanding.
  - **Example Introduction**

From the parking lot, I could see the towers of the castle of the Magic Kingdom standing stately against the blue sky. To the right, the tall peak of The Matterhorn rose even higher. From the left, I could hear the jungle sounds of Adventure Land. As I entered the gate, Main Street stretched before me with its quaint shops evoking an old-fashioned small town so charming it could never have existed. I was entranced. Disneyland may have been built for children, but it brings out the child in adults.
  - **Example Conclusion**

I thought I would spend a few hours at Disneyland, but here I was at 1:00 A.M., closing time, leaving the front gates with the now dark towers of the Magic Kingdom behind me. I could see tired children, toddling along and struggling to keep their eyes open as best they could. Others slept in their parents' arms as we waited for the parking lot tram that would take us to our cars. My forty-year-old feet ached, and I felt a bit sad to think that in a couple of days I would be leaving California, my vacation over, to go back to my desk. But then I smiled to think that for at least a day I felt ten years old again.
5. **Challenging the reader:** By issuing a challenge to your readers, you are helping them to redirect the information in the paper, and they may apply it to their own lives.
  - **Example**

Though serving on a jury is not only a civic responsibility but also an interesting experience, many people still view jury duty as a chore that interrupts their jobs and the routine of their daily lives. However, juries are part of America's attempt to be a free and just society. Thus, jury duty challenges us to be interested and responsible citizens.

**6. Looking to the future:** Looking to the future can emphasize the importance of your paper or redirect the readers' thought process. It may help them apply the new information to their lives or see things more globally.

- **Example**

Without well-qualified teachers, schools are little more than buildings and equipment. If higher-paying careers continue to attract the best and the brightest students, there will not only be a shortage of teachers, but the teachers available may not have the best qualifications. Our youth will suffer. And when youth suffers, the future suffers.

**7. Posing questions:** Posing questions, either to your readers or in general, may help your readers gain a new perspective on the topic, which they may not have held before reading your conclusion. It may also bring your main ideas together to create a new meaning.

- **Example**

Campaign advertisements should help us understand the candidate's qualifications and positions on the issues. Instead, most tell us what a boob or knave the opposing candidate is, or they present general images of the candidate as a family person or God-fearing American. Do such advertisements contribute to creating an informed electorate or a people who choose political leaders the same way they choose soft drinks and soap?

## Strategies to avoid

1. Beginning with an unnecessary, overused phrase such as "in conclusion," "in summary," or "in closing." Although these phrases can work in speeches, they come across as wooden and trite in writing.
2. Stating the thesis for the very first time in the conclusion.
3. Introducing a new idea or subtopic in your conclusion.
4. Ending with a rephrased thesis statement without any substantive changes.
5. Making sentimental, emotional appeals that are out of character with the rest of an analytical paper.
6. Including evidence (quotations, statistics, etc.) that should be in the body of the paper.

## Four kinds of ineffective conclusions

1. **The "That's My Story and I'm Sticking to It" Conclusion.** This conclusion just restates the thesis and is usually painfully short. It does not push the ideas forward. People write this kind of conclusion when they can't think of anything else to say. Example: In conclusion, Frederick Douglass was, as we have seen, a pioneer in American education, proving that education was a major force for social change with regard to slavery.

2. **The "America the Beautiful"/"I Am Woman"/"We Shall Overcome" Conclusion.** This kind of conclusion usually draws on emotion to make its appeal, but while this emotion and even sentimentality may be very heartfelt, it is usually out of character with the rest of an analytical paper. A more sophisticated commentary, rather than emotional praise, would be a more fitting tribute to the topic. **Example**

Because of the efforts of fine Americans like Frederick Douglass, countless others have seen the shining beacon of light that is education. His example was a torch that lit the way for others. Frederick Douglass was truly an American hero.

3. **The "Grab Bag" Conclusion.** This kind of conclusion includes extra information that the writer found or thought of but couldn't integrate into the main paper. You may find it hard to leave out details that you discovered after hours of research and thought, but adding random facts and bits of evidence at the end of an otherwise-well-organized essay can just create confusion. Example: In addition to being an educational pioneer, Frederick Douglass provides an interesting case study for masculinity in the American South. He also offers historians an interesting glimpse into slave resistance when he confronts Covey, the overseer. His relationships with female relatives reveal the importance of family in the slave community.



# What is a thesis?

A thesis statement declares what you believe and what you intend to prove. A good thesis statement makes the difference between a thoughtful research project and a simple retelling of facts. A good tentative thesis will help you focus your search for information. But don't rush! You must do a lot of background reading before you know enough about a subject to identify key or essential questions. You may not know how you stand on an issue until you have examined the evidence. You will likely begin your research with a working, preliminary or tentative thesis which you will continue to refine until you are certain of where the evidence leads. The thesis statement is typically located at the end of your opening paragraph. (The opening paragraph serves to set the context for the thesis.)

Remember, your reader will be looking for your thesis. Make it clear, strong, and easy to find.

## Attributes of a good thesis:

- It should be contestable, proposing an arguable point with which people could reasonably disagree. A strong thesis is provocative; it takes a stand and justifies the discussion you will present.
- It tackles a subject that could be adequately covered in the format of the project assigned.
- It is specific and focused. A strong thesis proves a point without discussing "everything about ...". Instead of music, think "American jazz in the 1930s" and your argument about it.
- It clearly asserts your own conclusion based on evidence. Note: Be flexible. The evidence may lead you to a conclusion you didn't think you'd reach. **It is perfectly okay to change your thesis!**
- It provides the reader with a map to guide him/her through your work.
- It anticipates and refutes the counter-arguments
- It **avoids** vague language (like "it seems").
- It **avoids** the first person. ("I believe," "In my opinion")
- It should pass the **So what? or Who cares? test** (Would your most honest friend ask why he should care or respond with "but everyone knows that"?). For instance, "people should avoid driving under the influence of alcohol," would be unlikely to evoke any opposition.

## Simple equations for a thesis might look something like this:

**Specific topic + Attitude/Angle/Argument = Thesis**

**What you plan to argue + How you plan to argue it = Thesis**

## How do you know if you've got a solid tentative thesis?

### Try these five tests:

- Does the thesis inspire a reasonable reader to ask, "How?" or "Why?"
- Would a reasonable reader NOT respond with "Duh!" or "So what?" or "Gee, no kidding!" or "Who cares?"
- Does the thesis avoid general phrasing and/or sweeping words such as "all" or "none" or "every"?
- Does the thesis lead the reader toward the topic sentences (the subtopics needed to prove the thesis)?
- Can the thesis be adequately developed in the required length of the paper or project?

# Guide to Literary Analysis Writing

**INTRODUCTION:** the first paragraph in your essay. It begins creatively in order to catch your reader's interest, provides essential background about the literary work, and prepares the reader for your thesis. The introduction must include the *author and title* of the work as well as an explanation of the *theme* to be discussed. The *thesis* goes in this paragraph usually at the end. Because the thesis sometimes sounds tacked on, make special attempts to link it to the sentence that precedes it by building on a key word or idea.

**CREATIVE OPENING:** the beginning sentences of the introduction that catches the reader's interest. Ways of beginning creatively include the following:

## **1) A meaningful piece of dialogue between two characters**

Ex. "It is another thing. You [Frederic Henry] cannot know about it unless you have it." "Well," I said. "If I ever get it I will tell you [priest]." (Hemingway 72). With these words, the priest in Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* sends the hero, Frederic, in search of the ambiguous "it" in his life.

## **2) A meaningful quotation (from the work or another source)**

Ex. "To be, or not to be, that is the question" {3.1.57}. This familiar statement expresses the young prince's moral dilemma in William Shakespeare's tragedy *Hamlet*, Prince of Denmark.

## **3) A universal idea.**

Ex. The terrifying scenes a soldier experiences on the front probably follow him throughout his life—if he manages to survive the war.

## **4) A rich, vivid description of the setting**

Ex. Sleepy Maycomb, like other Southern towns, suffers considerably during the Great Depression. Poverty reaches from the privileged families, like the Finches, to the Negroes and "white trash" Ewells, who live on the outskirts of town. Harper Lee paints a vivid picture of life in this humid Alabama town where tempers and bigotry explode into conflict.

## **5) An analogy or metaphor**

Ex. Life is like a box of chocolates: we never know what we're going to get. This element of uncertainty plays a major role in many dramas. For example, in Shakespeare's play, *Romeo and Juliet* have no idea what tragedies lie ahead when they fall so passionately and impetuously in love.

**THESIS:** a statement that provides the subject and overall opinion of your essay. For a literary analysis your thesis should (1) relate to the theme of the work and (2) suggest how this theme is revealed by the author. A good thesis may also suggest the organization of the paper.

Ex. Through Paul's experience behind the lines, at a Russian prisoner of war camp, and especially under bombardment in the trenches, Erich Maria Remarque realistically shows how war dehumanizes a man.

Sometimes a thesis becomes too cumbersome to fit into one sentence. In such cases, you may express the thesis as two sentences.

Ex. In *A Tale of Two Cities*, Charles Dickens shows the process by which a wasted life can be redeemed. Sidney Carton, through his love for Lucie Manette, is transformed from a hopeless, bitter man into a hero whose life and death have meaning.

**BODY:** the support paragraphs of your essay. These paragraphs contain supporting examples (evidence) and analysis/explanation (elaboration) for your topic sentences/support theses. Each paragraph in the body includes (1) a topic sentence/claim, (2) integrated evidence and elaboration, and (3) a concluding sentence. In its simplest form, each body paragraph is organized as follows:

1. topic sentence / claim
2. lead-in to evidence
3. **evidence** (evidence from text)
4. **elaboration** (2-3 sentences of explanation, elaboration, insight—tell us what the evidence proves)
5. transition and lead-in to next piece of evidence
6. **evidence** (evidence from text)
7. **elaboration** (2-3 sentences of explanation, elaboration, insight—tell us what the evidence proves)
8. concluding or clincher sentence

**TOPIC SENTENCE/CLAIM:** the first sentence of a body or support paragraph. It identifies one aspect of the thesis and states a primary reason why the thesis is true.

**Ex:** The role of the beast represents evil inside of all humans, revealing the overpowering immoral and wicked side of mankind.

**Ex:** Throughout the poem Poe uses references to Greek mythology to create the idea of death.

**EVIDENCE:** a specific example from the work used to provide evidence for your topic sentence/claim. Evidence can be a combination of paraphrase and direct quotation from the work.

**Ex:** When Carlton and Darnay first meet at the tavern, Carlton tells him, “I care for no man on this earth, and no man cares for me” (Dickens 105).

**ELABORATION:** your explanation and interpretation of the evidence. Elaboration tells the reader what the author of the text means or how the evidence proves the topic sentence/support thesis. Elaboration may include interpretation, analysis, argument, insight, and/or reflection. (*Helpful hint: In your body paragraph, you should have twice as much elaboration as evidence. In other words, for every sentence of evidence, you should have at least two sentences of elaboration.*)

**Ex:** Carlton makes this statement as if he were excusing his rude behavior to Darnay. Carton, however, is only pretending to be polite, perhaps to amuse himself. With this seemingly off-the-cuff remark, Carton reveals a deeper cynicism and his emotional isolation.

**TRANSITIONS:** words or phrases that connect or “hook” one idea to the next, both between and within paragraphs. Transition devices include using connecting words as well as repeating key words or using synonyms.

**Ex:** Another example... Finally, in the climax... Later in the story... In contrast to this behavior...Not only...but also... Furthermore...

**LEAD-IN:** phrase or sentence that prepares the reader for evidence by introducing the speaker, setting, and/or situation.

**Ex.** Later, however, when the confident Sidney Carton returns alone to his home, his alienation and unhappiness become apparent: “Climbing into a high chamber in a well of houses, he threw

himself down in his clothes on a neglected bed, and its pillow was wet with wasted tears” (Dickens 211).

**CONCLUDING SENTENCE (CLINCHER/WARRANT):** last sentence of the body paragraph. It concludes the paragraph by tying the evidence and elaboration back to the major thesis.

**Ex.** Thus, before Carton experiences love, he is able to convince himself that the world has no meaning.

**CONCLUSION:** last paragraph in your essay. This paragraph should begin by echoing your thesis without repeating the words verbatim. Then, the conclusion should broaden from the thesis statements to answer the “so what?” question your reader may have after reading your essay. The conclusion should do one or more of the following:

1. Reflect on how your essay topic relates to the book as a whole
2. Evaluate how successful the author is in achieving his or her goal or message
3. Give a personal statement about the topic
4. Make predictions
5. Connect back to your creative opening
6. Give your opinion of the novel’s value or significance

**PLAGIARISM/ACADEMIC HONESTY:** Plagiarism is the act of using another person’s ideas or expressions in your writing without acknowledging the source. You are plagiarizing if you do the following:

1. Use someone else’s ideas or examples without giving credit
2. Use a slightly changed statement as your own, putting your own words here and there and not giving credit
3. Fail to use quotation marks around exact sentences, phrases, or even words that belong to another person

Plagiarism in student writing is often unintentional. You have probably done a report or research paper at some time in your education in which you chose a topic, checked out several sources, and copied several sentences or paragraphs from each source. You might have been unaware that you were committing plagiarism. However, as a high school student writing an essay or research paper, you must be aware that anytime you use someone else’s thought, words, or phraseology without giving him or her credit in your paper constitutes plagiarism. Your paper will be credible only if you thoroughly document your sources.

# Persuasive /Argumentative Writing

**Goal:** Share your view with a reader willing to consider it. You will express your view clearly and vigorously. In the end you will help your reader see and understand one more view of reality. You are writing a persuasive piece of writing in which you will state your opinion about a topic. In stating your opinion you are stating the truth as you see it, but remember to keep your reader's/audience's point of view in mind as well. To persuade your reader to see your viewpoint you need to learn how to organize a persuasive piece of writing.

## I. Introduction

- Your opening statement must clearly state your position and the topic of the paper or set up your position that is clearly stated later in your essay. You must evaluate your audience and argument to decide when you will clearly state your position. Different arguments call for different writing structures. BUT, YOU **MUST** KNOW YOUR POSITION BEFORE YOU START WRITING.

- Do not start by saying that your view is ABSOLUTELY right and is the only way.
- It is probably best to state what you think your reader thinks--as best you can infer it.
- You do not need to state the other side to flatter your reader; you do this so that you show your audience that you are a well-rounded individual who realizes there are (at least) two sides to every issue.

## II. The Argument

- When trying to win over a reader who doesn't share your view, you use argument. Not a loud disagreement.
- Three common types of argument: Editorial, thoughtful articles, and other persuasive statements.
- Argument is reasoning--Making statements that lead to a conclusion.
- To support your argument you need evidence – anything that demonstrates what you are trying to say.

**Evidence includes:** facts, statistics, expert opinions, illustrations and examples, reported evidence and published research. Each piece of evidence must be cited correctly (in-text citations) and must be fully cited on the Works Cited page.

## III. How to write an argument- you prove your thesis!

- You assert the views you are going to defend.
- This is called a proposition or thesis of your argument or claim.
- It is a statement of what you believe.

## IV. Types of argument

- **Rational appeal (Logos)**
  - Conventional method of reasoning.
  - Supplies the reader with figures, facts and other evidence.
- **Emotional appeal (Pathos)**
  - Writer may re-state what the reader already knows.
  - Appeal to the writers feeling.

- Example: MLK Jr. did not share new information, but appealed to the emotional senses of the people.
- **Ethical appeal (Ethos)**
  - Impressing your reader that you are a well-informed person of goodwill, good sense and good moral character, therefore believable.
  - You make a good appeal because you reason carefully, write well and have a lot of evidence to support your view.
  - Quote respected authorities.

## **V. How to Reason**

- **The Claim:** Statement that is proven by evidence which supports some aspect of your thesis. A claim **MUST** be connected to your thesis.
- **The Data:** or evidence to prove something.
- **The Warrant:** the assumption or principle that connects the data to the claim. The discussion piece, which clearly shows how, claims and data prove/support the thesis.
- A common flaw in many arguments is that the warrant is not clear.
- To be persuaded, a reader needs to understand your assumption and the thinking that follows from them.

## **VI. Organization (SUGGESTED ORGANIZATION FOR SOME ARGUMENTS)**

- At the beginning of your essay clearly state the proposition or claim you are going to defend.
- The last sentence of your introductory paragraphs will be your **THESIS**. It is **ONE** very clear sentence that is what you intend to focus your **ENTIRE** paper around. If it does not connect to your thesis, support your thesis it does **NOT** go in the paper.
- For every point give evidence, facts, figures, examples, and/or expert opinions.
  - This does not mean the paragraph is full of evidence only. The data supports your discussion. Make sure there is much more to the paragraphs than data/evidence. If your paragraph has no discussion, no transitions between evidences you will **FAIL** the paper.
  - Of course the evidences are cited correctly in your paper, and the full citation will be found on the Works Cited page.
- Make sure statistics are up to date.
- Tackle the opposition at the end of your essay: reason with your opponents.
- In conclusion, briefly re-state your claims.
- You do need to have a conversation that states your position and what you want to happen.
- Do not forget other types of writing you have learned that will aid in your argument.
  - Descriptive writing, compare and contrast, narrative.

## **VII. Common mistakes**

- Warrant, claim, and data do not support thesis.

- Oversimplification.
- Either/or reasoning: giving only two solutions.
- No conversation in the text...only data.
- Argument from doubtful or unidentifiable authority: “My Aunt Betty says...”
- Closing paragraph is very “5 paragraph essayish.”
- Argument against a person’s character: “Mayor Bob is sleeping with his secretary how can we listen to his pleas for a new nursing home.”
- Arguing in a circle: “I am going to college because it is the right thing to do. Going to college is the right thing to do because it is expected of me. I am going to college to do the right thing.”
- Do not feel you have to use all the evidence you collected. You will put your reader to sleep. Use only the most powerful and persuasive bits of information.

Mistakes are also known as rhetorical fallacies.

# What are fallacies?

Fallacies are defects that weaken arguments. By learning to look for them in your own and others' writing, you can strengthen your ability to evaluate the arguments you make, read, and hear. It is important to realize two things about fallacies: First, fallacious arguments are very, very common and can be quite persuasive, at least to the causal reader or listener. You can find dozens of examples of fallacious reasoning in newspapers, advertisements, and other sources. Second, it is sometimes hard to evaluate whether an argument is fallacious. An argument might be very weak, somewhat weak, somewhat strong, or very strong. An argument that has several stages or parts might have some strong sections and some weak ones. The goal of this handout, then, is not to teach you how to label arguments as fallacious or fallacy-free, but to help you look critically at your own arguments and move them away from the "weak" and toward the "strong" end of the continuum.

## So what do fallacies look like?

For each fallacy listed, there is a definition or explanation, an example, and a tip on how to avoid committing the fallacy in your own arguments.

### Hasty generalization

**Definition:** Making assumptions about a whole group or range of cases based on a sample that is inadequate (usually because it is atypical or just too small). Stereotypes about people ("frat boys are drunkards," "grad students are nerdy," etc.) are a common example of the principle underlying hasty generalization.

**Example:** "My roommate said her philosophy class was hard, and the one I'm in is hard, too. All philosophy classes must be hard!" Two people's experiences are, in this case, not enough on which to base a conclusion.

**Tip:** Ask yourself what kind of "sample" you're using: Are you relying on the opinions or experiences of just a few people, or your own experience in just a few situations? If so, consider whether you need more evidence, or perhaps a less sweeping conclusion. (Notice that in the example, the more modest conclusion "Some philosophy classes are hard for *some* students" would not be a hasty generalization.)

### Missing the point

**Definition:** The premises of an argument do support a particular conclusion--but not the conclusion that the arguer actually draws.

**Example:** "The seriousness of a punishment should match the seriousness of the crime. Right now, the punishment for drunk driving may simply be a fine. But drunk driving is a very serious crime that can kill innocent people. So the death penalty should be the punishment for drunk driving." The argument actually supports several conclusions-- "The punishment for drunk driving should be very serious," in particular--but it doesn't support the claim that the death penalty, specifically, is warranted.

**Tip:** Separate your premises from your conclusion. Looking at the premises, ask yourself what conclusion an objective person would reach after reading them. Looking at your conclusion, ask yourself what kind of evidence would be required to support such a conclusion, and then see if you've actually given that evidence. Missing the point often occurs when a sweeping or extreme conclusion is being drawn, so be especially careful if you know you're claiming something big.

### Post hoc (also called false cause)

This fallacy gets its name from the Latin phrase "*post hoc, ergo propter hoc*," which translates as "after this, therefore because of this."

**Definition:** Assuming that because B comes after A, A caused B. Of course, sometimes one event really does cause another one that comes later--for example, if I register for a class, and my name later appears on the roll, it's true that the first event caused the one that came later. But sometimes two events that seem related in time aren't really related as cause and event. That is, correlation isn't the same thing as causation.



**Examples:** "President Jones raised taxes, and then the rate of violent crime went up. Jones is responsible for the rise in crime." The increase in taxes might or might not be one factor in the rising crime rates, but the argument hasn't shown us that one caused the other.

**Tip:** To avoid the *post hoc* fallacy, the arguer would need to give us some explanation of the process by which the tax increase is supposed to have produced higher crime rates. And that's what you should do to avoid committing this fallacy: If you say that A causes B, you should have something more to say about how A caused B than just that A came first and B came later!

## **Slippery slope**

**Definition:** The arguer claims that a sort of chain reaction, usually ending in some dire consequence, will take place, but there's really not enough evidence for that assumption. The arguer asserts that if we take even one step onto the "slippery slope," we will end up sliding all the way to the bottom; he or she assumes we can't stop halfway down the hill.

**Example:** "Animal experimentation reduces our respect for life. If we don't respect life, we are likely to be more and more tolerant of violent acts like war and murder. Soon our society will become a battlefield in which everyone constantly fears for their lives. It will be the end of civilization. To prevent this terrible consequence, we should make animal experimentation illegal right now." Since animal experimentation has been legal for some time and civilization has not yet ended, it seems particularly clear that this chain of events won't necessarily take place. Even if we believe that experimenting on animals reduces respect for life, and loss of respect for life makes us more tolerant of violence, that may be the spot on the hillside at which things stop--we may not slide all the way down to the end of civilization. And so, we have not yet been given sufficient reason to accept the arguer's conclusion that we must make animal experimentation illegal right now.

Like *post hoc*, slippery slope can be a tricky fallacy to identify, since sometimes a chain of events really can be predicted to follow from a certain action. Here's an example that doesn't seem fallacious: "If I fail my swim test, I won't be able to graduate. If I don't graduate, I probably won't be able to get a good job, and I may very well end up doing temp work or flipping burgers for the next year."

**Tip:** Check your argument for chains of consequences, where you say "if A, then B, and if B, then C," and so forth. Make sure these chains are reasonable.

## **Weak analogy**

**Definition:** Many arguments rely on an analogy between two or more objects, ideas, or situations. If the two things that are being compared aren't really alike in the relevant respects, the analogy is a weak one, and the argument that relies on it commits the fallacy of weak analogy.

**Example:** "Guns are like hammers--they're both tools with metal parts that could be used to kill someone. And yet it would be ridiculous to restrict the purchase of hammers--so restrictions on purchasing guns are equally ridiculous." While guns and hammers do share certain features, these features (having metal parts, being tools, and being potentially useful for violence) are not the ones at stake in deciding whether to restrict guns. Rather, we restrict guns because they can easily be used to kill large numbers of people at a distance. This is a feature hammers do not share--it'd be hard to kill a crowd with a hammer. Thus, the analogy is weak, and so is the argument based on it.

If you think about it, you can make an analogy of some kind between almost any two things in the world: "My paper is like a mud puddle because they both get bigger when it rains (I work more when I'm stuck inside) and they're both kind of murky." So the mere fact that you draw an analogy between two things doesn't prove much, by itself.

Arguments by analogy are often used in discussing abortion--arguers frequently compare fetuses with adult human beings, and then argue that treatment that would violate the rights of an adult human being also violates the rights of fetuses. Whether these arguments are good or not depends on the strength of the analogy: do adult humans and fetuses share the property that gives adult humans rights? If the property that matters is having a human genetic code or the potential for a life full of human experiences, adult humans and fetuses do share that property, so the argument and the analogy are strong; if the property is being self-aware, rational, or able to survive on one's own, adult humans and fetuses don't share it, and the analogy is weak.

**Tip:** Identify what properties are important to the claim you're making, and see whether the two things you're comparing both share those properties.

## Appeal to authority

**Definition:** Often we add strength to our arguments by referring to respected sources or authorities and explaining their positions on the issues we're discussing. If, however, we try to get readers to agree with us simply by impressing them with a famous name or by appealing to a supposed authority who really isn't much of an expert, we commit the fallacy of appeal to authority.

**Example:** "We should abolish the death penalty. Many respected people, such as actor Guy Handsome, have publicly stated their opposition to it." While Guy Handsome may be an authority on matters having to do with acting, there's no particular reason why anyone should be moved by his political opinions--he is probably no more of an authority on the death penalty than the person writing the paper.

**Tip:** There are two easy ways to avoid committing appeal to authority: First, make sure that the authorities you cite are experts on the subject you're discussing. Second, rather than just saying "Dr. Authority believes x, so we should believe it, too," try to explain the reasoning or evidence that the authority used to arrive at his or her opinion. That way, your readers have more to go on than a person's reputation. It also helps to choose authorities who are perceived as fairly neutral or reasonable, rather than people who will be perceived as biased.

## Ad populum

**Definition:** The Latin name of this fallacy means "**to the people**." There are several versions of the *ad populum* fallacy, but what they all have in common is that in them, the arguer takes advantage of the desire most people have to be liked and to fit in with others and uses that desire to try to get the audience to accept his or her argument. One of the most common versions is the bandwagon fallacy, in which the arguer tries to convince the audience to do or believe something because everyone else (supposedly) does.

**Example:** "Gay marriages are just immoral. 70% of Americans think so!" While the opinion of most Americans might be relevant in determining what laws we should have, it certainly doesn't determine what is moral or immoral: There was a time where a substantial number of Americans were in favor of segregation, but their opinion was not evidence that segregation was moral. The arguer is trying to get us to agree with the conclusion by appealing to our desire to fit in with other Americans.

**Tip:** Make sure that you aren't recommending that your audience believe your conclusion because everyone else believes it, all the cool people believe it, people will like you better if you believe it, and so forth. Keep in mind that the popular opinion is not always the right one!

## Ad hominem and tu quoque

**Definitions:** Like the appeal to authority and *ad populum* fallacies, the *ad hominem* ("against the person") and *tu quoque* ("you, too!") fallacies focus our attention on people rather than on arguments or evidence. In both of these arguments, the conclusion is usually "You shouldn't believe So-and-So's argument." The reason for not believing So-and-So is that So-and-So is either a bad person (*ad hominem*) or a hypocrite (*tu quoque*). In an *ad hominem* argument, the arguer attacks his or her opponent instead of the opponent's argument.

**Examples:** "Andrea Dworkin has written several books arguing that pornography harms women. But Dworkin is an ugly, bitter person, so you shouldn't listen to her." Dworkin's appearance and character, which the arguer has characterized so ungenerously, have nothing to do with the strength of her V argument, so using them as evidence is fallacious.

In a *tu quoque* argument, the arguer points out that the opponent has actually done the thing he or she is arguing against, and so the opponent's argument shouldn't be listened to. Here's an example: Imagine that your parents have explained to you why you shouldn't smoke, and they've given a lot of good reasons--the damage to your health, the cost, and so forth. You reply, "I won't accept your argument, because you used to smoke when you were my age. You did it, too!" The fact that your parents have done the thing they are condemning has no bearing on the premises they put forward in their argument (smoking harms your health and is very expensive), so your response is fallacious.

**Tip:** Be sure to stay focused on your opponents' reasoning, rather than on their personal character. (The exception to this is, of course, if you are making an argument about someone's character--if your conclusion is "Bill Clinton is an untrustworthy person," premises about his untrustworthy acts are relevant, not fallacious.)

## **Appeal to pity**

**Definition:** The appeal to pity takes place when an arguer tries to get people to accept a conclusion by making them feel sorry for someone.

**Examples:** "I know the exam is graded based on performance, but you should give me an A. My cat has been sick, my car broke down, and I've had a cold, so it was really hard for me to study!" The conclusion here is "You should give me an A." But the criteria for getting an A have to do with learning and applying the material from the course; the principle the arguer wants us to accept (people who have a hard week deserve A's) is clearly unacceptable. The information the arguer has given might *feel* relevant and might even get the audience to consider the conclusion--but the information isn't logically relevant, and so the argument is fallacious. Here's another example: "It's wrong to tax corporations--think of all the money they give to charity, and of the costs they already pay to run their businesses!"

**Tip:** Make sure that you aren't simply trying to get your audience to agree with you by making them feel sorry for someone.

## **Appeal to ignorance**

**Definition:** In the appeal to ignorance, the arguer basically says, "Look, there's no conclusive evidence on the issue at hand. Therefore, you should accept my conclusion on this issue."

**Example:** "People have been trying for centuries to prove that God exists. But no one has yet been able to prove it. Therefore, God does not exist." Here's an opposing argument that commits the same fallacy: "People have been trying for years to prove that God does not exist. But no one has yet been able to prove it. Therefore, God exists." In each case, the arguer tries to use the lack of evidence as support for a positive claim about the truth of a conclusion. There is one situation in which doing this is not fallacious: If qualified researchers have used well-thought-out methods to search for something for a long time, they haven't found it, and it's the kind of thing people ought to be able to find, then the fact that they haven't found it constitutes some evidence that it doesn't exist.

**Tip:** Look closely at arguments where you point out a lack of evidence and then draw a conclusion from that lack of evidence.

## **Straw man**

**Definition:** One way of making our own arguments stronger is to anticipate and respond in advance to the arguments that an opponent might make. In the straw man fallacy, the arguer sets up a wimpy version of the opponent's position and tries to score points by knocking it down. But just as being able to knock down a straw man, or a scarecrow, isn't very impressive, defeating a watered-down version of your opponents' argument isn't very impressive either.

**Example:** "Feminists want to ban all pornography and punish everyone who reads it! But such harsh measures are surely inappropriate, so the feminists are wrong: porn and its readers should be left in peace." The feminist argument is made weak by being overstated--in fact, most feminists do not propose an outright "ban" on porn or any punishment for those who merely read it; often, they propose some restrictions on things like child porn, or propose to allow people who are hurt by porn to sue publishers and producers, not readers, for damages. So the arguer hasn't really scored any points; he or she has just committed a fallacy.

**Tip:** Be charitable to your opponents. State their arguments as strongly, accurately, and sympathetically as possible. If you can knock down even the best version of an opponent's argument, then you've really accomplished something.

## **Red herring**

**Definition:** Partway through an argument, the arguer goes off on a tangent, raising a side issue that distracts the audience from what's really at stake. Often, the arguer never returns to the original issue.

**Example:** "Grading this exam on a curve would be the most fair thing to do. After all, classes go more smoothly when the students and the professor are getting along well." Let's try our premise-conclusion outlining to see what's wrong with this argument:

Premise: Classes go more smoothly when the students and the professor are getting along well.

Conclusion: Grading this exam on a curve would be the most fair thing to do.

When we lay it out this way, it's pretty obvious that the arguer went off on a tangent--the fact that something helps people get along doesn't necessarily make it more fair; fairness and justice sometimes require us to do things that cause conflict. But the audience may feel like the issue of teachers and students agreeing is important and be distracted from the fact that the arguer has not given any evidence as to why a curve would be fair.

**Tip:** Try laying your premises and conclusion out in an outline-like form. How many issues do you see being raised in your argument? Can you explain how each premise supports the conclusion?

## **False dichotomy**

**Definition:** In false dichotomy, the arguer sets up the situation so it looks like there are only two choices. The arguer then eliminates one of the choices, so it seems that we are left with only one option: the one the arguer wanted us to pick in the first place. But often there are really many different options, not just two--and if we thought about them all, we might not be so quick to pick the one the arguer recommends!

**Example:** "Caldwell Hall is in bad shape. Either we tear it down and put up a new building, or we continue to risk students' safety. Obviously we shouldn't risk anyone's safety, so we must tear the building down." The argument neglects to mention the possibility that we might repair the building or find some way to protect students from the risks in question--for example, if only a few rooms are in bad shape, perhaps we shouldn't hold classes in those rooms.

**Tip:** Examine your own arguments: If you're saying that we have to choose between just two options, is that really so? Or are there other alternatives you haven't mentioned? If there are other alternatives, don't just ignore them--explain why they, too, should be ruled out. Although there's no formal name for it, assuming that there are only three options, four options, etc. when really there are more is similar to false dichotomy and should also be avoided.

## **Begging the question**

**Definition:** A complicated fallacy; it comes in several forms and can be harder to detect than many of the other fallacies we've discussed. Basically, an argument that begs the question asks the reader to simply accept the conclusion without providing real evidence; the argument either relies on a premise that says the same thing as the conclusion (which you might hear referred to as "being circular" or "circular reasoning"), or simply ignores an important (but questionable) assumption that the argument rests on. Sometimes people use the phrase "beg the question" as a sort of general criticism of arguments, to mean that an arguer hasn't given very good reasons for a conclusion, but that's not the meaning we're going to discuss here.

**Examples:** "Active euthanasia is morally acceptable. It is a decent, ethical thing to help another human being escape suffering through death." Let's lay this out in premise-conclusion form:

Premise: It is a decent, ethical thing to help another human being escape suffering through death.

Conclusion: Active euthanasia is morally acceptable.

If we "translate" the premise, we'll see that the arguer has really just said the same thing twice: "decent, ethical" means pretty much the same thing as "morally acceptable," and "help another human being escape suffering through death" means "active euthanasia." So the premise basically says, "active euthanasia is morally acceptable," just like the conclusion does! The arguer hasn't yet given us any real reasons *why* euthanasia is acceptable; instead, she has left us asking "well, really, why do you think active euthanasia is acceptable?" Her argument "begs" (that is, evades) the real question (think of "beg off").

Here's a second example of begging the question, in which a dubious premise which is needed to make the argument valid is completely ignored: "Murder is morally wrong. So active euthanasia is morally wrong." The premise that gets left out is

"active euthanasia is murder." And that is a debatable premise--again, the argument "begs" or evades the question of whether active euthanasia is murder by simply not stating the premise. The arguer is hoping we'll just focus on the uncontroversial premise, "Murder is morally wrong," and not notice what is being assumed.

**Tip:** One way to try to avoid begging the question is to write out your premises and conclusion in a short, outline-like form. See if you notice any gaps, any steps that are required to move from one premise to the next or from the premises to the conclusion. Write down the statements that would fill those gaps. If the statements are controversial and you've just glossed over them, you might be begging the question. Next, check to see whether any of your premises basically says the same thing as the conclusion (but in other words). If so, you're begging the question. The moral of the story: You can't just assume or use as uncontroversial evidence the very thing you're trying to prove.

## **Equivocation**

**Definition:** Equivocation is sliding between two or more different meanings of a single word or phrase that is important to the argument.

**Example:** "Giving money to charity is the right thing to do. So charities have a right to our money." The equivocation here is on the word "right": "right" can mean both something that is correct or good (as in "I got the right answers on the test") and something to which someone has a claim (as in "everyone has a right to life"). Sometimes an arguer will deliberately, sneakily equivocate, often on words like "freedom," "justice," "rights," and so forth; other times, the equivocation is a mistake or misunderstanding. Either way, it's important that you use the main terms of your argument consistently.

**Tip:** Identify the most important words and phrases in your argument and ask yourself whether they could have more than one meaning. If they could, be sure you aren't slipping and sliding between those meanings.

## **So how do I find fallacies in my own writing?**

Here are some general tips for finding fallacies in your own arguments:

- **Pretend you disagree with the conclusion you're defending.** What parts of the argument would now seem fishy to you? What parts would seem easiest to attack? Give special attention to strengthening those parts.
- **List your main points;** under each one, **list the evidence** you have for it. Seeing your claims and evidence laid out this way may make you realize that you have no good evidence for a particular claim, or it may help you look more critically at the evidence you're using.
- **Learn which types of fallacies you're especially prone to,** and be careful to check for them in your work. Some writers make lots of appeals to authority; others are more likely to rely on weak analogies or set up straw men. Read over some of your old papers to see if there's a particular kind of fallacy you need to watch out for.
- **Be aware that broad claims need more proof than narrow ones.** Claims that use sweeping words like "all," "no," "none," "every," "always," "never," "no one," and "everyone" are sometimes appropriate--but they require a lot more proof than less-sweeping claims that use words like "some," "many," "few," "sometimes," "usually," and so forth.
- **Double check your characterizations of others,** especially your opponents, to be sure they are accurate and fair.

# MLA GUIDELINES

## General Format

MLA style specifies guidelines for formatting manuscripts and using the English language in writing. MLA style also provides writers with a system for referencing their sources through parenthetical citation in their essays and Works Cited pages.

Writers who properly use MLA also build their credibility by demonstrating accountability to their source material. Most importantly, the use of MLA style can protect writers from accusations of plagiarism, which is the purposeful or accidental uncredited use of source material by other writers.

If you are asked to use MLA format, be sure to consult the [MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers](#) (6th edition). Publishing scholars and graduate students should also consult the [MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing](#) (2nd edition). The [MLA Handbook](#) is available in most writing labs and reference libraries; it is also widely available in bookstores, libraries, and at the MLA web site. See the Additional Resources section of this handout for a list of helpful books and sites about using MLA style.

## Paper Format

The preparation of papers and manuscripts in MLA style is covered in chapter four of the [MLA Handbook](#), and chapter four of the [MLA Style Manual](#). Below are some basic guidelines for formatting a paper in MLA style.

### *General Guidelines*

- Type your paper on a computer and print it out on standard, white 8.5 x 11-inch paper,
- Double-space the text of your paper, and use a legible font like Times Roman. The font size should be 12 pt.
- Leave only one space after periods or other punctuation marks (unless otherwise instructed by your instructor).
- Set the margins of your document to 1 inch on all sides. Indent the first line of a paragraph one half-inch (five spaces or press tab once) from the left margin.
- Create a header that numbers all pages consecutively in the upper right-hand corner, one-half inch from the top and flush with the right margin. (Note: Your instructor may ask that you omit the number on your first page. Always follow your instructor's guidelines.)
- Use either italics or underlining throughout your essay for the titles of longer works and, only when absolutely necessary, providing emphasis.
- If you have any endnotes, include them on a separate page before your Works Cited page.

### *Formatting the First Page of Your Paper*

- Do not make a title page for your paper unless specifically requested.
- In the upper left-hand corner of the first page, list your name, your instructor's name, the course, and the date. Again, be sure to use double-spaced text.
- Double space again and center the title. Don't underline your title or put it in quotation marks; write the title in Title Case, not in all capital letters.
- Use quotation marks and underlining or italics when referring to other works in your title, just as you would in your text, e.g.,
  - Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas as Morality Play
  - Human Weariness in "After Apple Picking"
- Double space between the title and the first line of the text.
- Create a header in the upper right-hand corner that includes your last name, followed by a space with a page number; number all pages consecutively with Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, 4, etc.), one-half inch from the top and flush with the right margin. (Note: Your instructor or other readers may ask that you omit last name/page number header on your first page. Always follow their guidelines.)

Here is a sample first page of an essay in MLA style:

Smith 1

Pete Smith

Dr. B. Boilermaker

English 106

12 October 2008

Building a Dream: Reasons to Expand

Ross-Ade Stadium

During the 2000 football season, the Purdue Boilermakers won the Big Ten Conference Title, earned their first trip to the Rose Bowl in thirty-four years, and played every game in front of a sold-out crowd. Looking ahead . . .

A sample first page of an MLA-formatted paper.

**Cite the Purdue OWL in MLA:**

*Entire Website*

The Purdue OWL. 26 Aug. 2008. The Writing Lab and OWL at Purdue and Purdue University. 23 April 2008  
<<http://owl.english.purdue.edu>>.

*Individual Resources*

Purdue OWL. "MLA Formatting and Style Guide." The Online Writing Lab at Purdue. 10 May 2008. Purdue University Writing Lab. 12 May 2008 <<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/>>.

# In-Text Citations: The Basics

Guidelines for referring to the works of others in your text using MLA style is covered in chapter six of the [MLA Handbook](#) and in chapter seven of the [MLA Style Manual](#). Both books provide extensive examples, so it's a good idea to consult them if you want to become even more familiar with MLA guidelines or if you have a particular reference question.

## Basic In-Text Citation Rules

In MLA style, referring to the works of others in your text is done by using what's known as parenthetical citation. Immediately following a quotation from a source or a paraphrase of a source's ideas, you place the author's name followed by a space and the relevant page number(s).

Human beings have been described as "symbol-using animals" (Burke 3).

When a source has no known author, use a shortened title of the work instead of an author name. Place the title in quotation marks if it's a short work, or italicize or underline it if it's a longer work.

Your in-text citation will correspond with an entry in your Works Cited page, which, for the Burke citation above, will look something like this:

Burke, Kenneth. Language as Symbolic Action: Essays on Life, Literature, and Method. Berkeley: U of California P, 1966.

We'll learn how to make a Works Cited page in a bit, but right now it's important to know that parenthetical citations and Works Cited pages allow readers to know which sources you consulted in writing your essay, so that they can either verify your interpretation of the sources or use them in their own scholarly work.

## *Multiple Citations*

To cite multiple sources in the same parenthetical reference, separate the citations by a semi-colon:

...as has been discussed elsewhere (Burke 3; Dewey 21).

## When Citation is not Needed

Common sense and ethics should determine your need for documenting sources. You do not need to give sources for familiar proverbs, well-known quotations or common knowledge. Remember, this is a rhetorical choice, based on audience. If you're writing for an expert audience of a scholarly journal, they'll have different expectations of what constitutes common knowledge.



# Works Cited Page: Basic Format

According to MLA style, you must have a Works Cited page at the end of your research paper. Works Cited page preparation and formatting is covered in chapter 5 of the [MLA Handbook](#), and chapter 6 of the [MLA Style Manual](#). All entries in the Works Cited page must correspond to the works cited in your main text.

## Basic Rules

- Begin your Works Cited page on a separate page at the end of your research paper. It should have the same one-inch margins and last name, page number header as the rest of your paper.
- Label the page Works Cited (do not underline the words Works Cited or put them in quotation marks) and center the words Works Cited at the top of the page.
- Double space all citations, but do not skip spaces between entries.
- Indent the second and subsequent lines of citations five spaces so that you create a hanging indent.
- List page numbers of sources efficiently, when needed. If you refer to a journal article that appeared on pages 225 through 250, list the page numbers on your Works Cited page as 225-50.
- If you're citing an article or a publication that was originally issued in print form but that you retrieved from an online database, you should provide enough information so that the reader can locate the article either in its original print form or retrieve it from the online database (if they have access).

# Annotated Bibliographies

## Definitions

A **bibliography** is a list of sources (books, journals, websites, periodicals, etc.) one has used for researching a topic. Bibliographies are sometimes called "references" or "works cited" depending on the style format you are using. A bibliography usually just includes the bibliographic information (i.e., the author, title, publisher, etc.).

An **annotation** is a summary and/or evaluation.

Therefore, an **annotated bibliography** includes a summary and/or evaluation of each of the sources. Depending on your project or the assignment, your annotations may do one or more of the following:

- **Summarize:** Some annotations merely summarize the source. What are the main arguments? What is the point of this book or article? What topics are covered? If someone asked what this article/book is about, what would you say? The length of your annotations will determine how detailed your summary is.

For more help, see our handout on [paraphrasing](#) sources.

- **Assess:** After summarizing a source, it may be helpful to evaluate it. Is it a useful source? How does it compare with other sources in your bibliography? Is the information reliable? Is this source biased or objective? What is the goal of this source?

For more help, see our handouts on [evaluating resources](#).

- **Reflect:** Once you've summarized and assessed a source, you need to ask how it fits into your research. Was this source helpful to you? How does it help you shape your argument? How can you use this source in your research project? Has it changed how you think about your topic?

Your annotated bibliography may include some of these, all of these, or even others. If you're doing this for a class, you should get specific guidelines from your instructor.

## Why should I write an annotated bibliography?

**To learn about your topic:** Writing an annotated bibliography is excellent preparation for a research project. Just collecting sources for a bibliography is useful, but when you have to write annotations for each source, you're forced to read each source more carefully. You begin to read more critically instead of just collecting information. At the professional level, annotated bibliographies allow you to see what has been done in the literature and where your own research or scholarship can fit. To help you formulate a thesis: Every good research paper is an argument. The purpose of research is to state and support a thesis. So a very important part of research is developing a thesis that is debatable, interesting, and current. Writing an annotated bibliography can help you gain a good perspective on what is being said about your topic. By reading and responding to a variety of sources on a topic, you'll start to see what the issues are, what people are arguing about, and you'll then be able to develop your own point of view.

**To help other researchers:** Extensive and scholarly annotated bibliographies are sometimes published. They provide a comprehensive overview of everything important that has been and is being said about that topic. You may not ever get your annotated bibliography published, but as a researcher, you might want to look for one that has been published about your topic.

## Format

The format of an annotated bibliography can vary, so if you're doing one for a class, it's important to ask for specific guidelines.

**The bibliographic information:** Generally, though, the bibliographic information of the source (the title, author, publisher, date, etc.) is written in either MLA or APA format. For more help with formatting, see our [MLA handout](#) or for MLA 2009 go [here](#). For APA, go here: [APA handout](#).

**The annotations:** The annotations for each source are written in paragraph form. The lengths of the annotations can vary significantly from a couple of sentences to a couple of pages. The length will depend on the purpose. If you're just writing summaries of your sources, the annotations may not be very long. However, if you are writing an extensive analysis of each source, you'll need more space.

You can focus your annotations for your own needs. A few sentences of general summary followed by several sentences of how you can fit the work into your larger paper or project can serve you well when you go to draft.

## Annotated Bibliography Samples

### Overview

Below you will find sample annotations from annotated bibliographies, each with a different research project. Remember that the annotations you include in your own bibliography should reflect your research project and/or the guidelines of your assignment.

As mentioned elsewhere in this resource, depending on the purpose of your bibliography, some annotations may summarize, some may assess or evaluate a source, and some may reflect on the source's possible uses for the project at hand. Some annotations may address all three of these steps. Consider the purpose of your annotated bibliography and/or your instructor's directions when deciding how much information to include in your annotations.

Please keep in mind that all your text, including the write up beneath the citation, must be indented so that the author's last name is the only text that is flush left.

### *Sample MLA Annotation*

**Lamott, Anne. *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life*. New York: Anchor Books, 1995. Print.**

Lamott's book offers honest advice on the nature of a writing life, complete with its insecurities and failures. Taking a humorous approach to the realities of being a writer, the chapters in Lamott's book are wry and anecdotal and offer advice on everything from plot development to jealousy, from perfectionism to struggling with one's own internal critic. In the process, Lamott includes writing exercises designed to be both productive and fun.

Lamott offers sane advice for those struggling with the anxieties of writing, but her main project seems to be offering the reader a reality check regarding writing, publishing, and struggling with one's own imperfect humanity in the process. Rather than a practical handbook to producing and/or publishing, this text is indispensable because of its honest perspective, its down-to-earth humor, and its encouraging approach.

Chapters in this text could easily be included in the curriculum for a writing class. Several of the chapters in Part 1 address the writing process and would serve to generate discussion on students' own drafting and revising processes. Some of the writing exercises would also be appropriate for generating classroom writing exercises. Students should find Lamott's style both engaging and enjoyable.

In the sample annotation above, the writer includes three paragraphs: a summary, an evaluation of the text, and a reflection on its applicability to his/her own research, respectively.

# ABCD's of Timed Writing

**A**ttack the Prompt: Circle any word that is a command. Circle the verbs.

(1.5 Minutes)

Circle any commands.

**B**rainstorm possible answers: (3-5 minutes)

- Ideas come before thesis.
- FORMULATE A THESIS BEFORE YOU START WRITING.
- If you do this properly, your essay is practically written.

**C**reate an Outline (2-3 minutes)

Don't fall in love with your pre-write.

**AFTER YOU HAVE WRITTEN ESSAY**

**D**etect any errors.

**REREAD YOUR ESSAY**

# Mechanics Section

# **PARTS OF SPEECH**

**Noun**-WORD USED TO NAME PERSON, PLACE, THING, OR IDEA

**Pronoun**-WORD USED IN PLACE OF A NOUN OR MORE THAN ONE NOUN

**Adjective**-WORD USED TO MODIFY A NOUN OR PRONOUN

**Article**- GIVES SOME INFORMATION ABOUT A NOUN (A, AN, THE)

**Verb**- WORD THAT EXPRESSES ACTION OR OTHERWISE HELPS TO MAKE A STATEMENT

Linking Verbs-**express state or condition (to be verbs-*am, is, are, was etc*)**

***Appear, become, feel, grow, look, remain, seem, smell (YOU CAN***

***SUBSTITUTE SOME FORM OF SEEM TO LOCATE A LINKING VERB***

Helping Verbs/Verb Phrase- **a verb that is added to the main verb to create a verb phrase**

**Adverb**- WORD USED TO MODIFY A VERB, AN ADJECTIVE, OR ANOTHER ADVERB

**Preposition**- WORD USED TO SHOW THE RELATION OF A NOUN OR PRONOUN TO SOME OTHER WORD IN THE SENTENCE

**Conjunction**- WORD THAT JOINS WORDS OR GROUPS OF WORDS

Coordinating-

Correlative-

Subordinating-

**Interjection**- A WORD THAT EXPRESSES EMOTION AND HAS NOT GRAMMATICAL RELATION TO OTHER WORDS IN THE SENTENCE

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# **PARTS OF A SENTENCE**

**1.SUBJECT**-the part about which something is said

a. SIMPLE SUBJECT-the principal word or group of words in the subject

b. COMPOUND SUBJECT- consists of two or more subjects that are joined by a conjunction

**2.PREDICATE**-the part that says something about the subject

a. SIMPLE PREDICATE or Verb- principle word or group or words in the predicate is called the simple predicate

b. COMPOUND PREDICATE- two or more verbs combined with a conjunction

**3. COMPLEMENTS**-words that complete the meaning of the sentence (one word or more in the predicate)

a. DIRECT OBJECT- **receives the action of the verb**-what or whom after verb

b. INDIRECT OBJECT- **precedes the direct object**-to whom or for whom the action was of verb was done

c. OBJECTIVE COMPLIMENT- gives more information about the object

**4. PREDICATE NOMINATIVES (NOUN)**- a noun or pronoun complement that refers to the same person or thing as the subject of the verb. **IT FOLLOWS A LINKING VERB.**

**5. PREDICATE ADJECTIVE**-an adjective complement that modifies the subject of the verb. **IT FOLLOWS A LINKING VERB.**

**PHRASES**-group of words not containing a verb and its subject-it is used as a single part of speech

**1. PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES**-group of words beginning with a preposition and ending with a noun or pronoun

-ADJECTIVE PHRASE-modifies noun or pronoun

-ADVERB PHRASE-modifies a verb or another adverb

**2. PARTICIPLE** -verb form that can be used as an adjective

-PARTICIPIAL PHRASE- contains a participle and any compliments or modifiers

**3. GERUND**- verb ending in "ing" that is used as a noun

-GERUND PHRASE- gerund plus any complements

**4. INFINITIVES**- verb form, usually preceded by "to" that can be used as a noun or modifier

-INFINITIVE PHRASES

**5. APPOSITIVES**- noun or pronoun-often with modifiers-set beside another noun or pronoun to explain or identify it.

-APPOSITIVE PHRASES-phrase which explains noun or pronoun

## **CLAUSES-A group of words containing a subject and predicate and is used as part of a sentence.**

**1. INDEPENDENT CLAUSE**-Clause that can stand alone- expresses a complete thought

**2. SUBORDINATE CLAUSE (DEPENDENT CLAUSE)**- do not express a complete thought and cannot stand alone

a. **ADJECTIVE CLAUSE**- subordinate clause that modifies a noun or a pronoun  
I. Relative Pronoun-who, whom, whose, which, that, where, when

b. **NOUN CLAUSE**- subordinate clause used as a noun (can be the subject of the sentence)

c. **ADVERB CLAUSE**- clause that modifies a verb

## **SENTENCES-STRUCTURE OF A SENTENCE**

**1.SIMPLE SENTENCE**- 1 independent clause

**2. COMPOUND SENTENCE**- 2 or more independent clauses (2 subjects and 2 verbs)

**3. COMPLEX SENTENCE**- 1 independent clause and at least 1 subordinate clause

**4. COMPOUND-COMPLEX SENTENCE**- 2 independent clauses and at least 1 subordinate clause



## PREPOSITIONS

ABOUT	BETWEEN	OVER
ABOVE	BEYOND	PAST
ACROSS	BUT (EXCEPT)	SINCE*
AFTER*	BY	THROUGH
AGAINST	CONCERNING	THROUGHOUT
ALONG	DOWN	TO
AMID	DURING	TOWARD
AMONG	EXCEPT	UNDER
AROUND	FOR	UNDERNEATH
AT	FROM	UNTIL*
BEFORE*	IN	UNTO
BEHIND	INTO	UP
BELOW	LIKE	UPON
BENEATH	OF	WITH
BESIDE	OFF	WITHIN
BESIDES	ON	WITHOUT

\*Also SubordinateConjunctions.

The plane flew \_\_\_\_\_ the clouds.

### COMMON CONJUNCTIVE ADVERBS

Coordinating Conjunctions-	Correlative Conjunctions-	COMMON Subordinating Conjunctions		
<b>FANBOYS</b> For And Nor But Or Yet So	either...or not only...but (also) neither...nor whether...or both...and	AFTER* ALTHOUGH AS AS MUCH AS BECAUSE BEFORE* HOW ** *some words may be used as prepositions	IF IN ORDER THAT PROVIDED SINCE* THAN THAT THOUGH **can be used as adverbs	UNLESS UNTIL* WHEN** WHERE** WHILE *** <i>That</i> is often a relative pronoun

### COMMON CONJUNCTIVE ADVERBS

accordingly, again, also, besides consequently, finally, furthermore, however, indeed, moreover, nevertheless, otherwise, then, therefore, thus

## PRONOUN LIST

Doing it yourself	Done to you	Belonging to
I	me	mine
you	you	your
he	him	his
she	her	hers
it	it	its
we	us	our / ours
you	you	yours
they	them	their / theirs

# Transition Words & Phrases

## **Sequence:**

again, also, and, and then, besides, finally, first...second...third, furthermore, last, moreover, next, still, too

## **Time:**

after a bit, after a few days, after a while, afterward, as long as, as soon as, at last, at length, at that time, before, earlier, immediately, in the meantime, in the past, lately, later, meanwhile, now, presently, shortly, simultaneously, since, so far, soon, then, thereafter, until, when

## **Comparison:**

again, also, in the same way, likewise, once more, similarly

## **Contrast:**

although, but, despite, even though, however, in contrast, in spite of, instead, nevertheless, nonetheless, notwithstanding, on the contrary, on the one hand...on the other hand, regardless, still, though, yet

## **Examples:**

after all, even, for example, for instance, indeed, in fact, of course, specifically, such as, the following example, to illustrate

## **Cause and Effect:**

accordingly, as a result, because, consequently, for this purpose, hence, so, then, therefore, thereupon, thus, to this end

## **Place:**

above, adjacent to, below, beyond, closer to, elsewhere, far, farther on, here, near, nearby, opposite to, there, to the left, to the right

## **Concession:**

although it is true that, granted that, I admit that, it may appear that, naturally, of course

## **Summary, Repetition, or Conclusion:**

as a result, as has been noted, as I have said, as we have seen, as mentioned earlier, in any event, in conclusion, in other words, in short, on the whole, therefore, to summarize

## **Run-ons /Comma Splices / Fused Sentences & Fragments**

Run-ons, comma splices, and fused sentences are all names given to compound sentences that are not punctuated correctly. The best way to avoid such errors is to punctuate compound sentences correctly by using one or the other of these rules.

1. Join the two independent clauses with one of the coordinating conjunctions (and, but, for, or, nor, so, yet), and use a comma before the connecting word.

\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

He enjoys walking through the country, and he often goes backpacking on his vacations.

2. When you do not have a connecting word (or when you use a connecting word other than and, but, for, or nor, so, or yet between the two independent clauses) use a semicolon (;).

\_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_\_.

He often watched TV when there were only reruns; she preferred to read instead.

or

\_\_\_\_\_; however, \_\_\_\_\_.

He often watched TV when there were only reruns; however, she preferred to read instead.

So, run-ons and fused sentences are terms describing two independent clauses which are joined together with no connecting word or punctuation to separate the clauses.

**Incorrect:** They weren't dangerous criminals they were detectives in disguise.

**Correct:** They weren't dangerous criminals; they were detectives in disguise.

**Incorrect:** I didn't know which job I wanted I was too confused to decide.

**Correct:** I didn't know which job I wanted, and I was too confused to decide.

## **Sentence Fragments**

Fragments are incomplete sentences. Usually, fragments are pieces of sentences that have become disconnected from the main clause. One of the easiest ways to correct them is to remove the period between the fragment and the main clause. Other kinds of punctuation may be needed for the newly combined sentence.

Below are some examples with the fragments shown in **bold**. Punctuation and/or words added to make corrections are underlined. Notice that the fragment is frequently a dependent clause or long phrase that follows the main clause.

### **PROBLEM=DEPENDENT CLAUSE OR PHRASE STANDING ALONE**

**Fragment:** Purdue offers many majors in engineering. ***Such as electrical, chemical, and industrial engineering.***

**Possible Revision:** Purdue offers many majors in engineering, such as electrical, chemical, and industrial engineering.

**Fragment:** Coach Dietz exemplified this behavior by walking off the field in the middle of a game. ***Leaving her team at a time when we needed her.***

**Possible Revision:** Coach Dietz exemplified this behavior by walking off the field in the middle of a game, leaving her team at a time when we needed her.

**Fragment:** I need to find a new roommate. ***Because the one I have now isn't working out too well.***

**Possible Revision:** I need to find a new roommate because the one I have now isn't working out too well.

**Fragment:** The current city policy on housing is incomplete as it stands. ***Which is why we believe the proposed amendments should be passed.***

**Possible Revision:** Because the current city policy on housing is incomplete as it stands, we believe the proposed amendments should be passed.

You may have noticed that newspaper and magazine journalists often use a dependent clause as a separate sentence when it follows clearly from the preceding main clause, as in the last example above. This is a conventional **journalistic** practice, often used for emphasis. For **academic** writing and other more formal writing situations, however, you should avoid such journalistic fragment sentences.

Some fragments are not clearly pieces of sentences that have been left unattached to the main clause; they are written as main clauses but lack a subject or main verb.

### **PROBLEM=NO MAIN VERB**

**Fragment:** A story with deep thoughts and emotions.

**Possible Revisions:**

*Direct Object:* **She told** a story with deep thoughts and emotions.

*Appositive:* **Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper,"** a story with deep thoughts and emotions, **has impressed critics for decades.**

**Fragment: Toys of all kinds thrown everywhere.**

**Possible Revisions:**

*Complete verb:* Toys of all kinds **were** thrown everywhere.

*Direct object:* **They found** toys of all kinds thrown everywhere.

**Fragment: A record of accomplishment beginning when you were first hired.**

**Possible Revisions:**

*Direct object:* **I've noticed** a record of accomplishment beginning when you were first hired

*Main verb:* A record of accomplishment **began** when you were first hired.

### **PROBLEM=NO SUBJECT**

**Fragment: With the ultimate effect of all advertising is to sell the product.**

**Possible Revisions:**

*Remove preposition:* **The** ultimate effect of all advertising is to sell the product.

**Fragment: By paying too much attention to polls can make a political leader unwilling to propose innovative policies.**

**Possible Revisions:**

*Remove preposition:* **Paying** too much attention to polls can make a political leader unwilling to propose innovative policies.

**Fragment: For doing freelance work for a competitor got Phil fired.**

**Possible Revisions:**

*Remove preposition:* **Doing** freelance work for a competitor got Phil fired.

*Rearrange:* **Phil got fired** for doing freelance work for a competitor.

These last three examples of fragments with no subjects are also known as mixed constructions, that is, sentences constructed out of mixed parts. They start one way (often with a long prepositional phrase) but end with a regular predicate. Usually the object of the preposition (often a gerund, as in the last two examples) is intended as the subject of the sentence, so removing the preposition at the beginning is usually the easiest way to edit such errors.

# COMMAS

The comma is a valuable, useful punctuation device because it separates the structural elements of sentences into manageable segments. The rules provided here are those found in traditional handbooks; however, in certain rhetorical contexts and for specific purposes, these rules may be broken.

1. Use commas to separate independent clauses when they are joined by any of these seven coordinating conjunctions: *and, but, for, or, nor, so, yet*.

The game was over, but the crowd refused to leave.

The student explained her question, yet the instructor still didn't seem to understand.

Yesterday was her brother's birthday, so she took him out to dinner.

2. Use commas after introductory a) clauses, b) phrases, or c) words that come before the main clause.

a. Common starter words for introductory clauses that should be followed by a comma include *after, although, as, because, if, since, when, while*.

While I was eating, the cat scratched at the door.

Because her alarm clock was broken, she was late for class.

If you are ill, you ought to see a doctor.

When the snow stops falling, we'll shovel the driveway.

However, don't put a comma after the main clause when a dependent (subordinate) clause follows it (except for cases of extreme contrast).

1. ~~She was late for class, because her alarm clock was broken.~~ (incorrect)

2. ~~The cat scratched at the door, while I was eating.~~ (incorrect)

3. She was still quite upset, although she had won the Oscar. (correct: extreme contrast)

b. Common introductory phrases that should be followed by a comma include participial and infinitive phrases, absolute phrases, nonessential appositive phrases, and long prepositional phrases (over four words).

Having finished the test, he left the room.

To get a seat, you'd better come early.

After the test but before lunch, I went jogging.

The sun radiating intense heat, we sought shelter in the cafe.

c. Common introductory words that should be followed by a comma include *yes, however, well*.

Well, perhaps he meant no harm.

Yes, the package should arrive tomorrow morning.

However, you may not be satisfied with the results.

3. Use a pair of commas in the middle of a sentence to set off clauses, phrases, and words that are not essential to the meaning of the sentence. Use one comma before to indicate the beginning of the pause and one at the end to indicate the end of the pause.

Here are some clues to help you decide whether the sentence element is essential:

- If you leave out the clause, phrase, or word, does the sentence still make sense?
- Does the clause, phrase, or word interrupt the flow of words in the original sentence?
- If you move the element to a different position in the sentence, does the sentence still make sense?

If you answer "yes" to one or more of these questions, then the element in question is nonessential and should be set off with commas. Here are some example sentences with nonessential elements:

**Clause:** That Tuesday, *which happens to be my birthday*, is the only day when I am available to meet.

**Phrase:** This restaurant has an exciting atmosphere. The food, *on the other hand*, is rather bland.

**Word:** I appreciate your hard work. In this case, *however*, you seem to have over-exerted yourself.

**4. Do not use commas to set off essential elements of the sentence, such as clauses beginning with *that* (relative clauses). *That* clauses after nouns are always essential. *That* clauses following a verb expressing mental action are always essential.**

*That* clauses after nouns:

The book *that I borrowed from you* is excellent.

The apples *that fell out of the basket* are bruised.

*That* clauses following a verb expressing mental action:

She believes *that she will be able to earn an A*.

He is dreaming *that he can fly*.

I contend *that it was wrong to mislead her*.

They wished *that warm weather would finally arrive*.

Examples of other **essential** elements (no commas):

Students *who cheat* only harm themselves.

The baby *wearing a yellow jumpsuit* is my niece.

The candidate *who had the least money* lost the election.

Examples of **nonessential** elements (set off by commas):

Fred, *who often cheats*, is just harming himself.

My niece, *wearing a yellow jumpsuit*, is playing in the living room.

The Green party candidate, *who had the least money*, lost the election.

Apples, *which are my favorite fruit*, are the main ingredient in this recipe.

Tom, *the captain of the team*, was injured in the game.

She was, *however*, too tired to make the trip.

Two hundred dollars, *I think*, is sufficient.

**5. Use commas to separate three or more words, phrases, or clauses written in a series.**

The Constitution establishes the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government.

The candidate promised to lower taxes, protect the environment, reduce crime, and end unemployment.

The prosecutor argued that the defendant, who was at the scene of the crime, who had a strong revenge motive, and who had access to the murder weapon, was guilty of homicide.

**6. Use commas to separate two or more coordinate adjectives that describe the same noun. Be sure never to add an extra comma between the final adjective and the noun itself or to use commas with non-coordinate adjectives.**

Coordinate adjectives are adjectives with equal ("co"-ordinate) status in describing the noun; neither adjective is subordinate to the other. You can decide if two adjectives in a row are coordinate by asking the following questions:

- Does the sentence make sense if the adjectives are written in reverse order?
- Does the sentence make sense if the adjectives are written with *and* between them?



If you answer yes to these questions, then the adjectives are coordinate and should be separated by a comma. Here are some examples of coordinate and non-coordinate adjectives:

He was a difficult, stubborn child. (coordinate)

They lived in a white frame house. (non-coordinate)

She often wore a gray wool shawl. (non-coordinate)

Your cousin has an easy, happy smile. (coordinate) The 1) relentless, 2) powerful 3) summer sun beat down on them. (1-2 are coordinate; 2-3 are non-coordinate.)

**7. Use a comma near the end of a sentence to separate contrasted coordinate elements or to indicate a distinct pause or shift.**

He was merely ignorant, not stupid.

The chimpanzee seemed reflective, almost human.

You're one of the senator's close friends, aren't you?

The speaker seemed innocent, even gullible.

**8. Use commas to set off phrases at the end of the sentence that refer back to the beginning or middle of the sentence. Such phrases are free modifiers that can be placed anywhere in the sentence without causing confusion. (If the placement of the modifier causes confusion, then it is not "free" and must remain "bound" to the word it modifies.)**

1. Nancy waved enthusiastically at the docking ship, laughing joyously. (correct)

2a. ~~Lisa waved at Nancy, laughing joyously.~~ (incorrect: Who is laughing, Lisa or Nancy?)

2b. Laughing joyously, Lisa waved at Nancy. (correct)

2c. Lisa waved at Nancy, who was laughing joyously. (correct)

**9. Use commas to set off all geographical names, items in dates (except the month and day), addresses (except the street number and name), and titles in names.**

Birmingham, Alabama, gets its name from Birmingham, England.

July 22, 1959, was a momentous day in his life.

Who lives at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, DC?

Rachel B. Lake, MD, will be the principal speaker.

(When you use just the month and the year, no comma is necessary after the month or year: "The average temperatures for July 1998 are the highest on record for that month.")

**10. Use a comma to shift between the main discourse and a quotation.**

John said without emotion, "I'll see you tomorrow."

"I was able," she answered, "to complete the assignment."

In 1848, Marx wrote, "Workers of the world, unite!"

11. Use commas wherever necessary to prevent possible confusion or misreading.

To George, Harrison had been a sort of idol.

## **Comma Abuse**

Commas in the wrong places can break a sentence into illogical segments or confuse readers with unnecessary and unexpected pauses.

12. Don't use a comma to separate the subject from the verb.

~~An eighteen-year old in California, is now considered an adult.~~ (incorrect)

~~The most important attribute of a ball player, is quick reflex actions.~~ (incorrect)

13. Don't put a comma between the two verbs or verb phrases in a compound predicate.

~~We laid out our music and snacks, and began to study.~~ (incorrect)

~~I turned the corner, and ran smack into a patrol car.~~ (incorrect)

14. Don't put a comma between the two nouns, noun phrases, or noun clauses in a compound subject or compound object.

~~The music teacher from your high school, and the football coach from mine are married.~~ (incorrect: compound subject)

~~Jeff told me that the job was still available, and that the manager wanted to interview me.~~  
(incorrect: compound object)

15. Don't put a comma after the main clause when a dependent (subordinate) clause follows it (except for cases of extreme contrast).

1. ~~She was late for class, because her alarm clock was broken.~~ (incorrect)

2. ~~The cat scratched at the door, while I was eating.~~ (incorrect)

3. She was still quite upset, although she had won the Oscar. (correct: extreme contrast)

# The Apostrophe

The apostrophe has three uses:

1. to form possessives of nouns
2. to show the omission of letters
3. to indicate certain plurals of lowercase letters

## *Forming Possessives of Nouns*

To see if you need to make a possessive, turn the phrase around and make it an "of the..." phrase. For example:

the boy's hat = the hat of the boy  
three days' journey = journey of three days

If the noun after "of" is a building, an object, or a piece of furniture, then **no** apostrophe is needed!

room of the hotel = hotel room  
door of the car = car door  
leg of the table = table leg

Once you've determined whether you need to make a possessive, follow these rules to create one.

- **add 's to the singular form of the word (even if it ends in -s):**

the owner's car  
James's hat (James' hat is also acceptable. For plural, proper nouns that are possessive, use an apostrophe after the 's':  
"The Eggles' presentation was good." The Eggles are a husband and wife consultant team.)

- **add 's to the plural forms that do not end in -s:**

the children's game  
the geese's honking

- **add ' to the end of plural nouns that end in -s:**

houses' roofs  
three friends' letters

- **add 's to the end of compound words:**

my brother-in-law's money

- **add 's to the last noun to show joint possession of an object:**

Todd and Anne's apartment

## *Showing omission of letters*

Apostrophes are used in contractions. A contraction is a word (or set of numbers) in which one or more letters (or numbers) have been omitted. The apostrophe shows this omission. Contractions are common in speaking and in informal writing. To use an apostrophe to create a contraction, place an apostrophe where the omitted letter(s) would go. Here are some examples: **don't = do not** **he'll = he will** **who's = who is** **shouldn't = should not** **could've = could have** (**NOT "could of"!**) **'60 = 1960**

## ***Forming plurals of lowercase letters***

Apostrophes are used to form plurals of letters that appear in lowercase; here the rule appears to be more typographical than grammatical, e.g. "three ps" versus "three p's." To form the plural of a lowercase letter, place '**s**' after the letter. There is no need for apostrophes indicating a plural on capitalized letters, numbers, and symbols (though keep in mind that some editors, teachers, and professors still prefer them). Here are some examples:

**p's and q's** = a phrase taken from the early days of the printing press when letters were set in presses backwards so they would appear on the printed page correctly. The expression was used commonly to mean, "Be careful, don't make a mistake." Today, the term also indicates maintaining politeness, possibly from "mind your pleases and thank-yous."

Nita's mother constantly stressed minding one's p's and q's.

**three Macintosh G4s = three of the Macintosh model G4**

There are two G4s currently used in the writing classroom.

**many & s = many ampersands**

That printed page has too many & s on it.

**the 1960s = the years in decade from 1960 to 1969**

The 1960s were a time of great social unrest.

## ***Don't use apostrophes for possessive pronouns or for noun plurals.***

Apostrophes should not be used with possessive pronouns because possessive pronouns already show possession — they don't need an apostrophe. His, her, its, my, yours, ours are all possessive pronouns. Here are some examples:

**wrong:** his' book

**correct:** his book

**wrong:** The group made it's decision.

**correct:** The group made its decision.

(Note: Its and it's are not the same thing. It's is a contraction for "it is" and its is a possessive pronoun meaning "belonging to it." It's raining out= it is raining out. A simple way to remember this rule is the fact that you don't use an apostrophe for the possessive his or hers, so don't do it with its!)

**wrong:** a friend of yours'

**correct:** a friend of yours

**wrong:** She waited for three hours' to get her ticket.

**correct:** She waited for three hours to get her ticket.

## ***Proofreading for apostrophes***

A good time to proofread is when you have finished writing the paper. Try the following strategies to proofread for apostrophes:

- If you tend to leave out apostrophes, check every word that ends in -s or -es to see if it needs an apostrophe.
- If you put in too many apostrophes, check every apostrophe to see if you can justify it with a rule for using apostrophes.

# Semicolon, Colon, Parenthesis, Dash, and Italics

Punctuation marks are signals to your readers. In speaking, we can pause, stop, or change our tone of voice. In writing, we use the following marks of punctuation to emphasize and clarify what we mean.

**Semicolon ;** In addition to using a semicolon to join related independent clauses in compound sentences, you can use a semicolon to separate items in a series if the elements of the series already include commas.

Members of the band include Harold Rostein, clarinetist; Tony Aluppo, tuba player; and Lee Jefferson, trumpeter.

**Colon :** Use a colon . . .

in the following situations:	for example:
after a complete statement in order to introduce one or more directly related ideas, such as a series of directions, a list, or a quotation or other comment illustrating or explaining the statement. Colons always introduce a complete sentence or a list.	The daily newspaper contains four sections: news, sports, entertainment, and classified ads.  The strategies of corporatist industrial unionism have proven ineffective: compromises and concessions have left labor in a weakened position in the new "flexible" economy.
in a business letter greeting.	Dear Ms. Winstead:

**Parentheses ()** Parentheses are occasionally and sparingly used for extra, nonessential material included in a sentence. For example, dates, sources, or ideas that are subordinate or tangential to the rest of the sentence are set apart in parentheses. Parentheses always appear in pairs.

Before arriving at the station, the old train (someone said it was a relic of frontier days) caught fire.

**Dash --** Use a dash (should be typed or handwritten with two hyphens connected with no spaces)

in the following situations:	for example:
to emphasize a point or to set off an explanatory comment; but don't overuse dashes, or they will lose their impact.	To some of you, my proposals may seem radical--even revolutionary.  In terms of public legitimation--that is, in terms of garnering support from state legislators, parents, donors, and university administrators--English departments are primarily places where advanced literacy is taught.
To signal an abrupt break in thought	He might—if I have anything to do with it—change his mind.
for an <u>appositive</u> phrase that already includes commas.	The boys--Jim, John, and Jeff--left the party early.

As you can see, dashes function in some ways like parentheses (used in pairs to set off a comment within a larger sentence) and in some ways like colons (used to introduce material illustrating or emphasizing the immediately preceding statement). But comments set off with a pair of dashes appear less subordinate to the main sentence than do comments in parentheses. And material introduced after a single dash may be more emphatic and may serve a greater variety of rhetorical purposes than material introduced with a colon.

## Quotation Marks " "

Use quotation marks . . .

in the following situations:	for example:
to enclose <u>direct quotations</u> . Note that commas and periods go inside the closing quotation mark in conventional American usage; colons and semicolons go outside; and placement of question and exclamation marks depends on the situation	He asked, "Will you be there?" "Yes," I answered, "I'll look for you in the foyer."
to indicate words used ironically, with reservations, or in some unusual way; but don't overuse quotation marks in this sense, or they will lose their impact.	History is stained with blood spilled in the name of "civilization."

## Underlining and *Italics*

Underlining and italics are not really punctuation, but they are significant textual effects used conventionally in a variety of situations. Before computerized word-processing was widely available, writers would underline certain terms in handwritten or manually typed pages, and the underlining would be replaced by italics in the published version. Since word processing today allows many options for font faces and textual effects, it is generally recommended that you choose either underlining or italics and use it consistently throughout a given document as needed. Because academic papers are manuscripts and not final publications and because italics are not always easily recognized with some fonts, many instructors prefer underlining over italics for course papers. Whichever you choose, italics or underlining should be used . . .

in the following situations:	for example:
to indicate titles of complete or major works such as magazines, books, newspapers, academic journals, films, television programs, long poems, plays of three or more acts	Faulkner's last novel was <i>The Reivers</i> .  <u>The Simpsons</u> offers hilarious parodies of American culture and family life.
foreign words that are not commonly used in English	Wearing blue jeans is <i>de rigueur</i> for most college students.
words or phrases that you wish to emphasize	The very <i>founding principles</i> of our nation are at stake!

# QUOTE INTEGRATION

## Summarize, Paraphrase, or Quote? That is the question.

A **summary** is a relatively brief, objective account, in your own words, of the main ideas in a source passage.

**Summarize to:**

- *To condense the material.* You may have to *condense* or to reduce the source material to draw out the points that relate to your paper.
- *To omit extras from the material.* You may have to *omit* extra information from the source material to focus on the author's main points.
- *To simplify the material.* You may have to *simplify* the most important complex arguments, sentences, or vocabulary in the source material.

A **paraphrase** is a restatement, in your own words, of a passage of text. Its structure reflects the structure of the source passage. Paraphrases are sometimes the same length as the source passage, sometimes shorter. In certain cases-- particularly if the source passage is difficult to read--the paraphrase may be even longer than the original. . . . Keep in mind that only an occasional word (but not whole phrases) from the original source appears in the paraphrase, and that a paraphrase's sentence structure does not reflect that of the source.

**Paraphrase to:**

- *To change the organization of ideas for emphasis.* You may have to change the organization of ideas in source material so that you can emphasize the points that are most related to your paper. You should remember to be faithful to the meaning of the source.
- *To simplify the material.* You may have to *simplify* complex arguments, sentences, or vocabulary.
- *To clarify the material.* You may have to *clarify* technical passages or specialized information into language that is appropriate for your audience.

A **quotation** uses the exact words of the original.

Use **Quotes** to:

1. *Accuracy:* You are unable to paraphrase or summarize the source material without changing the author's intent.
2. *Authority:* You may want to use a quote to lend expert authority for your assertion or to provide source material for analysis.
3. *Conciseness:* Your attempts to paraphrase or summarize are awkward or much longer than the source material.
4. *Unforgettable language:* You believe that the words of the author are memorable or remarkable because of their effectiveness or historical flavor. Additionally, the author may have used a unique phrase or sentence, and you want to comment on words or phrases themselves.

Bell, Jim. Summarize, Paraphrase, or Quote. 2000. Learning Skills Center, UNBC. 12 Apr. 2004  
<<http://www.unbc.ca/lsc/writing/Summarize,Paraphrase,orQuote.pdf>>.

Use and Integrate Sources: When to Quote, Paraphrase, and Summarize. Academic Center, University of Houston Victoria. 12 Apr. 2004  
<<http://www.uhv.edu/ac/research/write/quotepdf.pdf>>.

## Quote Integration-PUNCTUATION RULES

- **Do not leave your quotes "naked." Make sure they are clearly connected to the argument you are trying to make.**

**NO:** After June's humiliating piano recital, Waverly adds insult to injury. "You aren't a genius like me" (Tan 151).

**YES:** After June's humiliating piano recital, Waverly adds insult to injury by declaring, "You aren't a genius like me" (Tan 151).

- **Use brackets ([ ]) and ellipses (. . .)** to change verbs or other parts of the original quotes when necessary. This technique is especially useful for maintaining present tense in your paper. P.S. Know the difference between using (. . .) and (. . . .).

**NO:** Dwight is a bully who takes out his anger and insecurity on those who are weaker than he is. "This made him furious; on the way back to the car he would kill anything he saw. He killed chipmunks, squirrels, blue jays, and robins"(Wolff 171).

**YES:** Dwight is a bully who takes out his anger and insecurity on those who are weaker than he is. While hunting, he boosts his ego by "kill[ing] anything he [sees]. He kill[s] chipmunks, squirrels, blue jays, and robins" (Wolff 171).

- **If you're quoting poetry, make sure you use a slash (/) to indicate where each line ends.** That way, you are staying true to the text, and the reader will know that you are quoting poetry, instead of prose.

**Ex.:** When Duncan asks for an update on the battle, the captain describes the struggling armies as "two spent swimmers that do cling together/And choke their art" (*Macbeth* 1.2.10-11).

- **At the end of the quote, use the QUO-PAR-PUNC Rule:** Quotation marks- Parentheses-Punctuation (Special thanks to Sally Wallace of the Brentwood School for teaching me this rule!). Within the parentheses, you usually write the author's last name and the page number. If you are only quoting from one book throughout your paper, then you only have to put the page number. If you are quoting Shakespeare, then you need to cite the play, act, scene, and line numbers.

**NO:** When Waverly accuses her mother of showing off, Lindo's eyes turn "into dangerous black slits. She ha[s] no words for [Waverly], just sharp silence. (Tan 102)"

**YES:** When Waverly accuses her mother of showing off, Lindo's eyes turn "into dangerous black slits. She ha[s] no words for [Waverly], just sharp silence" (Tan 102).

**Note:** If a quote ends with a question mark or exclamation point, then put that punctuation before the quotation marks, to make sure the intended emotion is retained.

**Ex.:** During their phone conversation, Toby's father tries to win Toby over by saying, "I've made some mistakes . . . . We all have. But that's behind us. Right, Tober?" (211).



- If there is a quote within the quote you are using, then use single quotation marks to set off the inner quote.

**Ex.:** When Lena shows Ying-Ying around her new house, Ying-Ying complains that "the slant of the floor makes her feel as if she is 'running down'" (Tan 163).

- When your quote is longer than four lines, "block it off" from the rest of your paragraph. In this case, you don't use quotation marks (except for lines of dialogue), and the QUO-PAR-PUNC rule does not apply. (Note: Avoid using very long quotes-- they sometimes bog the paper down.)

**Ex.:** Lady Macbeth calls on supernatural powers so that she can assist in Duncan's murder:

. . . Come you spirits  
That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,  
And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full  
Of direst cruelty. Make thick my blood.  
Stop up th'access and passage to remorse,  
That no compunctious visitings of nature  
Shake my fell purpose . . . . (*Macbeth* 1.5.47-53)

Lady Macbeth thus reveals the all-consuming nature of her ambition: she is even willing to give up her identity as a woman to get what she wants. (And the paper goes on from there.)

**THREE “T’s” WHEN INTEGRATING QUOTES:** Introduce, Integrate, and Interpret. You start by setting up (introducing) the quote (In the early part of the novel, Joe says...); next, you integrate the quote by setting it off using a colon or a comma (see below for examples); finally, you interpret the quote (When Joe says this, what he is really indicating is...). NEVER LET A QUOTE “SPEAK FOR ITSELF.” Notice, “interpret” does not necessarily mean “restate” or “repeat”; “interpret” means to explain the significance of the quote in regards to your paper. Also notice that you want to avoid using phrases like “This quotes shows” or “In the previous quote.” **The exception to the three “T” rule: a hook does not need to be introduced, and a final thought does not need to be interpreted.**

# Integrating Quotations into Sentences-STYLE

**There are at least four ways to integrate quotations.**

## **1. Introduce the quotation with a complete sentence and a colon.**

Example: In "Where I Lived, and What I Lived For," Thoreau states directly his purpose for going into the woods: "I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived."

Example: Thoreau ends his essay with a metaphor: "Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in."

This is an easy rule to remember: if you use a complete sentence to introduce a quotation, you need a colon after the sentence. Be careful not to confuse a colon (:) with a semicolon (;). Using a comma in this situation will most likely create a comma splice, one of the serious sentence-boundary errors.

## **2. Use an introductory or explanatory phrase, but not a complete sentence, separated from the quotation with a comma.**

Example: In "Where I Lived, and What I Lived For," Thoreau states directly his purpose for going into the woods when he says, "I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived."

Example: Thoreau suggests the consequences of making ourselves slaves to progress when he says, "We do not ride on the railroad; it rides upon us."

Example: According to Thoreau, "We do not ride on the railroad; it rides upon us."

You should use a comma to separate your own words from the quotation when your introductory or explanatory phrase ends with a verb such as "says," "said," "thinks," "believes," "pondered," "recalls," "questions," and "asks" (and many more). You should also use a comma when you introduce a quotation with a phrase such as "According to Thoreau."

## **3. Make the quotation a part of your own sentence without any punctuation between your own words and the words you are quoting.**

Example: In "Where I Lived, and What I Lived For," Thoreau states directly his purpose for going into the woods when he says that "I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived."

Example: Thoreau suggests the consequences of making ourselves slaves to progress when he says that "We do not ride on the railroad; it rides upon us."

Example: Thoreau argues that "shams and delusions are esteemed for soundest truths, while reality is fabulous."

Example: According to Thoreau, people are too often "thrown off the track by every nutshell and mosquito's wing that falls on the rails."

Notice that the word "that" is used in three of the examples above, and when it is used as it is in the examples, "that" replaces the comma which would be necessary without "that" in the sentence. You usually have a choice, then, when you begin a sentence with a phrase such as "Thoreau says." You either can add a comma after "says" (Thoreau says, "quotation") or you can add the word "that" with no comma (Thoreau says that "quotation.")

#### 4. Use short quotations--only a few words--as part of your own sentence.

Example: In "Where I Lived, and What I Lived For," Thoreau states that his retreat to the woods around Walden Pond was motivated by his desire "to live deliberately" and to face only "the essential facts of life."

Example: Thoreau argues that people blindly accept "shams and delusions" as the "soundest truths," while regarding reality as "fabulous."

Example: Although Thoreau "drink[s] at" the stream of Time, he can "detect how shallow it is."

When you integrate quotations in this way, you do not use any special punctuation. Instead, you should punctuate the sentence just as you would if all of the words were your own. No punctuation is needed in the sentences above in part because the sentences do not follow the pattern explained under number 1 and 2 above: there is not a complete sentence in front of the quotations, and a word such as "says," "said," or "asks" does not appear directly in front of the quoted words.

All of the methods above for integrating quotations are correct, but you should avoid relying too much on just one method. You should instead use a variety of methods.

#### Notice the Punctuation!

Notice that there are only two punctuation marks that are used to introduce quotations: the comma and the colon (:). Note that a semicolon (;) is not used to introduce quotations.

Notice as well the punctuation of the sentences above in relation to the quotations. If there are no parenthetical citations in the sentences (no author's name and page number in parentheses), the commas and periods go inside the final quotation mark ("like this."). For whatever reason, this is the way we do it in America. In England, though, the commas and periods go outside of the final punctuation mark.

Semicolons and colons go outside of the final quotation mark ("like this";).

Question marks and exclamation points go outside of the final quotation mark if the punctuation mark is part of your sentence--your question or your exclamation ("like this"?). Those marks go inside of the final quotation mark if they are a part of the original--the writer's question or exclamation ("like this!").

**The Proper Punctuation: Keeping in Simple** Remembering just a few simple rules can help you use the correct punctuation as you introduce quotations. There are some exceptions to the rules below, but they should help you use the correct punctuation with quotations most of the time.

- Rule 1: Complete sentence: "quotation." (If you use a complete sentence to introduce a quotation, use a colon (:)) just before the quotation.)
- Rule 2: Someone says, "quotation." (If the word just before the quotation is a verb indicating someone uttering the quoted words, use a comma. Examples include the words "says," "said," "states," "asks," and "yells." But remember that there is no punctuation if the word "that" comes just before the quotation, as in "the narrator says that.")
- Rule 3: If Rules 1 and 2 do not apply, do not use any punctuation between your words and the quoted words.

And remember that a semicolon (;) never is used to introduce quotations.

These rules oversimplify the use of punctuation with quotations, but applying just these few rules should help you use the correct punctuation about 90 percent of time.

# Commonly Mistaken Words

## COMMON WORDS THAT SOUND ALIKE

### *Accept, Except*

- **accept** = verb meaning to receive or to agree: He **accepted** their praise graciously.
- **except** = preposition meaning all but, other than: Everyone went to the game **except** Alyson.

### *Affect, Effect*

- **affect** = verb meaning to influence: Will lack of sleep **affect** your game?
- **effect** = noun meaning result or consequence: Will lack of sleep have an **effect** on your game?
- **effect** = verb meaning to bring about, to accomplish: Our efforts **have effected** a major change in university policy.

A memory-help for affect and effect is **RAVEN**: Remember, Affect is a Verb and Effect is a Noun.

### *Advise, Advice*

- **advise** = verb that means to recommend, suggest, or counsel: I **advise** you to be cautious.
- **advice** = noun that means an opinion or recommendation about what could or should be done: I'd like to ask for your **advice** on this matter.

### *Conscious, Conscience*

- **conscious** = adjective meaning awake, perceiving: Despite a head injury, the patient remained **conscious**.
- **conscience** = noun meaning the sense of obligation to be good: Chris wouldn't cheat because his **conscience** wouldn't let him.

### *Its, It's*

- **its** = possessive adjective (possessive form of the pronoun it): The crab had an unusual growth on **its** shell.
- **it's** = contraction for it is or it has (in a verb phrase): **It's** still raining; **it's** been raining for three days. (Pronouns have apostrophes only when two words are being shortened into one.)

### *Lead, Led*

- **lead** = noun referring to a dense metallic element: The X-ray technician wore a vest lined with **lead**.
- **led** = past-tense and past-participle form of the verb to lead, meaning to guide or direct: The evidence **led** the jury to reach a unanimous decision.

### *Than, Then*

<b>Than</b>	used in comparison statements: He is richer <b>than</b> I. used in statements of preference: I would rather dance <b>than</b> eat. used to suggest quantities beyond a specified amount: Read more <b>than</b> the first paragraph.
<b>Then</b>	a time other than now: He was younger <b>then</b> . She will start her new job <b>then</b> . next in time, space, or order: First we must study; <b>then</b> we can play. suggesting a logical conclusion: If you've studied hard, <b>then</b> the exam should be no problem.

### *Their, There, They're*

- **Their** = possessive pronoun: They got **their** books.
- **There** = that place: My house is over **there**. (This is a place word, and so it contains the word here.)
- **They're** = contraction for they are: **They're** making dinner. (Pronouns have apostrophes only when two words are being shortened into one.)

### *We're, Where, Were*

- **We're** = contraction for we are: **We're** glad to help. (Pronouns have apostrophes only when two words are being shortened into one.)
- **Where** = location: **Where** are you going? (This is a place word, and so it contains the word here.)
- **Were** = a past tense form of the verb be: They **were** walking side by side.

### *Your, You're*

- **Your** = possessive pronoun: **Your** shoes are untied.
- **You're** = contraction for you are: **You're** walking around with your shoes untied. (Pronouns have apostrophes only when two words are being shortened into one.)

## One Word or Two?

### *All ready/already*

- **all ready**: used as an adjective to express complete preparedness
- **already**: an adverb expressing time  
At last I was **all ready** to go, but everyone had **already** left.

### *All right/alright*

- **all right**: used as an adjective or adverb; older and more formal spelling, more common in scientific & academic writing: Will you be **all right** on your own?
- **alright**: Alternate spelling of all right; less frequent but used often in journalistic and business publications, and especially common in fictional dialogue: He does **alright** in school.

### *All together/altogether*

- **all together**: an adverb meaning considered as a whole, summed up: **All together**, there were thirty-two students at the museum.
- **altogether**: an intensifying adverb meaning wholly, completely, entirely: His comment raises an **altogether** different problem.

### *Anyone/any one*

- **anyone**: a pronoun meaning any person at all: **Anyone** who can solve this problem deserves an award.
- **any one**: a paired adjective and noun meaning a specific item in a group; usually used with of: **Any one** of those papers could serve as an example.

Note: There are similar distinctions in meaning for everyone and every one

### *Anyway/any way*

- **anyway**: an adverb meaning in any case or nonetheless: He objected, but she went **anyway**.
- **any way**: a paired adjective and noun meaning any particular course, direction, or manner: **Any way** we chose would lead to danger.

### *Awhile/a while*

- **awhile**: an adverb meaning for a short time; some readers consider it nonstandard; usually needs no preposition: Won't you stay **awhile**?
- **a while**: a paired article and noun meaning a period of time; usually used with for: We talked for **a while**, and then we said good night.

### *Maybe/may be*

- **maybe**: an adverb meaning perhaps: **Maybe** we should wait until the rain stops.
- **may be**: a form of the verb be: This **may be** our only chance to win the championship.

# Literary Terms Section

# Literary and Reading Terms

**Act** A major unit of action in a drama or a play. Each act can be further divided into smaller sections called scenes.

**Allegory** A story in which people, things, and actions represent an idea or a generalization about life; allegories often have a strong moral or lesson.

**Alliteration** When the beginnings of words start with the same consonant or vowel sounds in stressed syllables – and the words are close together. Example: Toby teaches tiny tots in Toledo.

**Allusion** A reference to some striking incident in history or reference to a mythological character. Example: Cain and Abel or Atlas.

**Analogy** A point-by-point comparison between two dissimilar things in order to clarify the less familiar of the two.

**Anecdote** A brief account of an interesting incident or event that usually is intended to entertain or to make a point. A short summary of a humorous event used to make a point.

**Antagonist** The person or thing opposing the protagonist or hero of the story. When this is a person, he or she is usually called the villain.

**Antithesis** An opposition, or contrast, of ideas. Example: "It was the best of times; it was the worst of times..."

**Aphorism** A short statement that expresses a general observation about life in a clever or pointed way. – "Sometimes the human heart is the only clock in the world that keeps true time" – "Keeping Time"

**Apostrophe** The direct address of the absent or dead as if they were present, or the inanimate as if it were animate e.g. when Juliet talks to dead Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet*.

**Archetype** An image, character or pattern of circumstance that recurs throughout literature and thought consistently enough to be considered universal --wise grandparent, generous thief, innocent maiden.

**Aside** An author directly addresses the audience but is not supposed to be heard by other actors on the stage.

**Assonance** A repetition of vowel sounds. e.g. How now brown cow.

**Author's perspective** An author's beliefs and attitudes as expressed by his or her writing.

**Author's purpose** His or her reason for creating a particular work.

**Autobiography** An author's account or story of his own life.

**Biases** An inclination for or against a person, place, idea, or thing that inhibits impartial judgment

**Biography** The story of a person's life written by another person.

**Caricature** A picture or imitation of a person's features or mannerisms exaggerated in a comic or absurd way.

**Cause and effect** Two events are related as cause and effect when one event brings about, or causes, the other. The event that happens first is the cause; the one that follows is the effect.

**Character** A person or an animal in a story, play, poem, or other work of literature.

**Character sketch** A short piece of writing that reveals or shows something important about a person or fictional character.

**Characterization** A representation of a person's attributes or peculiarities, appearance, personality.

- **Direct:** The writer states directly what the character is like. Example: Rita was small and fragile looking, but she had immense courage and independence.
- **Indirect:**

1) The writer gives the actual speech of the character. Example: "I'm afraid but I'll do it anyway!" said Rita.

2) The writer reveals what the character is thinking or feeling. Example: As the cold water of the lake wrapped around her legs, Rita trembled at the memory of last summer's accident.

3) The writer tells about the character's actions. Example: With determined effort, Rita managed to get the rowboat into the lake and clamber aboard.

4) The writer tells how other people respond to the character. Example: Polly watched from the shore, knowing it was impossible to stop Rita once she had decided to do something. "She is so stubborn!" Polly thought.

**Chronological order** The order in which events happen in time.

**Classic** An enduring work of literature that continues to be read long after it was written.

**Cliché** Any expression used so often that its freshness and clarity have worn off e.g. "tip of the iceberg."

**Climax** The high point of the story. It is the point that brings about the solution (or decides that there will not be a solution). The conflict builds and becomes worse up to this point. After the climax, the problem will usually, though not always, be solved. The climax comes near the end of the story.

**Comedy** A dramatic work that is light and often humorous in tone. It usually ends with a happy resolution.

**Comparison** The process of identifying similarities. Comparisons are used to make ideas and details clearer to the reader.

**Conflict** The colliding or clashing of thoughts, feelings, actions, or persons: the problems or complications in the story. All stories have conflicts. There are five basic types of conflict:

- **Character vs. Character:** One character in a story has a problem with one or more of the other characters
  - **Character vs. Society:** A character has a conflict or problem with some element of society – the school, the law, the accepted way of doing things, etc.
  - **Character vs. Self:** A character has trouble deciding what to do in a particular situation.
  - **Character vs. Nature:** A character has a problem with some natural happening: a snowstorm, an avalanche, the bitter cold, or any of the other elements of nature
  - **Character vs. Fate (God):** A character has to battle what seems to be an uncontrollable problem. Whenever the problem seems to be a strange or unbelievable coincidence, fate can be considered as the cause of the conflict
- Connotation** All the emotions or feelings a word can arouse, such as the positive or good feeling associated with the word love.

**Consonance** The repetition of consonant sounds within a line of verse or a sentence of prose. Not limited to the initial letter of a word. e.g. "such a tide as seems asleep."

**Contrast** The process of pointing out differences between things.

**Conventions** Widely accepted rules for grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.

**Denotation** The dictionary meaning of a word.

**Denouement** The final outcome or resolution of a play or story.

**Description** Writing that helps the reader to picture scenes, events, and characters.

**Dialect** A form of language that is spoken in a particular place or by a particular group of people.

**Dialogue** Consists of the conversations characters have with one another. Dialogue has two main functions:

- 1) It tells a lot about the characters' personalities.
- 2) It moves the plot, or action, along.

**Diction** An author's choice of words based on their correctness, clearness, or effectiveness.

- **Archaic** words are those that are old fashioned and no longer sound natural when used. Example: "I believe thee not".
- **Colloquialism:** An expression that is usually accepted in informal situations and certain locations. Example: "He really grinds my beans".
- **Jargon:** Specialized language used by a specific group, such as those who use computers. Example: override, interface, and download.
- **Profanity:** Language that shows disrespect for someone or something regarded as holy or sacred.
- **Slang:** The informal language used by a particular group of people among themselves. It is also used in fiction to lend color and feelings. Example: awesome, chill, no way - way.
- **Vulgarity:** Language that is generally considered crude, gross, and, at times, offensive.

**Didactic** Literature instructs or presents a moral or religious statement.

**Drama** The form of literature known as plays; but drama also refers to the type of serious play that is often concerned with the leading character's relationship to society rather than with some tragic flaw within his personality.

**Dramatic monologue** A literary work (or a part of a literary work) in which a character is speaking about him or herself as if another person were present. The words of the speaker reveal something important about his or her character.

**Dynamic Character** A character who undergoes adaptation, change, or growth--Pinocchio

**Empathy** Putting yourself in someone else's place and imagining how that person must feel.

**Epic** A long narrative poem about the adventures of a hero whose actions reflect the ideals and values of a nation or a group.

**Epigram** A brief, witty saying or poem often dealing with its subject in a satirical manner.

**Epiphany** A sudden moment of understanding that causes a character to change or act in a certain way.

**Epitaph** A short poem or verse written in memory of someone.

**Epithet** A word or phrase used in place of a person's name and is characteristic of that person. Example: Material Girl, Alexander the Great, Ms. Know-It-All.



**Essay** A piece of prose which expresses an individual's point of view; usually, it is a series of closely related paragraphs which combine to make a complete piece of writing.

**Exaggeration** An extreme overstatement of an idea. It is often used for purposes of emphasis or humor.

**Exposition** The beginning of the story where:

- The audience usually meets the characters
- The time and place (setting) are told
- The conflict (the problem in the story that needs to be solved) is introduced
- This portion helps the reader understand the background or situation in which the story is set.

**Extended metaphor** A figure of speech that compares two essentially unlike things at some length. It may introduce a series of metaphors representing different aspects of a situation.

**Fable** A short fictional narrative that teaches a lesson. It usually includes animals that talk and act like people.

**Fact** A statement that can be proved.

**Falling action** All that happens after the climax. This is the action which works out the decision arrived at during the climax. The resolution (denouement) follows.

**Fantasy** A work of literature that contains at least one fantastic or unreal element.

**Farce** Literature based on a humorous and improbable plot.

**Fiction** Prose writing that tells an imaginary story. The writer of a fictional work might invent all the events and characters in it or might base parts of the story on real people or events.

**Figurative language** Writers use figurative language – expressions that are not literally true – to create original descriptions.

**Figure of Speech** A literary device used to create a special effect or feeling by making some type of interesting and creative comparison. Examples: Antithesis, Hyperbole, Metaphor, Metonymy, Personification, Simile, Understatement, etc.

**Flashback** Returning to an earlier time in the story for the purpose of making something in the present clearer.

**Flat Character** A character who is simple, two dimensional, and shallow. Readers do not feel like they get to KNOW a flat character. e.g. the mother in *Little Red Riding Hood*.

**Foil** Someone who serves as a contrast or challenge to another character.

**Foreshadowing** A suggestion of what is to come later in the work by giving hints and clues.

**Genre** Used to define form or type of literature. The novel, the essay, and poem are examples of the many genre or forms of literature.

**Gothic novel** A type of fiction that is characterized by gloomy castles, ghosts, and supernatural happenings - creating mysterious and sometimes frightening story.

**Historical fiction** Contemporary fiction that is set in the past.

**Horror fiction** Contains mysterious and often supernatural events to create terror.

**Hubris** Derived from the Greek word *hybris*, means "excessive pride." In Greek tragedy, hubris is often viewed as the flaw that leads to the downfall of the tragic hero.

**Hyperbole** A figure of speech in which the truth is exaggerated for emphasis or for humorous effect. Example: "I have seen this river so wide it had only one bank."

**Idiom** An expression whose meaning is different from the sum of the meanings of its individual words.

**Imagery** Used to describe the words or phrases, which bring forth a certain picture or image in the mind of the reader. It is the sensory language and the metaphors that the writer uses to create the atmosphere.

**Impressionism** The recording of events and situations as they have been impressed upon the mind.

**Inference** A logical guess based on evidence. Readers, by combining the information the writer provides with what they know from their own experience, can figure out more than the words say.

**Irony** A contrast between what is expected and what actually exists.

**Jargon** Specialized language of a trade, profession, or group.

**Legend** A story handed down from the past about a specific person.

**Litotes** A form of understatement that is achieved by saying the opposite of what you mean e.g. calling a fat child-- "skinny" or a slow one-- "speedy."

**Local color** The use of language and details that are common in a certain region of the country. (Regional dialect)

**Main idea** A central idea that a writer wishes to express. It could be the central idea of an entire work or a topic sentence of a paragraph.

**Malapropism** A type of pun, or play on words, that results when two words become jumbled in the speaker's mind. The term comes from a character in Sheridan's comedy, *The Rivals*. The character, Mrs. Malaprop, is constantly mixing up her words.

**Melodrama** An exaggerated form of drama (soap operas) characterized by heavy use of romance, suspense, and emotion.

**Memoir** A specific type of autobiography. A memoir does not cover the author's entire life.

**Metaphor** A comparison of two things that have some quality in common. A metaphor does not contain the words of comparison – like or as. Example: "A green plant is a machine that runs on solar energy."

**Metaphor** A comparison between two things that have something in common without using like, as or resembles the dog had "a stick of a leg"- "Moco Limping"

**Meter** The more or less regular pattern of accented and unaccented syllables in poetry.

**Metonymy** Substituting one word for another related word. Example: The White House has decided to create more public service jobs. (White House is substituted for president.)

**Mood** The feeling a piece of literature arouses in the reader: happy, sad, etc.

**Moral** A lesson or value that the author is trying to get across to the reader.

**Motif** A term for an often-repeated idea or theme in literature.

**Motivation** Why characters behave in a certain way. You can track motivation with because sentences.

**Myth** A traditional story that attempts to justify a certain practice or believe or to explain a natural phenomenon.

**Narration** Writing that relates an event or a series of events.

**Narrative** Writing that tells a story. The events can be real or imagined.

**Narrator** The person who is telling the story.

**Naturalism** An extreme form of realism in which the author tries to show the relation of a person to the environment or surroundings. Often, the author finds it necessary to show the ugly or raw side of that relationship.

**Nonfiction** Writing that tells about real people, places, and events.

**Novel** A term that covers a wide range of prose materials, which have two common characteristics: they are fictional and lengthy.

**Novella** A prose work longer than the standard short story, but shorter and less complex than a full-length novel.

**Onomatopoeia** The formation or use of words such as buzz that imitate the sounds associated with the objects or actions they refer to. -moo, drip, clang, choo choo.

**Opinion** A statement that reflects a writer's belief, but which cannot be supported by proof or evidence.

**Organization** Writing that has an inviting lead, purposeful sequencing and no dream ending.

**Outlining** A general description covering the main points of a subject with headings & subheadings

**Oxymoron** A combination of contradictory terms as in "jumbo shrimp."

**Parable** A short descriptive story that illustrates a particular belief or moral.

**Paradox** A statement that seems contrary to common sense, yet may, in fact be true. Example: "The coach considered this a good loss."

**Parallel Structure** The repeating of phrases and sentences that are syntactically similar.

**Paraphrasing** The restatement of a text by readers in their own words or in another form.

**Parody** A form of literature that intentionally uses comic effect to mock a literary work or style.

**Pathetic fallacy:** A form of personification giving human traits to nature. Example: cruel sea, howling wind.

**Pathos** A Greek root meaning suffering or passion. It usually describes the part in a play or story that is intended to elicit pity or sorrow from the audience or reader.

**Personification** A literary device in which the author elevates an animal, object, or idea to the level of human such that it takes on the characteristics of a human personality. Example: "The rock stubbornly refused to move."

**Persuasion** Meant to sway readers' feelings, beliefs, or actions.

**Picaresque novel** A work of fiction consisting of a lengthy string of loosely connected events. It usually features the adventures of a rogue living by his or her wits.

**Plot** The sequence of events that happen in a story. There are five basic parts to a plot :

- Exposition
- Rising Action
- Climax
- Falling Action
- Resolution

**Poetic justice** A term that describes a character "getting what he deserves" in the end, especially if what he deserves is punishment. The purest form of poetic justice is when one character plots against another but ends up being caught in his or her own trap.

**Poetic License** A poet or other professional writer is allowed to break conventional rules of grammar, spelling, form, or citation to make rhyme or meter or general effect better --Dr. Seuss

**Poetry** A type of literature in which ideas and feelings are expressed in compact, imaginative, and often musical language.

**Point of view** The vantage point from which the story is being told.

- **First-person point of view:** The story is told by one of the characters.

- **Third-person point of view:** The story is told by someone outside of the story. There are three kinds of third person p.o.v.:

- **Omniscient-** allows the narrator to relate the thoughts and feelings of all the characters
- **Limited omniscient-** allows the narrator to relate the thoughts and feelings of only one character
- **Camera (objective) view-** seeing and recording the action from a neutral or unemotional point of view

**Primary source** A firsthand account of an event. Primary sources include: diaries, journals, letters, speeches, news stories, photographs, and pieces of art.

**Propaganda** One sided persuasion, materials spread abroad by advocates of a doctrine.

**Prose** An ordinary form of spoken and written language. It is the language that lacks the special features of poetry.

**Protagonist** The main character or hero of the story.

**Pseudonym** A pen name or false name. The name a writer uses in place of his or her given name.

**Pun** A word or phrase that is used to suggest more than one possible meaning.

**Quest** A main character seeking to find something or achieve a goal. In the process, this character encounters and overcomes a series of obstacles, returning wiser and more experienced.

**Realism** Literature that attempts to represent life as it really is.

**Realistic fiction** Imaginative writing set in the real, modern world.

**Renaissance** Means "rebirth," is the period of history following the Middle Ages. This period began late in the 14th century and continued through the 15th and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. The term now applies to any period in time in which intellectual and artistic interest is revived or reborn.

**Repetition** A technique in which a sound, word, phrase, or line is repeated for effect or emphasis.

**Resolution** Sometimes called the "denouement." It ties up the story. It is most often the final solution to the conflict. It is also what happens as a result of the solution.

**Rhetorical Question** A question asked for effect which neither requires a reply nor wants a reply. -

- When it is past bed time and a parent asks, "Isn't it past your bed time?"

**Rhetorical Techniques** The tools used in effective or persuasive language --contrast, repetition, paradox, understatement, sarcasm, and rhetorical questions.

**Rhyme** Repetition of sounds at the end of words e.g. "I do not like green eggs and ham. I do not like them Sam I am."

**Rising Action** The part of a drama that follows the event that gives rise to the conflict & precedes the climax.

**Romanticism** A literary movement with an emphasis on the imagination and emotions.

**Sarcasm** Use of praise to mock someone or something.

**Satire** A literary technique in which ideas or customs are ridiculed for the purpose of improving society.

**Scene** In a play, a scene is a section presenting events that occur in one place at one time.

**Science fiction** Is prose writing in which a writer explores unexpected possibilities of the past or future by using scientific data and theories as well as his or her imagination.

**Secondary source** Presents information compiled from or based on other sources.

**Sensory details** Words and phrases that help readers see, hear, taste, feel, or smell what the author is describing.

**Sentence Fluency** Sentences have varied length and beginnings, they are easy to read aloud.

**Setting** The place and time that a literary or dramatic work takes place.

**Short story** A brief work of fiction that can generally be read in one sitting. Usually contains one major conflict and at least one main character.

**Simile** A comparison of two unlike things in which a word of comparison (like or as) is used. Example: She eats like a bird.

**Slang** Non-standard vocabulary, figures of speech marked by spontaneity and raciness.

**Slapstick** A form of low comedy that often includes exaggerated, sometimes violent action. The "pie in the face" routine is a classic piece of slapstick.

**Soliloquy** A speech delivered by a character when he or she is alone on stage. It is as though the character is thinking out loud.

**Stage** Is the level and raised platform on which entertainers usually perform.

**Stage directions** In the script of a play, the stage directions are the instructions to the actors, director, and stage crew.

**Static Character** A character who undergoes no change e.g. Atticus in *To Kill a Mockingbird*

**Stereotype** A broad generalization or an oversimplified view that disregards individual differences. These can lead to unfair judgments of people on the basis of ethnic background or physical appearance.

**Stream of consciousness** A style of writing in which the thoughts and feelings of the writer are recorded as they occur.

**Style** How the author uses words, phrases, and sentences to form his or her ideas. Style is also thought of as the qualities and characteristics that distinguish one writer's work from the work of others.

**Surprise ending** An unexpected twist in the plot at the end of a story.

**Suspense** A feeling of growing tension and excitement.

**Symbol** A concrete object used to represent an idea. Example: A black object usually symbolizes death or sorrow.

**Syntax** The arrangement – the ordering, grouping, placement – of words within a sentence and sentences within a paragraph.

**Theme** The statement about life a particular story is trying to get across to the reader. A theme is a message about life or human nature that is communicated by a literary work.

**Tone** The overall feeling, or effect, created by a writer's use of words. This feeling may be serious, humorous, or satiric.

**Tragedy** A literary work in which the hero is destroyed by some flaw within his character and/or by forces he cannot control.

**Tragic Hero** A character that experiences an inner struggle because of some flaw within his character. That struggle ends in the defeat of the hero.

**Transcendentalism** A philosophy that requires human beings to go beyond (transcend) reason in their search for truth. It assumes that an individual can arrive at the basic truths of life through spiritual insight if he or she takes the time to think seriously about them.

**Understatement** A way of emphasizing an idea by talking about it in a restrained manner. Example: "Aunt Polly is prejudiced against snakes." (She was terrified of them.)

**Voice** An author's or a narrator's voice is his or her distinctive style or manner of expression.

**Word Choice** Vivid images created with just the right words and phrases.

# Literary Analysis Techniques Section

# **3 LEVELS OF QUESTIONING**

## **Level I: Recall**

The answer is in the text. There is nothing implied, the answer is right or wrong. Recalling facts leads to analysis or inference based on facts.

**What were Cinderella's slippers made out of?**

**How did Cinderella get to the ball?**

## **Level II: Analysis/Inference**

Derive logical conclusions based on facts (premises). Analysis includes asking “how” or “why” based on study of text. Read between the lines, look for the hidden meaning. Conclusions should be understood but not directly expressed.

**Why does Cinderella's stepmother care whether or not she goes to the ball?**

**Why did everything turn back the way it was except the glass slipper?**

**Why don't the step sisters like Cinderella?**

## **Level III: Synthesis (THEME QUESTIONS)**

Go beyond the text and inquire into the value, importance and application of the information presented. Apply inferences to “THE BIG PICTURE.”

**Does a woman's salvation always lie with a man?**

**What does it mean to live happily ever after?**

**Does good always overcome evil?**

# Scintillating Sentences

A sentence/passage that:

- REPRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT IDEA
- EXHIBITS UNIQUE WRITING STYLE
- EXEMPLIFIES RECURRING THEMES
- ILLUSTRATES A PARTICULAR POINT OF VIEW

## Quizzical Quote

A sentence or passage that:

- YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND
- YOU THINK OTHERS IN THE CLASS WILL NOT UNDERSTAND
- BOGGLES YOUR MIND FOR ANY REASON (IT MAY HAVE MULTIPLE LEVELS OF UNDERSTANDING)

**Include your reflections regarding the significance of the quote or questions you have about the quote. All quotes should relate back to the purpose of the piece.**

**REMEMBER...MOVE BEYOND THE OBVIOUS AND LOOK FOR THE COMPLEXITY.**

**Example of Scintillating Sentences/Quizzical Quote response for "Ambush" by Tim O'Brien**

**"I did not hate the young man; I did not see him as the enemy; I did not ponder issues of morality or politics or military duty." Pg. 1223**

The repetition of "I did not" at the beginning of successive clauses emphasizes the idea that the narrator's actions were automatic and that expected emotions regarding why you would kill someone—hate, duty, or the fact that he was an enemy—were not the narrator's reasons for killing the Vietnamese man. Simply put, he killed him out of base wartime instinct and terror. This repetition as well as omission of conjunctions artfully accentuates the narrator's conflicted emotions in later years regarding whether or not the choice to kill the man was moral or even justified.

**"I had already pulled the pin on the grenade. I had come up to a crouch. It was entirely automatic."pg. 1223**

**Vs.**

**"The brush was thick and I had to lob it high, not aiming, and I remember the grenade seeming to freeze above me for an instant , as if a camera had clicked, and I remember ducking down and holding my breath and seeing little wisps of fog rise from the earth. " pg. 1223**

The first sentences are short and choppy to emphasize the seemingly instinctual rush of events. He repeats "I had" at the beginning of the sentences as well which creates a jerky urgent feel. The second sentence, which is clearly longer than typical sentences, creates a "slow-motion" effect. The effect is heightened by statements that the grenade seemed to "freeze above [him]." I'm a bit confused by the simile "as if a camera clicked." Did this insinuate the flash of action? Was it purposefully used to add to the "freezing" of time effect? This slowing of time emphasized in his sentence length and figurative language emphasizes this moment, literal moment, that has plagued the narrator's thoughts throughout the later years.

# Dialectical (Double Entry) Journal Entries

A dialectical journal represents a method of having a conversation with a work of literature. It is a type of double-entry note-taking where students write notes that dialogue with one another, thereby developing critical reading and reflective questioning. Your journal should be set up on your own paper like the model below. Remember that page numbers should be included in the left-hand column.

Journal entries may take several forms or focus on various aspects of your reading. Observations may be questions about material not understood; comments to explain a statement; facts to remember for later; comments on interesting diction, imagery, characters, or literary devices; definitions of vocabulary; questions regarding what may be a flaw in the writer's logic; an assertion about a character, or other interesting aspects of the novel and the writer's craft. In addition to the above, the following guidelines may prove helpful.

## Model

The following page models a sample journal. Entries are based on responses to the short story "The Most Dangerous Game" by Richard Connell.

Passage/Notes	Page	Observations
Rainsford hears gunshot	15	Right? Direction of Ship-Trap Island? Whitney mentioned in the 1st sentence. How far—sound carrying on water?
very "heavy" darkness	15 par. 1	Impenetrable
Rainsford cannot see, climbs on rail, knocks pipe from hand, over reaches, falls in "blood warm" Caribbean.	15 par. 2	Does anyone hear "short hoarse" cry? Seems confident, balanced.  Where were they going?  "Blood-warm" scarier than just "warm."
Rainsford: "straight flight was futile"	25	<u>Smart</u> —he realized he could not just run...he would be caught or trapped. Thinking like a hunter, he must trick Zaroff.
"I have played the fox; now I must play the cat of the fable."	25	<u>Clever</u> —He has been clever like the fox by leading Zaroff in circles; now he needs sleep. Therefore, he mimics the actions of a cat and climbs in the tree to think. He pulls on his knowledge of animals and stories to try to survive.



## **Journal Guidelines**

- Take the time to write down anything in relation to the text. If you are intrigued by certain statements or if you're attracted to characters or issues or problems, write your response. Try to take at least five minutes to write when you've finished an assignment or when you've put your book down for a break. You may want to write something that strikes you then. Make sure that you include page numbers.
- Make connections with your own experience. What does the reading make you think of? Does it remind you of anything or anyone?
- Make connections with other texts or concepts or events. Do you see any similarities between this text (concept, events) and other texts (concepts, events)? Does it bring to mind other related issues?
- Ask yourself questions about the text. What perplexes you about a particular passage? Try beginning, "I wonder why..." or "I'm having trouble understanding how..." or "It perplexes me that..." or "I was surprised when..."
- Try agreeing with the writer. Write down the supporting ideas. Try arguing with the writer. On what points, or about what issues, do you disagree? Think of your journal as a place to carry on a dialogue with the writer or with the text in which you actually speak with him or her. Ask questions; have the writer respond. What happens when you imagine yourself in his/her shoes?
- Write down striking words, images, phrases, or details. Speculate about them. Why did the author choose them? What do they add to the story? Why did you notice them? Copy words from the text into your journal and respond to them. On the first reading you might put checks in the margin of your novel where the passages intrigue you; on the second reading, choose the most interesting ideas, then write about them.
- Describe the author's point of view. How does the author's attitude shape the way the writer presents the material?

Note: These guidelines do not include every possible type of response for a dialectical journal, but they, along with those described under "Journal Entries" above, provide ample suggestions.

# Journal Grading Sheet

10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detailed, meaningful passages, plot and quote selections</li> <li>• Thoughtful interpretation and elaboration about the text; Avoids clichés.</li> <li>• Includes comments about literary elements such as diction, imagery, syntax, and how these elements contribute to the meaning of the text.</li> <li>• Makes insightful personal connections and asks thought-provoking, insightful questions</li> <li>• Coverage of text is complete and thorough</li> <li>• Journal is neat, organized and professional looking; student has followed directions in the organization of journal</li> </ul>
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less detailed, but good plot and quote selections</li> <li>• Some intelligent elaboration; addresses some thematic connections</li> <li>• Includes some literary elements, but less on how they contribute to the meaning</li> <li>• Some personal connection; asks pertinent questions</li> <li>• Adequately addresses all parts of reading assignment</li> <li>• Journal is neat and readable; student has followed directions in the organization of journal</li> </ul>
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Few good details from the text</li> <li>• Most of the elaboration is vague, unsupported, or plot summary/paraphrase</li> <li>• Some listing of literary elements; virtually no discussion on meaning</li> <li>• Limited personal connection; asks few, or obvious questions</li> <li>• Addresses most of the reading assignment, but is not very long or thorough</li> <li>• Journal is relatively neat, but may be difficult to read. Student has not followed all directions in journal organization: loose-leaf, no columns, not in separate notebook, etc.</li> </ul>
5 or less	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hardly any good details from the text</li> <li>• All notes are plot summary or paraphrase</li> <li>• Few literary elements, virtually no discussion on meaning</li> <li>• Limited personal connections, no good questions</li> <li>• Limited coverage of the text: way too short</li> <li>• Did not follow directions in organizing journal; difficult to read or follow</li> </ul>

# Using TPFFASTT for Analysis of Poetry

<b>T</b>	<b>Title</b>	What do the words of the title suggest to you? What denotations are presented in the title? What connotations or associations do the words possess?		
<b>P</b>	<b>Paraphrase</b>	Translate the poem in your own words. What is the poem about?		
<b>F</b>	<b>Figurative Language</b>	What meaning does the poem have beyond the literal meaning? Fill in the chart below.		
		Rhyme & Rhythm	Diction	Imagery
		Speaker's Point of View	Details	Allusions
		Symbolism	Figurative Language	Other Devices (apostrophe, sound devices, irony, oxymoron, paradox, pun, sarcasm, understatement)
<b>A</b>	<b>Attitude</b>	What is the speaker's attitude? How does the speaker feel about himself, about others, and about the subject? What is the author's attitude? How does the author feel about the speaker, about other characters, about the subject, and the reader?		
<b>S</b>	<b>Shifts</b>	Where do the shifts in tone, setting, voice, etc. occur? Look for time and place, keywords, punctuation, stanza divisions, changes in length or rhyme, and sentence structure. What is the purpose of each shift? How do they contribute to effect and meaning?		
<b>T</b>	<b>Title</b>	Reanalyze the title on an interpretive level. What part does the title play in the overall interpretation of the poem?		
<b>T</b>	<b>Theme</b>	List the subjects and the abstract ideas in the poem. Then determine the overall theme. The theme must be written in a complete sentence.		

Remember:

Poetry, ideally, should be read aloud! If you can't read it aloud, make sure to listen to yourself reciting the poem. Pronounce each word, pause at breaks, and pay attention to punctuation.

# DIDLS: The Key to TONE

## Diction - the *connotation* of the word choice

What words does the author choose? Consider his/her word choice compared to another. Why did the author choose that particular word? What are the connotations of that word choice?

## Images (figurative language) - vivid appeals to understanding through the senses

What images does the author use? What does he/she focus on in a sensory (sight, touch, taste, smell, etc.) way? What types of figurative language does the author use? The kinds of images the author puts in or leaves out reflect his/her style. Are they vibrant? Prominent? Plain? NOTE: Images differ from detail in the degree to which they appeal to the senses.

## Details - *facts* that are included or those that are omitted

What details does the author choose to include? What do they imply? What does the author choose to exclude? What are the connotations of their choice of details? PLEASE NOTE: Details are facts. They differ from images in that they don't have a strong sensory appeal.

## Language - the *overall* use of language, such as formal, clinical, jargon

What is the overall impression of the language the author uses? Does it reflect education? A particular profession? Intelligence? Is it plain? Ornate? Simple? Clear? Figurative? Poetic? Make sure you don't skip this step.

## Syntax (Sentence Structure) - how structure affects the reader's attitude

What are the sentences like? Are they simple with one or two clauses? Do they have multiple phrases? Are they choppy? Flowing? What emotional impression do they leave? If we are talking about poetry, what is the meter? Is there a rhyme scheme?

## **DICTION:**

Laugh: guffaw, chuckle, titter, giggle, cackle, snicker, roar

Self-confident: proud, conceited, egotistical, stuck-up, haughty, smug, condescending

House: home, hut, shack, mansion, cabin, home, residence

Old: mature, experienced, antique, relic, senior, ancient

Fat: obese, plump, corpulent, portly, porky, burly, husky, full-figured

**-Words can be *monosyllabic* (one syllable in length) or *polysyllabic* (more than one syllable in length). The higher the ratio of polysyllabic words, the more difficult the content.**

-Words can be *colloquial* (slang), *informal* (conversational), *formal* (literary) or *old-fashioned*.

-Words can be *denotative* (containing an exact meaning, e.g., dress) or *connotative* (containing suggested meaning, e.g., gown)

-Words can be *concrete* (specific) or *abstract* (general or conceptual).

## IMAGES:

The use of vivid descriptions or figures of speech that appeal to sensory experiences helps to create the author's *tone*.

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun. (restrained)

An old, mad, blind, despised, and dying king. (somber, candid)

He clasps the crag with crooked hands. (dramatic)

Love sets you going like a fat gold watch. (fanciful)

Smiling, the boy fell dead. (shocking)

### -FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE (examples)

Metaphors- **comparison of two unlike things**      *Why?*

Similes- **comparison of two unlike things using "like" or "as"**

Extended Metaphors- **metaphors that continue past one line**

Symbol- **an object, person, etc that represents something beyond itself**

Imagery- **words that refer to the five senses (smell, taste, see, hear, touch)**

Personification- **giving inanimate objects or ideas human qualities**

Allegory- **a story or vignette that, like a metaphor, has both a literal and figurative meaning.**

Oxymoron- **a phrase that seems self-contradictory "an eloquent silence, jumbo shrimp"**

Paradox- **an idea that is self-contradictory, yet under scrutiny makes sense.**

Understatement- **understated**

Hyperbole- **overstated or exaggerated**

## DETAILS:

Details are most commonly the *facts* given by the author or speaker as support for the attitude or tone.

The speaker's perspective shapes what details are given and which are not.

# LANGUAGE:

## Some terms to describe language:

<b>official</b>	se	<b>verbal</b>	arent, word for word
<b>concrete</b>	ual, specific, particular	<b>idealistic</b>	itanical, righteous
<b>evocative</b>	des to; suggestive	<b>obscure</b>	lear
<b>colloquial</b>	ryday, common	<b>naïve</b>	-witted, undiscerning
<b>detached</b>	off, removed, separated	<b>obvious</b>	ir, obvious
<b>emotional</b>	ressive of emotions	<b>scholarly</b>	llectual, academic
<b>lyric</b>	, melodious, romantic	<b>luscious</b>	sionate, luscious
<b>precise</b>	ct, accurate, decisive	<b>simple</b>	ir, intelligible
<b>exact</b>	oatim, precise	<b>colloquial</b>	o, colloquialism
<b>illustrative</b>	/ing as illustration	<b>metaphorical</b>	esentative, metaphorical
<b>formal</b>	demic, conventional		
<b>grotesque</b>	eous, deformed		
<b>homespun</b>	sy, homey, native, rustic		

Like word choice, the language of a passage has control over tone.

Consider language to be the entire body of words used in a text, not simply isolated bits of diction.

For example, an invitation to a wedding might use formal language, while a biology text would use scientific and clinical language.

- When I told Dad that I had goofed the exam, he blew his top. (slang)
- I had him on the ropes in the fourth and if one of my short rights had connected, he'd have gone down for the count. (jargon)
- A close examination and correlation of the most reliable current economic indexes justifies the conclusion that the next year will witness a continuation of the present, upward market trend. (pompous, pedantic)

## Rhetorical Devices -- The use of language that creates a literary effect – enhance and support

<b>Rhetorical Question</b>	food for thought; create satire/sarcasm; pose dilemma
<b>Euphemism</b>	substituting a milder or less offensive sounding word(s)
<b>Aphorism</b>	universal commends, sayings, proverbs – convey major point
<b>Repetition</b>	also called refrain; repeated word, sentence or phrase
<b>Restatement</b>	main point said in another way
<b>Irony</b>	Either verbal or situational – good for revealing attitude
<b>Allusion</b>	refers to something universally known
<b>Paradox</b>	a statement that can be true and false at the same time

## SYNTAX (SENTENCE STRUCTURE):

- Does the sentence length fit the subject matter?
- Why is the sentence length effective?
- What variety of sentence lengths are present?
- Sentence beginnings – Variety or Pattern?
- Arrangement of ideas in sentences

A **SIMPLE SENTENCE** contains one independent clause: ex: *"The singer bowed to her adoring audience."*

A **COMPOUND SENTENCE** contains two independent clauses and is joined by a coordinating conjunction or by a semicolon: e.g. *"The singer bowed to the audience, but she sang no encores."*

A **COMPLEX SENTENCE** contains an independent clause and one or more subordinate (**dependent**) clauses: e.g. *"Because the singer was tired, she went straight to bed after the concert."*

A **COMPOUND-COMPLEX SENTENCE** contains two or more independent clauses and one or more subordinate (**dependent**) clauses: e.g. *"The singer bowed while the audience applauded, but she sang no encores."*

A **LOOSE SENTENCE** makes complete sense if brought to a close before the actual ending: e.g. *"We reached Edmonton that morning after a turbulent flight and some exciting experiences, tired but exhilarated, full of stories to tell our friends and neighbors."* The sentence *could end* before the modifying phrases without losing its coherence.

A **PERIODIC SENTENCE** makes sense fully only when the end of the sentence is reached. The modifying phrases come first. *"That morning, after a turbulent flight and some exciting experiences, we reached Edmonton."*

**BALANCED SENTENCE:** the phrases or clauses balance each other by virtue of their likeness of structure, meaning, or length: e.g., *"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside still waters"*

**PARALLEL STRUCTURE (parallelism):** refers to a grammatical or structural similarity between sentences or parts of a sentence. It involves an arrangement of words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs so that elements of equal importance are equally developed and similarly phrased. *"He loved swimming, running, and playing tennis."*

**NATURAL ORDER OF A SENTENCE:** involves constructing a sentence so the subject comes before the predicate. *"Oranges grow in California"*

**INVERTED ORDER OF A SENTENCE:** involves constructing a sentence so the subject comes before the predicate. *"In California grow the oranges"* This is a device in which typical sentence patterns are reversed to create an emphatic or rhythmic effect.

**JUXTAPOSITION (THINK OF CONTRAST):** a poetic and rhetorical device in which normally unassociated or contrasting ideas, words, or phrases are placed next to one another, often creating an effect of surprise or wit. *"The dark, dingy, repulsive killer skipped through the bright, colorful tulips."*

**REPETITION:** is a device in which words, sounds, and ideas are used more than once to enhance rhythm and create emphasis. *"...government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth"*

**RHETORICAL QUESTION:** a question that requires no answer. It is used to draw attention to the point and is generally stronger than a direct statement: *"If Mr. Ferchoff is always fair, as you have said, why did he refuse to listen to Mrs. Baldwin's arguments?"*

**RHETORICAL FRAGMENT:** a sentence fragment used deliberately for a persuasive purpose or to create a desired effect: *"Something to consider."*

**How a sentence is constructed affects what the audience takes from the piece.**

- Parallel syntax (similarly styled phrases and sentences) can create interconnected emotions, feelings and ideas.
- Short sentences are punchy, intense, and can create emphasis. Long sentences can be distancing, reflective and more abstract.
- Short sentences are often emphatic, passionate or flippant, whereas longer sentences suggest greater thought.
- Sentence structure affects *tone*.

## **SHIFT IN TONE:**

Good authors are rarely monotone. A speaker's attitude can shift on a topic, or an author might have one attitude toward the audience and another toward the subject. The following are some clues to watch for shifts in tone:

- key words (but, yet, nevertheless, however, although)
- punctuation (dashes, periods, colons)
- paragraph divisions
- changes in sentence length
- sharp contrasts in diction

**TONE:** Tone is defined as the writer's or speaker's attitude toward the subject and the audience. Understanding tone in prose and poetry can be challenging because the reader doesn't have voice inflection to obscure or to carry meaning. Thus, an appreciation of word choice, details, imagery, and language all contribute to the understanding of tone. To misinterpret tone is to misinterpret meaning.



A list of tone words is one practical method of providing a basic "tone vocabulary." An enriched vocabulary enables you to use more specific and subtle descriptions of an attitude they discover in a text. Here is a short list of simple but helpful "tone words":

Angry	Sad	Sentimental	Afraid
Sharp	Cold	Fanciful	Detached
Upset	Urgent	Complimentary	Contemptuous
Silly	Joking	Condescending	Happy
Boring	Poignant	Sympathetic	Confused
Apologetic	Hollow	Childish	Humorous
Joyful	Peaceful	Horrific	Allusive
Mocking	Sarcastic	Sweet	Objective
Nostalgic	Vexed	Vibrant	Zealous
Tired	Frivolous	Irrelevant	Bitter
Audacious	Benevolent	Dreamy	Shocking
Seductive	Restrained	Somber	Candid
Proud	Giddy	Pitiful	Dramatic
Provocative	Didactic	Lugubrious	Sentimental

# SOAPStone--Critical Analysis of the Rhetorical Situation

## **S: What is the SUBJECT?**

**The general topic, content, and ideas contained in the text.** That is, what is this piece about? You should be able to state the subject in a few words or a short phrase. For example, is this piece about the sadness of aging, the glories of nature, or the need for abolition? Aging, nature and abolition are not subjects, but topics. There is a distinction.

## **O: What is the OCCASION?**

**The time and place of the piece; the current situation which gave rise to the writing or speech.** It is particularly important that you understand the **context** that encouraged the writing or speaking to happen. This includes **historical information**. An occasion may be impromptu, or a writer or speaker may be commissioned to deliver a piece for a particular occasion. For example, a writer may pen an editorial prior to congress taking an important vote, Dr. King wrote a speech particularly for the March on Washington, and Arthur Miller wrote The Crucible during the time of the HUAC hearings and the blacklist.

## **A: Who is the AUDIENCE?**

**The group of readers to whom this piece is directed.** The audience may be one person, a small group, or a large group. People tend to write or speak for a particular audience, not for just anyone. What qualities do the audience members have in common? Are they of a particular age, class, occupation or ethnicity? Do they share certain beliefs or values?

## **P: What is the PURPOSE?**

**The reason behind the text.** What does the speaker, writer, or filmmaker want the audience to do, feel, say or choose? In literature, we call this the theme of the piece.

## **S: What is the author's STYLE? (Strategic and unique use of language)**

**The individuality of the author.** Given the choice of many different options in regards to diction, syntax, figurative language (i.e. allusions), rhetorical strategies etc., which does the author choose to use and what effect does the author's selections have on the piece.

## **S: Who is the SPEAKER?**

**The voice that tells the story.** In nonfiction, what do we know about the writer's life and views that shape this text? In fiction or poetry, one may often mistakenly believe that the author and narrator of a piece are the same. Sometimes people fail to realize that the author may choose to tell the story from any number of different points of view. We may think that what the speaker believes is what the author believes. This misconception creates problems for some students as they try to unravel meaning. What can you tell about the speaker (not the author) from the text?

## **T: What is the TONE?**

**Attitude towards a subject conveyed by the speaker.** What choice of words and use of rhetorical devices let you know the speaker's tone? Is the tone light-hearted or deadly serious? Mischievous or ironic? The tone informs us as to the speaker's true point of view.

# Literature Circle Roles

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_

Your job for our next meeting is to be the

## Discussion Director

Your job is to develop a list of questions and lead your group in a discussion about this part of the book. Don't worry about the small details here: your task is to help people talk over the **BIG IDEAS** of the reading and share their reactions. Usually, the best discussion questions come from your own thoughts, feelings, and concerns as you read, which you can list on a piece of paper, during or after your reading. Use the levels of questioning guide (see page 94) to help you develop your questions.

**For your meeting, you need to write 2 recall questions, and 8 analysis and synthesis questions (any combo of the two, but at least 1 of each type).**

Part of your job is to **politely keep everyone** in the group **focused and on-task!**

Your job for our next meeting is to be the

## Connection Kid

Your job is to find connections between the book your group is reading and the real world. This means connecting the reading to your own life, to happenings at school or in the community, to similar events at other times or places, or to other people or problems that you are reminded of. You might also see connections between this book and other writings (books, poems, stories, etc.) on the same or different topics, or by the same author. **THERE ARE NO WRONG ANSWERS HERE.** Whatever the reading connects you with is worth sharing! These will be done in a **double-entry journal** (see page 96) format. Response paragraphs must be a minimum of 6 sentences long.

**You need a minimum of ONE connection per chapter, and at least FOUR entries total.**

Your sheet needs to be set up as follows:

Quote (page#, paragraph #)	Connection to/response/reflection on quote
"Only I never saw another butterfly./ That butterfly was the last one. / Butterflies don't live in here,/ in the ghetto." ( <u>I Never Saw Another Butterfly</u> , 39)	This reminds me of <u>Night</u> when Elie hears his friend play the violin while they are all in the shack. Elie talks about how it was so beautiful to listen to even in the midst of the torture of their being evacuated from the Concentration Camp. I think the butterfly is like that music. It is so beautiful and unexpected. In another situation, he might not even have noticed the butterfly. But in Terezin, there are so few beautiful things that he has to hold onto it when he sees it, letting it linger in his memory to help him through the horrors.

Your job for the next meeting is to be the

# Illustrious Illustrator

Your job is to draw some kind of artwork related to the reading. It can be a sketch, cartoon, diagram, collage, flow chart, diorama, sculpture, or stick figure scene—anything hand-created! ***You may not use clip art for this assignment***, as it must be created by you! You can create artwork of something that is discussed specifically in the reading, or of something that the reading reminded you of, or an illustration that conveys any idea or feeling you got from the reading. Any kind of drawing or graphic is okay—you can even label things with words, if that helps. Make your drawing large, on a plain white sheet of paper without making any comments. On the reverse side of your artwork, write a paragraph that explains what you drew, where it came from in the selection, and why you chose that image to capture (because it was the easiest is not an acceptable explanation). Let the people in the group make comments on what they think your picture means or represents. After everyone else has a say, you get the last word! Tell them what your picture means, where it came from, and what it represents to you.

**You need a total of THREE illustrations, and at least ONE per chapter.**

Your Job for the next meeting is to be the

# Vocab Driver

Your job is to be on the lookout for especially important words in today’s reading. If you find words that are puzzling, unfamiliar, interesting, funny-sounding, etc., write them down on paper as soon as you come across them including their page number and paragraph number. You may also come across words that stand out in the reading: words that are repeated a lot, used in an unusual way, or key to the meaning of the reading. Make note of these words on your sheet also and be ready to point them out in the group. After you finish reading the selection, get a dictionary and write the definition of each word based on the context in which they were used. When it is your turn to present your information, help fellow group members find them by telling them on what page and in which paragraph they are located.

**You need 15-20 WORDS FOR YOUR PRESENTATION!**

Your sheet must be set up in a graph as follows:

Page # and ¶#	Word	Your Definition	Dictionary Definition	Importance (why did I choose this word?)

Your job for our next meeting is to be the

## Summary Specialist

Your job is to prepare a brief summary or conclusion of today's reading. This is a kind of "chapter" or "section" summary of what was read for this meeting. The other members of your group will be counting on you to give a quick (1 or 2 minutes max!) statement that conveys the "gist", the key points, the main highlights, or in other words, the ESSENCE of today's reading. Remember, that you are focusing on the big details, not the small minutia. Please use the format below, where you will write the key points (actions, events, themes) followed by a paragraph summarizing what happened in your chapter. ***Do not combine chapters into one summary!***

**You must do a separate summary for each chapter you read for the literature circle meeting.**

Key points (main events or details from the chapter):

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Summary (paragraph that gives an overview of what happened in the chapter):

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Your job for our next meeting is to be the

## Passage Finder

Your job is to locate a few special sections in the reading that you connect with, ***that you will read aloud to your group***. The idea is to help people remember some interesting, powerful, funny, puzzling, or otherwise important sections of the reading. You decide which passages or paragraphs are worth hearing, and then jot down plans on paper for how they should be shared. You should practice reading the passages aloud to yourself, including dialog, so that you can interject emotion, feeling, meaning, and accent. Remember to vary your reading speed as necessary. Make sure to have the page number and paragraph handy! Possible reasons for picking a passage include, but are not limited to: Important, informative, surprising, funny, confusing, controversial, well-written, thought-provoking, loved the character/event, hated the character/event, etc.

**You need to have a minimum of ONE passage per chapter with at least four passages total prepared to share. Each passage needs to have the quote written out, and a paragraph explaining what each passage is about and why you choose to share it.**