

| Paragraph review   | Points  |
|--|---------|
| Count the number of sentences in your paragraph...<br>6-8 sentences give yourself 10 points<br>< 6 or > 8 sentences give yourself 5 points   |         |
| Underline the first three words of each sentence...<br>If you have 4 different types of sentence openers give yourself 10 points<br>If you have 3 different types of sentence openers give yourself 7 points<br>If you have 2 different types of sentence openers give yourself 3 points<br>If all your sentences start with subject openers, give yourself 1 point<br>OPENERS: subject, adverbial clause, -ing openers, -ed openers, prepositional openers, appositives |         |
| Underline 'ELEVATED' words in your paper<br>Give yourself one point for each big word up to 10 points.<br>(Ask your neighbor if it's an 'elevated' word or your teacher)   |         |
| Support:<br>Give yourself 10 points if you used two examples to support your idea.<br>Give yourself 5 points if you used one example to support your idea.<br>Give yourself 2 points if you used more than 3 examples to support your idea.  |         |
| Transitional words:<br>Give yourself 10 points if you used a strong transitional word in your paragraph.<br>Give yourself 5 points if you used a weak transitional word in your paragraph (therefore, because, although, so, however)  |         |
| Concluding Sentence:<br>If you used a concluding sentence, give yourself 10 points.  |         |
| Total Points   | ____/60 |

## 6 Sentence Patterns To Add Variety to Your Writing

Vary Your Sentence Openings -- To create sentence variety and to clarify the relationship of your ideas, use various sentence openings that modify the sentence preceding it.

1. **-ing phrase opener** (present participle phrase) example sentences:

Looking rather pale, she obviously was sick.

Fighting for his life, the swimmer struggled to shore as waves crashed into him.

Spewing out black smoke, the old Model T Ford chugged up the hill.

Pattern: -ing phrase, complete sentence (-ing phrase, subject + predicate). Hint: -ing phrase should tell reader what the subject is doing, shows subject's action.

2. **-ed phrase opener** (past participle phrase) example sentences:

Baffled by what had happened, Francis sat in silence with a dumb look on his face.

Bothered by the ants, Larry brought out the industrial can of RAID ant spray.

Caught with his hand in the cookie jar, the boy pleaded innocence with his mom.

Pattern: -ed phrase, complete sentence (-ed phrase, subject + predicate) Hint: Many past participles are irregular forms. For example: 'catch' becomes 'caught' as a past participle.

3. **-ly opener** (adverb) example sentences:

Quickly, the teacher closed the door to the classroom.

Sadly, the girls were unable to get back into the classroom.

Cleverly, they tried to get a key from Mrs. Price.

Pattern: -ly word, complete sentence (-ly word, subject + predicate)

4. **prepositional phrase opener** example sentences:

In the magazine, one can find various clothing ads and articles. On page four, the reader can learn how to make scary treats for Halloween.

Under the bridge, the troll waited for the language arts teacher.

Pattern: prepositional phrase, complete sentence (prepositional phrase, subject + predicate).

5. **to openers** (infinitive phrase) example sentences:

To get to work on time, Jim sped down the highway at 80 miles per hour.

To experience nature, one should walk in the woods rather than read a book.

To visualize an essay, a student may want to first outline or map out ideas.

Pattern: To phrase and complete sentence (To phrase, subject + predicate)

6. **Appositive** -- Use an appositive to add additional information. example sentences:

Dr. Jones, a surgeon for Mercy Hospital, was on-call 24 hours a day.

The anchor introduced a bumper, a short video tease of upcoming news, to the audience.

The farmer decided to use LSNA, a legal pesticide, to eradicate the bugs.

Pattern: An appositive modifies a noun; therefore, it follows the noun it modifies or explains/defines in more detail.

\*<http://www.merced.cc.ca.us/faculty/pirov/sentvar.htm>

## Sentence Variety: Sentence Beginnings

Sentences that repeatedly begin with similar elements, such as the subject or a construction like *there is* or *there were*, do not engage a reader. Consider the following variations for beginning sentences.

1. Begin with a dependent clause or a clause condensed to a phrase. *Examples:* While my friends were waiting for the movie to begin, they ate three tubs of popcorn. While waiting for the movie to begin, my friends ate popcorn.
2. Begin with a participle or an adjective. A sentence can begin with a participle or an adjective if the word is in a phrase that refers to the subject of the independent clause. *Examples* Waiting for the movie to begin, my friends ate popcorn. Forced to work late, they ordered a pepperoni pizza. Aware of the problems, they nevertheless decided to continue.
3. Begin with a prepositional phrase. *Examples* On a busy street in Tokyo, the traveler was lost. With immense joy, we watched our team win the pennant. You can also occasionally try inverted word order. At the end of my block stands a deserted building.
4. Begin with an infinitive. *Example* To prove his point, he turned to the encyclopedia.

\*<http://college.hmco.com/english/raimes/digitalkeys/keyshtml/sentenc7.htm>

# MLA Formatting

MLA (Modern Language Association) style is most commonly used to write papers within the liberal arts and humanities.

If you use Word, you can download a template to your computer. Save it as a template and use to create future files by using the 'save as' feature so as not to lose your template.

<http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/templates/research-paper-in-mla-style-TC001018376.aspx>

## General Guidelines:

- Double space the text of your paper, use a legible font in size 12 pt. (Times New Roman, Calibri, Arial, etc.)
- Leave only one space after periods or other punctuation marks.
- Set the margins to one inch on all sides.
- Indent the first line of paragraphs one half inch from the left margin, MLA recommends that you use the Tab key or by pushing the space bar five times.
- 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. Use your last name one space page number – Hall 1.
- In the upper hand of the first page, list your name, your instructor's name, the course, and the date. (double-spaced)
- Double space again and enter the title, centered.
- Works cited pages are alphabetized and only the first line of the entry is left aligned with margin, all subsequent lines are indented. All is double spaced.
- First page heading should include: (double spaced)  
Your Name  
Mrs. Hall  
Senior Composition  
19 August 2014

See samples on next page.....

Rider 1

Paige Rider

Professor S. A. Marker

English 101

3 April 2011

## How College Writing Differs from High School:

## Essays that Welcome Uncertainty and Seek out Debates Lead to True Growth

In high school, teachers who asked me to write personal essays or expository papers typically rewarded what Smith describes as “the emotions and knowledge that the students already know well” (123). On other hand, success in college means being ready to “explore an idea, probe an issue, solve a problem, or make an argument that compels us to turn to outside help” (Gibaldi 2). That phrase “turn to outside help” is a good definition of what it means to research – to search

Rider 4

## Works Cited

- Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. New York: Modern Language Association, 2010. Print.
- Hectopus, Hector. “It Reminds Me of the Time I Gave a Speech.” *Self-referential Speeches of World*. Ed. Cecillia C. Above. New York: 2011. Print.
- Russell, Tony, Allen Brizee, Elizabeth Angeli, and Russell Keck. “MLA Works Cited Page: Basic Format.” *Purdue OWL*. Purdue University. Web. 30 Mar. 2011.
- Smith, Harriet. “Titles of Journal Articles Go in Quotes.” *Name of the Journal* 12.1 (2010): 34-56. Web. 30 Mar. 2011|

<http://jerz.setonhill.edu/writing/academic1/mla-style-papers/screen-shot-2011-05-29-at-4-07-02-pm/#main>

## Outline Structure for Literary Analysis Essay

### I. Catchy Title

#### II. Paragraph 1: Introduction (Use HATMAT)

- A. Hook
- B. Author
- C. Title
- D. Main characters (if it ties into your prompt)
- E. A short summary
- F. Thesis

#### III. Paragraph 2: First Body Paragraph

- A. Topic sentence (what this paragraph will discuss, how it will prove your thesis)
- B. Context for the quote 1. Who says it? 2. What's happening in the text when they say it?
- C. Quote from the text (cited appropriately)
- D. Analysis of the quote: How does it prove your thesis? E. Closing sentence (wrap up the paragraph to effectively transition to the next paragraph)

#### IV. Paragraph 3: Second Body Paragraph

- A. Topic sentence (what this paragraph will discuss, how it will prove your thesis)
- B. Context for the quote 1. Who says it? 2. What's happening in the text when they say it?
- C. Quote from the text (cited appropriately)
- D. Analysis of the quote: How does it prove your thesis?
- E. Closing sentence (wrap up the paragraph to effectively transition to the next paragraph)

#### V. Paragraph 4: Third Body Paragraph

- A. Topic sentence (what this paragraph will discuss, how it will prove your thesis)
- B. Context for the quote 1. Who says it? 2. What's happening in the text when they say it?
- C. Quote from the text (cited appropriately)
- D. Analysis of the quote: How does it prove your thesis?
- E. Closing sentence (wrap up the paragraph to effectively transition to the next paragraph)

#### VI. Conclusion (You do not necessarily have to follow this order, but include the following):

- A. Summarize your argument.
- B. Extend the argument.
- C. Show why the text is important.

## Parts to a Great Essay

Same as above, just worded differently

### 1. A Catchy Title

2. **Introduction:** the opening paragraph. The introduction should include the following:

a. Hook, Author, Title, Main Characters, A Short Summary, Thesis

b. Hook: The beginning sentences of the introduction that catch the reader's interest. Ways of beginning creatively include the following:

- A startling fact or bit of information
- A meaningful quotation (from the work or another source)
- A rich, vivid description
- An analogy or metaphor

c. Introductions should identify the work of literature being discussed, name the author, and briefly present the issue that the body of your essay will more fully develop (your thesis). Basically, introductions suggest that something interesting is occurring in a particular work of literature.

3. **Body:** The body of your paper should logically and fully develop and support your thesis.

a. Each body paragraph should focus on one main idea that supports your thesis statement.

b. These paragraphs include:

**i. A topic sentence** – a topic sentence states the main point of a paragraph: it serves as a mini-thesis for the paragraph. You might think of it as a signpost for your readers—or a headline—something that alerts them to the most important, interpretive points in your essay. It might be helpful to think of a topic sentence as working in two directions simultaneously. It relates the paragraph to the essay's thesis, and thereby acts as a signpost for the argument of the paper as a whole, but it also defines the scope of the paragraph itself.

**ii. Context for the quote** 1. Who says it? What is happening in the text when they say it? 2. This prepares the reader for the quote by introducing the speaker, setting, and/or situation.

**iii. Quote/Concrete details** - a specific example from the work used to provide evidence for your topic sentence/support thesis.

**iv. Commentary** - your explanation and interpretation of the concrete detail. Commentary explains how the concrete detail proves the thesis.

**Clincher/Concluding Sentence** - last sentence of the body paragraph. It concludes the paragraph by tying the concrete details and commentary back to the major thesis.



**4. Conclusion:** the last paragraph where you are given one last chance to convince the reader of your argument and provide a sense of closure.

a. Summarize your argument AND extend your argument.

b. A sophisticated conclusion does not simply restate the thesis of the introduction or summarize the logic presented in the body of the essay. Your conclusion, most often, will try to suggest the broader significance of your discussion – why is it important? In other words, suggest in your introduction that some literary phenomenon is occurring. In the body of your essay, use examples and fully developed logic to prove that the literary phenomenon takes place. Finally, in your conclusion suggest why such a phenomenon is significant.

\*Source: [amundsenhs.org/](http://amundsenhs.org/)

### Citing sources in the text

In MLA style, writers place references to sources in the paper to briefly identify them and enable readers to find them in the Works Cited list. These parenthetical references should be kept as brief and as clear as possible.

- Give only the information needed to identify a source. Usually the author's last name and a page reference suffice.
- Place the parenthetical reference as close as possible to its source. Insert the parenthetical reference where a pause would naturally occur, preferably at the end of a sentence.
- Information in the parenthesis should complement, not repeat, information given in the text. **If you include an author's name in a sentence, you do not need to repeat it in your parenthetical statement.**
- The parenthetical reference should *precede* the punctuation mark that concludes the sentence, clause, or phrase that contains the cited material.
- Electronic and online sources are cited just like print resources in parenthetical references. If an online source lacks page numbers, omit numbers from the parenthetical references. If an online source includes fixed page numbers or section numbering, such as numbering of paragraphs, cite the relevant numbers.

#### Examples:

#### QUOTING ONE LINE OR LESS FROM A POEM

Only include the line number in the parenthetical citation. Be sure to make clear the author and the poem in your sentence.

**Example:** In Richard Howard's "Oystering," he writes, "Lunch is served" (45).

#### QUOTING BETWEEN ONE AND THREE LINES FROM A POEM

Replace the line breaks with a virgule (a backslash). For a stanza break, use two virgules.

**Example:** Mary Reufle's "The Hand" opens with the lines, "The teacher asks a question. / You know the answer, you suspect / you are the only one..." (1-3).

#### QUOTING MORE THAN THREE LINES FROM A POEM

Indent the poem one inch from the left margin. Do not use quotation marks. Punctuation follows the quote and before the parenthetical cite.

Ronald Wallace's poem "The Student Theme" describes words as if they were people: The adjectives all ganged up on the nouns, Insistent, loud, demanding, inexact, Their Latinate constructions flashing. The pronouns Lost their referents: They were dangling, lacked the stamina to follow the prepositions lead in, on, into, to, toward, for, or from. (1-6)

**Author's name in text**

Dover has expressed this concern (118-21).

**Author's name in reference**

This concern has been expressed (Dover 118-21).

**Multiple authors of a work**

This hypothesis (Bradley and Rogers 7) suggested this theory (Sumner, Reichl, and Waugh 23).

**Two locations**

Williams alludes to this premise (136-39, 145).

**Works with no author**

When a work has no author, use the work's title or a shortened version of the title when citing it in text. (If abbreviating a title, omit initial articles and begin with the word by which it is alphabetized in the Works Cited list.):

as stated by the presidential commission (*Report 4*).

## Comma Review:

In a *Time* magazine essay, "In Praise of the Humble Comma," author Pico Iyer compares the comma to "a flashing yellow light that asks us only to slow down." But when do we need to flash that light, and when is it better to let the sentence ride on through without interruption? Here we'll consider four main guidelines for using commas effectively. But keep in mind that these are *only* guidelines: there are no unbreakable rules for using commas--or any other marks of punctuation.

### 1. Use a Comma Before a Coordinator

Use a comma before a coordinator (*and, but, yet, or, nor, for, so*) that links two main clauses:

"The optimist thinks that this is the best of all possible worlds, **and** the pessimist knows it."

(Robert Oppenheimer)

"You may be disappointed if you fail, **but** you are doomed if you don't try."

(Beverly Sills)

However, do *not* use a comma before a coordinator that links two words or phrases:

"Jack **and** Diane sang **and** danced all night."

### 2. Use a Comma to Separate Items in a Series

Use a comma between words, phrases, or clauses that appear in a series of three or more:

"You get injected, inspected, detected, infected, neglected, and selected."

(Arlo Guthrie)

"It is by the goodness of God that in our country we have three unspeakably precious things: freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, and the prudence never to practice either of them."

(Mark Twain)

Notice that in each example a comma appears before but not after the coordinator.

### 3. Use a Comma After an Introductory Word Group

Use a comma after a phrase or clause that precedes the subject of the sentence:

"*When you get to the end of your rope*, tie a knot and hang on."  
(Franklin Roosevelt)

"*If at first you don't succeed*, failure may be your style."  
(Quentin Crisp)

However, if there's no danger of confusing readers, you may omit the comma after a *short* introductory phrase:

"*At first* I thought the challenge was staying awake, so I guzzled venti cappuccinos and 20-ounce Mountain Dew's."

### 4. Use a Pair of Commas to Set Off Interruptions

Use a pair of commas to set off words, phrases, or clauses that interrupt a sentence:

"Words are, *of course*, the most powerful drug used by mankind."  
(Rudyard Kipling)

"Literature is all, *or mostly*, about expression."

But don't use commas to set off words that directly affect the essential meaning of the sentence:

"Your manuscript is both good and original. But the part *that is good* is not original, and the part *that is original* is not good."  
(Samuel Johnson)

### Proper Use of Semicolons, Colons, and Dashes:

Some joker once observed that the semicolon is "a comma that has gone to college." Maybe that explains why so many writers try to avoid the mark: too highfalutin, they think, and a little old fashioned to boot. As for the colon--well, unless you're a surgeon, *that* one sounds downright scary.

The dash, on the other hand, frightens nobody. As a result, many writers overwork the mark, using it like a chef's knife to slice and dice their prose. The result can be pretty unappetizing.

In fact, all three marks of punctuation--the semicolon, the colon, and the dash--can be effective when used sparingly. And the guidelines for using them are not especially tricky. So let's consider the primary jobs carried out by each of these three marks.

### Semicolons (;)

Use a semicolon to separate two main clauses not joined by a coordinating conjunction:

Those who write clearly have readers; those who write obscurely have commentators.

We can also use a semicolon to separate main clauses joined by a conjunctive adverb (such as *however, consequently, otherwise, moreover, nevertheless*):  
A great many people may think that they are thinking; however, most are merely rearranging their prejudices.

Basically, a semicolon (whether followed by a conjunctive adverb or not) serves to coordinate two main clauses.

### Colons (:)

Use a colon to set off a summary or a series *after* a complete main clause:

It is time for the baby's birthday party: a white cake, strawberry-marshmellow ice cream, and a clean bib.

Notice that a main clause does not have to *follow* the colon; however, a complete main clause generally should precede it.

### Dashes (--)

Use a dash to set off a short summary after a complete main clause:

At the bottom of Pandora's Box lay the final gift--hope.

We may also use a pair of dashes in place of a pair of commas to set off words, phrases, or clauses that interrupt a sentence with additional--but not essential--information:

In the great empires of antiquity--Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, Persia--splendid though they were, freedom was unknown.

Unlike parentheses (which tend to de-emphasize the information contained between them), dashes are *more* emphatic than commas. And dashes are particularly useful for setting off items in a series that are already separated by commas.

These three punctuation marks--semicolons, colons, and dashes--are most effective when used sparingly.

## Why read out loud?

Reading aloud has many benefits that will strengthen your editing process. Most people have far more experience listening to and speaking English than they do reading and editing it on the printed page. When you read your draft out loud or listen to someone else read it, your brain gets the information in a new way, and you may notice things that you didn't see before:

- As listeners, we need the order of ideas in a paper to make sense. We can't flip back and forth from page to page to try to figure out what is going on or find information we need. When you hear your paper read out loud, you may recognize that you need to re-order the information in it or realize that there are gaps in your explanation.
- Listeners also need transitions to help us get from one main idea to the next. When you hear your paper, you may recognize places where you have moved from one topic to another too abruptly.
- We all make errors in our sentences. Sometimes we leave out a word, mess things up as we copy and paste text, or make a grammatical mistake. These kinds of errors can be hard to see on the page, but sentences that contain them are very likely to sound wrong. For native speakers of English (and some non-native speakers, too), reading out loud is one of the most powerful proofreading techniques around.
- Sometimes sentences aren't grammatically incorrect, but they are still awkward in some way—too long, too convoluted, too repetitive. Problems like these are often easily heard.
- Hearing your paper can also help you get a sense of whether the tone is right. Does it sound too formal? Too chatty or casual? What kind of impression will your voice in this paper make on a reader? Sometimes hearing your words helps you get a more objective sense of the impression you are creating—listening puts in you in something more like the position your reader will be in as he/she moves through your text.

### What are some strategies for reading out loud?

Reading your paper out loud has a lot of benefits, but it presents a few challenges, too. One issue is that a lot depends on how you read. It is very easy to read too quickly or to let your brain automatically “smooth over” mistakes, fill in missing words, and make little corrections without you ever becoming consciously aware that it's happening. If you don't read exactly what is on the printed page, you won't get an accurate sense of what is in your paper. Here are some strategies to help you read out loud effectively:

- Try working from a printed copy. This will allow you to make marks at places where something sounds wrong to you so you can return to them later.
- As you read, follow along with your finger, pointing at each word. This can help you stay focused and not skip anything.
- Try to read at a moderate pace.
- If you are proofreading, consider reading your paper out loud one sentence at a time, starting at the end and working back to the beginning. This will help you focus on the structure of each sentence, rather than on the overall flow of your argument.



- Try covering up everything but the section or sentence you are working on at the moment so you can concentrate on it and not get lost.

One great strategy to try is to ask a friend to read your paper out loud while you listen. Make sure that your friend knows to read exactly what is on the printed page. Pay close attention to places where your friend seems to stumble or get lost—those may be places where you need to make things clearer for your readers. As your friend is speaking, you can jot notes on a printed copy of the paper. You don't have to be in the same room to do this—you could email a copy of your paper to your friend and ask him/her to call you and read to you over the phone.

Web-based text to speech applications allow you to hear your text read without having to install any software on your computer. You will need an active internet connection to have your text translated into speech—but you may then be able to download a wav or mp3 file and listen to your paper on your mp3 player or computer.

**iSpeech:** [www.ispeech.org](http://www.ispeech.org). The iSpeech website offers a demonstration of its text to voice conversion; if you try it and like it, click “personal use” and create a free account. Now you will be able to upload files or paste your text into a box on the iSpeech site. When your chosen text has been converted to speech, just press “listen.” You can download the speech file or podcast it. The voice iSpeech uses is fairly natural; unfortunately, you cannot choose from a variety of voices, control the speed at which the voice reads while it is playing, or stop and start the voice. iSpeech may have trouble uploading open files, so be sure to close your file first if you want to upload everything. iSpeech does not highlight text as it reads, so if that's important to you, this is not a good reader for you. If you download the sound file, you can open it with a media player. iSpeech works for PDF, text, html, Excel, Word, rtf, and even Powerpoint files. Conversion is often fairly quick, and your uploads are archived with your account.

**Yakitome** [www.yakitome.com](http://www.yakitome.com). On this website, click on “Free Text to Speech” to create an account. Experiment with the different voices (the AT&T ones sound more natural than the Microsoft ones), choose your settings, and paste in your text. Your request will then be put in a work queue; it may take quite some time for it to be converted (it took 15 minutes for a four-page paper in one of our tests), so it's best if you have something else to work on while you wait. Longer documents seem to linger at the bottom of the work queue. Once the conversion is done, your text is stored on the site as an mp3 or wav file in the Yakitome Podcast Library and can be downloaded (to listen to it on your computer or mp3 player). It is stored as private, unless you set it as public, so you'll need to sign into your account to access it. Yakitome's controls take a little getting used to, and its pronunciation is occasionally imperfect. Click “text” under view if you want to look at your text onscreen while listening. Hover your cursor over various controls to see how they work.

You should never have a quotation standing alone as a complete sentence, or, worse yet, as an incomplete sentence, in your writing. We all know what happens when you let go of a helium balloon; it flies away. In a way, the same thing happens when you present a quotation that is standing all by itself in your writing, a quotation that is not "held down" by one of your own sentences. The quotation will seem disconnected from your own thoughts and from the flow of your sentences. Ways to integrate quotations properly into your own sentences are explained below.

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's philosophy might be summed up best by his repeated request for people to ignore the insignificant details of life: "Our life is frittered away by detail. An honest man has hardly need to count more than his ten fingers, or in extreme cases he may add his ten toes, and lump the rest. Simplicity, simplicity, simplicity!"

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: Thoreau asks, "Why should we live with such hurry and waste of life?"

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. \*Blending quotations by Colin Welch

## ***Literary/Rhetorical Devices:***

**Purpose:** Knowing these terms will allow you to discuss an author's work at a more sophisticated level as you discuss how an author achieves his or her purpose.

**Allegory** – The device of using character and/or story elements symbolically to represent an abstraction in addition to the literal meaning. In some allegories, for example, an author may intend the characters to personify an abstraction like hope or freedom. The allegorical meaning usually deals with moral truth or a generalization about human existence.

**Ex.** "Animal Farm" George Orwell

**Alliteration** - The repetition of sounds, especially initial consonants in two or more neighboring words (as in "she sells sea shells). Although the term is not used frequently in the multiple-choice section, you can look for alliteration in any essay passage. The repetition can reinforce meaning, unify ideas, supply a musical sound, and/or echo the sense of the passage.

**Allusion** – A direct or indirect reference to something which is presumably commonly known, such as an event, book, myth, place, or work of art. Allusions can be historical, literary, religious, topical, or mythical. There are many more possibilities, and a work may simultaneously use multiple layers of allusion.

**Ex.** "Plan ahead: it wasn't raining when Noah built the ark" - Richard Cushing

**Ambiguity** (am-bi-gyoo-i-tee) - The multiple meanings, either intentional or unintentional, of a word, phrase, sentence, or passage.

**Analogy** - A similarity or comparison between two different things or the relationship between them. An analogy can explain something unfamiliar by associating it with or pointing out its similarity to something more familiar. Analogies can also make writing more vivid, imaginative, or intellectually engaging.

**Ex.** He that voluntarily continues ignorance is guilty of all the crimes which ignorance produces, as to him that should extinguish the tapers of a lighthouse might justly be imputed the calamities of shipwrecks." -Samuel Johnson

**Anaphora** (uh-naf-er-uh) – One of the devices of repetition, in which the same expression (word or words) is repeated at the beginning of two or more lines, clauses, or sentences. **Ex.** "It was the best of times; it was the worst of times." "They are masters who instruct us without rod or ferule, without angry words, without clothes or money." –Richard de Bury

**Anecdote** – A short narrative detailing particulars of an interesting episode or event. The term most frequently refers to an incident in the life of a person.

**Antecedent** (an-tuh-**seed**-nt) - The word, phrase, or clause referred to by a pronoun. The AP Language exam occasionally asks for the antecedent of a given pronoun in a long, complex sentence or in a group of sentences

**Antithesis (an-tih-theh-sis)** – Figure of balance in which two contrasting ideas are intentionally juxtaposed, usually through parallel structure; a contrasting of opposing ideas in adjacent phrases, clauses, or sentences. Antithesis creates a definite and systematic relationship between ideas.

**Ex.** “He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose” – Jim Elliot “That’s one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind” - Neil Armstrong

**Aphorism** – A terse statement of known authorship which expresses a general truth or a moral principle. (If the authorship is unknown, the statement is generally considered to be a folk proverb.) An aphorism can be a memorable summation of the author’s point.

**Apostrophe** – A figure of speech that directly addresses an absent or imaginary person or a personified abstraction, such as liberty or love. It is an address to someone or something that cannot answer. The effect is to give vent to or display intense emotion, which can no longer be held back:

**Ex.** William Wordsworth addresses John Milton as he writes, “Milton, thou shouldst be living at this hour:/England hath need of thee.” “O value of wisdom that fadeth not away with time, virtue ever flourishing that cleanseth its possessor from all venom! O heavenly gift of the divine bounty, descending from the Father of lights, that thou mayest exalt the rational soul to the very heavens! Thou art the celestial nourishment of the intellect...” - Richard de Bury

**Asyndeton (uh-sin-di-tu/hn)**: consists of omitting conjunctions between words, phrases, or clauses. This can give the effect of unpremeditated multiplicity, of an extemporaneous rather than a labored account.

Asyndetic lists can be more emphatic than if a final conjunction were used.

**Ex.** On his return he received medals, honors, treasures, titles, fame. They spent the day wondering, searching, thinking, understanding.

**Atmosphere** – The emotional mood created by the entirety of a literary work, established partly by the setting and partly by the author’s choice of objects that are described. Even such elements as description of the weather can contribute to the atmosphere. Frequently atmosphere foreshadows events. Perhaps it can create a mood.

**Chiasmus (kahy-az-muhs)** - (From the Greek word for “criss-cross,” a designation based on the Greek letter “chi,” written X). Chiasmus is a figure of speech in which two successive phrases or clauses are parallel in syntax, but reverse the order of the analogous words.

**Ex.** “The land was ours before we were the land’s” - Robert Frost (N, V, Pro: Pro, V, N)

“Pleasure’s a sin, and sometimes sin’s a pleasure” – Lord Byron

Sitting together at lunch, the kids talked incessantly; but they said nothing at all sitting in the dentist’s office.

**Clause** – A grammatical unit that contains both a subject and a verb. An independent, or main, clause expresses a complete thought and can stand alone as a sentence. A dependent, or subordinate clause cannot stand alone as a sentence and must be accompanied by an independent clause. The point that you want to consider is the question of what or why the author subordinates one element to the other. You should also become aware of making effective use of subordination in your own writing.

**Colloquial/colloquialism** (kuj-loh-kwee-uhl) - The use of slang or informalities in speech or writing. Not generally acceptable for formal writing, colloquialisms give a work a conversational, familiar tone. Colloquial expressions in writing include local or regional dialects.

**Coherence** - A principle demanding that the parts of any composition be arranged so that the meaning of the whole may be immediately clear and intelligible. Words, phrases, clauses within the sentence; and sentences, paragraphs, and chapters in larger pieces of writing are the unit that by their progressive and logical arrangement, make for coherence.

**Conceit** - A fanciful expression, usually in the form of an extended metaphor or surprising analogy between seemingly dissimilar objects. A conceit displays intellectual cleverness as a result of the unusual comparison being made.

**Connotation** - The non-literal, associative meaning of a word; the implied, suggested meaning. Connotations may involve ideas, emotions, or attitudes.

**Denotation** – The strict, literal, dictionary definition of a word, devoid of any emotion attitude, or color.

**Diacoep** – repetition of a word or phrase after an intervening word or phrase: word/phrase X, . . ., word/phrase X.

**Ex.** We will do it, I tell you; we will do it.

We give thanks to Thee, O God, we give thanks (Psalm 75:1)

**Diction** – Related to style, diction refers to the writer’s word choices, especially with regard to their correctness, clearness, or effectiveness. For the AP exam, you should be able to describe an author’s diction (for example, formal or informal, ornate or plain) and understand the ways in which diction can complement the author’s purpose. Diction, combined with syntax, figurative language, literary devices, etc., creates an author’s style.

**Didactic** (dahy-dak-tik) – From the Greek, *didactic* literally means “teaching.” Didactic works have the primary aim of teaching or instructing, especially the teaching of moral or ethical principles.

**Enumeration** – Figure of amplification in which a subject is divided into constituent parts or details, and may include a listing of causes, effects, problems, solutions, conditions, and consequences; the listing or detailing of the parts of something.

**Ex.** I love her eyes, her hair, her nose, her cheeks, her lips.

“Who’s gonna turn down a Junior Mint? It’s chocolate; it’s peppermint; it’s delicious. . . It’s very refreshing!” – Kramer (*Seinfeld*).

**Expletive (ek-spli-tiv)** - Figure of emphasis in which a single word or short phrase, usually interrupting normal speech, is used to lend emphasis to the words on either side of the expletive.

**Ex.** *in fact, of course, to be sure, indeed, I suppose, I hope, you know, you see, clearly, in any event, in effect, certainly, remarkably.*

**Euphemism (yoo-fuh-miz-uhm)** - From the Greek for “good speech,” euphemisms are a more agreeable or less offensive substitute for a generally unpleasant word or concept. The euphemism may be used to adhere to standards of social or political correctness or to add humor or ironic understatement.

**Ex.** Saying “earthly remains” rather than “corpse” is an example of euphemism.

**Exposition** - In essays, one of the four chief types of composition, the others being argumentation, description, and narration. The purpose of exposition is to explain something. In drama, the exposition is the introductory material, which creates the tone, gives the setting, and introduces the characters and conflict.

**Extended metaphor** – A metaphor developed at great length, occurring frequently in or throughout the work.

**Figurative language** – Writing or speech that is not intended to carry literal meaning and is usually meant to be imaginative and vivid.

**Figure of speech** – A device used to produce figurate language. Many compare dissimilar things. Figures of speech include apostrophe, hyperbole, irony, metaphor, metonymy, oxymoron, paradox, personification, simile, synecdoche, and understatement.

**Generic conventions** – This term describes traditions for each genre. These conventions help to define each genre; for example, they differentiate an essay and journalistic writing or an autobiography and political writing. On the AP language exam, try to distinguish the unique features of a writer’s work from those dictated by convention.

**Genre** – The major category into which a literary work fits. The basic divisions of literature are prose, poetry, and drama. However, genre is a flexible term; within these broad boundaries exist many subdivisions that are often called genres themselves. For example, prose can be divided into fiction (novels and short stories) or nonfiction (essays, biographies, autobiographies, etc). Poetry can be divided into lyric, dramatic, narrative, epic, etc. Drama can be divided into tragedy, comedy, melodrama, farce, etc. ON the AP language exam, expect the majority of the passages to be from the following genres: autobiography, biography, diaries, criticism, essays, and journalistic, political, scientific, and nature writing.

**Homily (hom-uh-lee)**- This term literally means “sermon,” but more informally, it can include any serious talk, speech, or lecture involving moral or spiritual advice.



**Hyperbole** (hahy-pur-buh-lee) – A figure of speech using deliberate exaggeration or overstatement. Hyperboles often have a comic effect; however, a serious effect is also possible.

Often, hyperbole produces irony.

**Ex.** “So first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself” - Franklin D. Roosevelt

This stuff is used motor oil compared to the coffee you make, my love.

**Hypophora** – Figure of reasoning in which one or more questions is/are asked and then answered, often at length, by one and the same speaker; raising and responding to one’s own question(s). A common usage is to ask the question at the beginning of a paragraph and then use the paragraph to answer it. You can use hypophora to raise questions which you think the reader obviously has on his/her mind and would like to see formulated and answered. **Ex.** “When the enemy struck on that June day of 1950, what did America do? It did what it always has done in all its times of peril. It appealed to the heroism of its youth.” - Dwight D. Eisenhower

**Imagery** - The sensory details or figurative language used to describe, arouse emotion, or represent abstractions. On a physical level, imagery uses terms related to the five senses; we refer to visual, auditory, tactile, gustatory, or olfactory imagery. On a broader and deeper level, however, one image can represent more than one thing. For example, a rose may present visual imagery while also representing the color in a woman’s cheeks and/or symbolizing some degree of perfection (It is the highest flower on the Great Chain of Being). An author may use complex imagery while simultaneously employing other figures of speech, especially metaphor and simile. In addition, this term can apply to the total of all the images in a work. ON the AP exam, pay attention to *how* an author creates imagery and to the effect of this imagery.

**Inference/infer** – To draw a reasonable conclusion from the information presented. When a multiple-choice question asks for an inference to be drawn from a passage, the most direct, most reasonable inference is the safest answer choice. If an inference is implausible, it’s unlikely to be the correct answer. **Note that if the answer choice is directly stated, it is *not* inferred and is wrong.** You must be careful to note the connotation –negative or positive – of the choices.

**Invective** – an emotionally violent, verbal denunciation or attack using strong, abusive language.

**Irony/ironic** - The contrast between what is stated explicitly and what is really meant. The difference between what appears to be and what actually is true. In general, there are three major types of irony used in language;

- (1) In a *verbal* irony, the words literally state the opposite of the writer’s (or speaker’s) true meaning.
- (2) In *situational* irony, events turn out the opposite of what was expected. What the characters and the readers think ought to happen.

(3) In *dramatic* irony, facts or events are unknown to a character in a play or piece of fiction, but known to the reader, audience, or other characters in the work. Irony is used for many reasons, but frequently, it's used to create poignancy or humor.

**Juxtaposition** (*juhk-stuh-puh-zish-uhn*) - When two words, phrases, images, ideas are placed close together or side by side for comparison or contrast.

**Litotes** (*lahy-toh-teez*) – From the Greek word “simple” or “plain.” Litotes is a figure of thought in which a point is affirmed by negating its opposite. It is a special form of understatement, where the surface denial serves, through ironic contrast, to reinforce the underlying assertion.

**Ex.** He's no fool (which implies he is wise).

Not uncommon (which implies that the act is frequent)

**Loose sentence** - a type of sentence in which the main idea (independent clause) comes first, followed by dependent grammatical units such as phrases and clauses. If a period were placed at the end of the independent clause, the clause would be a complete sentence. A work containing many loose sentences often seems informal, relaxed, and conversational. Generally loose sentences create loose style.

**Metaphor** – A figure of speech using implied comparison of seemingly unlike things or the substitution of one for the other, suggesting some similarity. Metaphorical language makes writing more vivid, imaginative, thought provoking, and meaningful.

**Metonymy** (*mi-ton-uh-mee*) – A term from the Greek meaning “changed label” or “substitute name.” Metonymy is a figure of speech in which the name of one object is substituted for that of another closely associated with it. A news release that claims “the White House declared” rather than “the President declared” is using metonymy. The substituted term generally carries a more potent emotional response.

**Mood** – This term has two distinct technical meanings in English writing. The first meaning is grammatical and deals with verbal units and a speaker's attitude. The *indicative* mood is used only for factual sentences. For example, “Joe eats too quickly.” The *subjective* mood is used to express conditions contrary to fact. For example, “If I were you, I'd get another job.” The *imperative* mood is used for commands. For example, “Shut the door!” The second meaning of mood is literary, meaning the prevailing atmosphere or emotional aura of a work. Setting, tone, and events can affect the mood. In this usage, mood is similar to tone and atmosphere.

**Narrative** – The telling of a story or an account of an event or series of events.

**Onomatopoeia** (*on-uh-mat-uh-pee-uh*) – A figure of speech in which natural sounds are imitated in the sounds of words. Simple examples include such words as *buzz*, *hiss*, *hum*, *crack*, *whinny*, and *murmur*. If you note examples of onomatopoeia in an essay passage, note the effect.

**Oxymoron** – From the Greek for “pointedly foolish,” an oxymoron is a figure of speech wherein the author groups apparently contradictory terms to suggest a paradox. Simple examples include “jumbo shrimp” and “cruel kindness.” This term does not usually appear in the multiple-choice questions, but there is a chance that you might find it in an essay. Take note of the effect which the author achieves with this term.

**Paradox** – A statement that appears to be self-contradictory or opposed to common sense but upon closer inspection contains some degree of truth or validity.

**Parallelism** – Also referred to as parallel construction or parallel structure, this term comes from Greek roots meaning “beside one another.” It refers to the grammatical or rhetorical framing of words, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs to give structural similarity. This can involve, but is not limited to repetition of a grammatical element such as a preposition or verbal phrase. A famous example of parallelism begins Charles Dickens’s novel *A Tale of Two Cities*: “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity . . .” The effects of parallelism are numerous, but frequently they act as an organizing force to attract the reader’s attention, add emphasis and organization, or simply provide a musical rhythm.

**Parody** – A work that closely imitates the style or content of another with the specific aim of comic effect and/or ridicule. As comedy, parody distorts or exaggerated distinctive features of the original. As ridicule, it mimics the work by repeating and borrowing words, phrases, or characteristics in order to illuminate weaknesses in the original. Well-written parody offers enlightenment about the original, but poorly written parody offers only ineffectual imitation. Usually an audience must grasp literary allusion and understand the work being parodied in order to fully appreciate the nuances of the newer work. Occasionally, however, parodies take on a life of their own and don’t require knowledge of the original.

**Pedantic** (*puh-dan-tik*) - An adjective that describes words, phrases, or general tone that is overly scholarly, academic, or bookish.

**Periodic sentence** – A sentence that presents its central meaning in a main clause at the end. This independent clause is preceded by a phrase or clause that cannot stand alone. For example: “Ecstatic with my AP score, I let out a loud, joyful shout!” The effect of a periodic sentence is to add emphasis and structural variety. It is also a much stronger sentence than the loose sentence.

**Personification** – A figure of speech in which the author presents or describes concepts, animals, or inanimate objects by endowing them with human attributes or emotions.

Personification is used to make these abstractions, animal, or objects appear more vivid to the reader.

**Polysyndeton** (*paulee-sin-dih-tawn*) – Figure of addition and emphasis which intentionally employs a series of conjunctions (FANBOYS: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so) not normally found in successive words, phrases or clauses; the deliberate and

excessive use of conjunctions in successive words or clauses. The effect is a feeling of multiplicity, energetic enumeration, and building up – a persistence or intensity.

**Ex.** They read and studied and wrote and drilled. I laughed and talked and flunked. “It’s [football] a way of life, really, to those particular people who are a part of it. It’s more than a game, and regardless of what level it’s played upon, it still demands those attributes of courage **and** stamina **and** coordinated efficiency **and** goes even beyond that **for** [it] is a means – it provides a mental and physical relaxation to everybody that watches it, like yourself.” - Vince Lombardi

**Point of view** – In literature, the perspective from which a story is told. There are two general divisions of point of view, and many subdivisions within those. (1) the *first person narrator* tells the story with the first person pronoun, “I,” and is a character in the story. This narrator can be the protagonist, a participant (character in a secondary role), or an observer (a character who merely watches the action). (2) the *third person narrator* relates the events with the third person pronouns, “he,” “she,” and “it.” There are two main subdivisions to be aware of: *omniscient* and *limited omniscient*. In the “third person omniscient” point of view, the narrator, with godlike knowledge, present the thoughts and actions of any or all characters. This all-knowing narrator can reveal what each character feels and thinks at any given moment. The “third person limited omniscient” point of view, as its name implies, presents the feelings and thoughts of only one character, presenting only the actions of all remaining characters. This definition applies in question in the multiple-choice section. However on the essay portion of the exam, the “point of view” carries an additional meaning. When you are asked to analyze the author’s point of view, the appropriate point for you to address is the author’s *attitude*.

**Predicate adjective** – One type of subject complement is an adjective, group of adjectives, or adjective clause that follows a linking verb. It is the predicate of the sentence, and modifies, or describes, the subject.

**Predicate nominative** - A second type of subject complement - a noun, group of nouns, or noun clause that names the subject., It, like the predicate adjective, follows a linking verb and is located in the predicate of the sentence.

**Prose** – One of the major divisions of genre, prose refers to fiction and non-fiction, including all its forms. In prose the printer determines the length of the line; in poetry, the poet determines the length of the line

**Repetition** - The duplication, either exact or approximate, of any element of language, such as a sound, word, phrase, clause, sentence, or grammatical pattern.

**Rhetoric** – From the Greek for “orator,” this term describes the principles governing the art of writing effectively, eloquently, and persuasively.

**Rhetorical modes** - This flexible term describes the variety, the conventions, and purposes of the major kinds of writing. The four most common rhetorical modes and their purposes are as follows: (1) The purpose of *exposition* (or expository writing) is to explain and analyze information by presenting an idea, relevant evidence, and

appropriate discussion. The AP language exam essay questions are frequently expository topics. (2) The purpose of *argumentation* is to prove the validity of an idea, or point of view, by presenting sound reasoning, discussion, and argument that thoroughly convince the reader. *Persuasive* writing is a type of argumentation having an additional aim of urging some form of action. (3) The purpose of *description* is to re-create, invent, or visually present a person, place, event or action so that the reader can picture that being described. Sometimes an author engages all five senses in description; good descriptive writing can be sensuous and picturesque. Descriptive writing may be straightforward and objective or highly emotional and subjective. (4) The purpose of *narration* is to tell a story or narrate an event or series of events. This writing mode frequently uses the tools of descriptive writing. These four modes are sometimes referred to as mode of discourse.

**Rhetorical Question [erotesis]** – differs from hypophora in that it is not answered by the writer because its answer is obvious or obviously desired, and usually just a yes or no answer would suffice. It is used for effect, emphasis, or provocation, or for drawing a conclusive statement from the fact at hand.

**Ex.** We shrink from change; yet is there anything that can come into being without it? What does Nature hold dearer, or more proper to herself? Could you have a hot bath unless the firewood underwent some change? Could you be nourished if the food suffered no change? Do you not see, then, that change in yourself is the same order, and no less necessary to Nature? -Marcus Aurelius

**Sarcasm** – From the Greek meaning “to tear flesh,” sarcasm involves bitter, caustic language that is meant to hurt or ridicule someone or something. It may use irony as a device, but not all ironic statements are sarcastic, that is, intended to ridicule. When well done, sarcasm can be witty and insightful; when done poorly, it’s simply cruel

**Satire** – A work that targets human vices and follies or social institutions and conventions for reform or ridicule. Regardless of whether or not the work aims to reform human behavior, satire is best seen as a style of writing rather than a purpose for writing. It can be recognized by the many devices used effectively by the satirist: irony, wit, parody, caricature, hyperbole, understatement, and sarcasm. The effects of satire are varied, depending on the writer’s goal, but good satire, often humorous, is thought provoking and insightful about the human condition.

**Semantics** – The branch of linguistics that studies the meaning of words, their historical and psychological development, their connotations, and their relation to one another.

**Style** - The consideration of style has two purposes: (1) An evaluation of the sum of the choices an author makes in blending diction, syntax, figurative language, and other literary devices. Some authors’ styles are so idiosyncratic that we can quickly recognize works by the same author (or a writer emulating that author’s style)/ Compare, for example, Jonathan’s Swift to George Orwell or William Faulkner to Ernest Hemingway.

We can analyze and describe an author’s personal style and make judgments on how appropriate it is to the author’s purpose. Styles can be called flowery, explicit,

succinct, rambling, bombastic, commonplace, incisive, or laconic, to name only a few examples. (2) Classification of authors to a group and comparison of an author to similar authors. By means of such classification and comparison, we can see how an author's style reflects and helps to define a historical period, such as the Renaissance of the Victorian period, or a literary movement, such as the romantic, transcendental or realist movement.

**Subject complement** – The word (with any accompanying phrases) or clauses that follow a linking verb and complements, or completes, the subject of the sentence by either (1) renaming it or (2) describing it. The former is the technically a predicate nominative, the latter a predicate adjective. Multiple-choice questions.

**Subordinate clause** - Like all clauses, this word group contains both a subject and a verb (plus any accompanying phrases or modifiers), but unlike the independent clause, the subordinate clause cannot stand alone; it does not express a complete thought. Also called a dependent clause, the subordinate clause depends on a main clause, sometimes called an independent clause, to complete its meaning. Easily recognized key words and phrases usually begin these clauses for example: *although, because, unless, if even though, since, as soon as, while, who, when, where, how and that.*

**Syllogism (sil- uh-jiz-uhm)** – From the Greek for “reckoning together,” a syllogism (or syllogistic-reasoning or syllogistic logic is a deductive system of formal logic that presents two premises (the first one called “major” and the second, “minor”) that inevitably lead to a sound conclusion. A frequently cited example proceeds as follows; *Major premise:* All men are mortal  
*Minor premise:* Socrates is a man.

*Conclusion:* Therefore, Socrates is mortal.

A Syllogism's conclusion is valid only if each of the two premises is valid. Syllogisms may also present the specific idea first (“Socrates”) and the general second (“All men”).

**Symbol/symbolism** Generally, anything that represents itself and stands for something else. Usually a symbol is something concrete – such as object, action, character, or scene – that represents something more abstract. However, symbols, and symbolism can be much more complex. One system classifies symbols in three categories: (1) *Natural* symbols are objects and occurrences from nature to represent ideas commonly associated with them (dawn symbolizing hope or a new beginning, a rose symbolizing love, a tree symbolizing knowledge). (2) *Conventional* symbols are those that have been invested with meaning by a Group (religious symbols such as a cross or Star of David; national symbols, such as a flag or an eagle; or group symbols, such as a skull and crossbones for pirates or the scales of justice for lawyers). (3) *Literary* symbols are sometimes also conventional in the sense that they are found in a variety of works and are generally recognized. However, a work's symbols may be more complicated as is the whale in *Moby Dick* and the jungle in *Heart of Darkness*. On the AP exam, try to determine what abstraction an object is a symbol for and to what extent it is successful in representing that abstraction.

**Synecdoche** (si-*nek-duh-kee*) – is a type of metaphor in which the part stands for the whole, the whole for a part, the genus for the species, the species for the genus, the material for the thing made, or in short, any portion, section, or main quality for the whole or the thing itself (or vice versa).

Ex. Farmer Joes has two hundred head of cattle [whole cattle], and three hired hands [whole people]. If we had some wheels [whole vehicle], I'd put on my best threads [clothes] and ask for Jane's hand [hopefully her whole person] in marriage.

**Syntax** – The way an author chooses to join words into phrases, clauses, and sentences. Syntax is similar to diction, but you can differentiate them by thinking of syntax as the groups of words, while diction refers to the individual words. In the multiple-choice section, expect to be asked some questions about how an author manipulates syntax. In the essay section, you will need to analyze how syntax produces effects.

**Theme** - The central idea or message of a work, the insight it offers into life. Usually theme is unstated in fictional works, but in nonfiction, the theme may be directly stated, especially in expository or argumentative writing.

**Thesis** – In expository writing, the thesis statement is the sentence or a group of sentences that directly expresses the author's opinion, purpose, meaning, or position. Expository writing is usually judged by analyzing how accurately, effectively, and thoroughly a writer has proved the thesis.

**Tone** – Similar to mood, tone describes the author's attitude toward his material, the audience, or both. Tone is easier to determine in spoken language than in written language. Considering how a work would sound if it were read aloud can help in identifying an author's tone. Some words describing tone are *playful, serious, businesslike, sarcastic, humorous, formal, ornate, sardonic, and somber*.

**Transition** – A word or phrase that links different ideas. Used especially, although not exclusively, in expository and argumentative writing, transitions effectively signal a shift from one idea to another. A few commonly used transitional words or phrases are *furthermore, consequently, nevertheless, for example, in addition, likewise, similarly* and *on the contrary*. More sophisticated writers use more subtle means of transition. We will discuss these methods later.

**Understatement** – The ironic minimizing of fact, understatement presents something as less significant than it is. The effect can frequently be humorous and emphatic. Understatement is the opposite of hyperbole.

Ex. The 1906 San Francisco earthquake interrupted business somewhat in the downtown area. Last week I saw a woman flayed, and you will hardly believe how much it altered her person for the worse. – Jonathan Swift

**Undertone** - An attitude that may lie under the ostensible tone of the piece. Under a cheery surface, for example, a work may have threatening undertones. William Blake's "The Chimney Sweeper" from the Songs of Innocence has a grim undertone.

**Wit** – In modern usage, intellectually amazing language that surprises and delights. A witty statement is humorous, while suggesting the speaker's verbal power in creating ingenious and perceptive remarks. Wit usually uses terse language that makes a pointed statement. Historically, wit originally meant basic understanding. Its meaning evolved to include speed of understanding, and finally (in the early seventeenth century), it grew to mean quick perception including creative fancy and a quick tongue to articulate an answer that demanded the same quick perception.

**Information in handout compiled from the following resources:**

\* *Essential Literary Terms with Exercises* – Sharon Hamilton

\* *A Handbook of Rhetorical Devices* – Robert A. Harris [<http://www.virtualsalt.com/rhetoric.htm>]

\* *American Rhetoric: Rhetorical Figures in Sound* [<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/rhetoricaldevicesinsound.htm>]



The Writing Lab – D204d <http://bellevuecollege.edu/asc/writing> 425-564-2200

## What is a Synthesis Essay?

The main purpose of a synthesis essay is to make insightful connections. Those connections can show the relationship(s) between parts of a work or even between two or more works. It is your job to explain why those relationships are important. In order to write a successful synthesis essay, you must gather research on your chosen topic, discover meaningful connections throughout your research, and develop a unique and interesting argument or perspective. A synthesis is not a summary. A synthesis is an opportunity to create new knowledge out of already existing knowledge, i.e., other sources. You combine, “synthesize,” the information in your sources to develop an argument or a unique perspective on a topic. Your thesis statement becomes a one-sentence claim that presents your perspective and identifies the new knowledge that you will create. Before writing your synthesis

1. Narrow a broad or general topic to a specific topic: In a short essay, completely covering a large topic is impossible, so picking a specific, focused topic is important. For example, the broad topic of global warming would need to be narrowed down to something more specific, like the effects of automobile exhaust on an ecosystem.
2. Develop a working thesis statement: A working thesis statement should include a rough idea of your topic and the important point you want to make about that topic. Writing this statement at the top of a rough draft or outline and looking at it often can help you remain focused throughout the essay. However, the thesis statement that you begin with is not set in stone. If you find that your essay shifts topic slightly, you can change your thesis in later drafts so that it matches your new focus.
3. Decide how you will use your sources: After completing your research and gathering sources, you may have a large or overwhelming amount of information. However, the purpose of a synthesis essay is to use only the most important parts of your research, the information that will best support your claim. At this point, you must decide which sources, and/or which parts of those sources, you will use.
4. Organize your research: Now, decide the order in which you will present your evidence, the various arguments you will employ, and how you will convince your readers.

## SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES for Essays:

### **YOU TOO CAN WIN \$30,000!**

#### WHO CAN ENTER

The Voice of Democracy Program is open to students in grades 9-12 (on the Nov. 1 deadline), who are enrolled in a public, private or parochial high school or home study program in the United States and its territories.

#### HOW TO ENTER

The deadline for submissions for the 2014-2015 program is November 1, 2014. Enter at <http://www.vfw.org/Community/Voice-of-Democracy/>

The theme is: **Why Veterans are Important to our Nation's History and Future**

Students should record their reading of the draft to a CD. The recording can be no shorter than three minutes and no longer than five minutes (plus or minus five seconds).

Entries begin at the Post level. Once the student creates their essay and completes burning the audio version to a CD, they can submit their typed version, CD and the Voice of Democracy entry form to their local participating VFW Post by the November 1 deadline.

#### JUDGING CRITERIA

Originality is worth 30 points: Treatment of the theme should show imagination and human interest.

Content is worth 35 points: Clearly express your ideas in an organized manner. Fully develop your theme and use transitions to move smoothly from one idea to the other.

Delivery is worth 35 points: Speak in a clear and credible manner.

## General Scholarship Information

### Application Requirements

All applicants must be citizens of the United States and must attend or plan to attend an accredited college or university in the United States. DAR chapter sponsorship is not required; however, a chapter or state chairman may work with the applicant to put the information together to send to the DAR Scholarship Committee.

**To apply, click below to download the necessary application forms:**

- [The DAR Scholarship Application Form](#)
- [Financial Need Form](#)

**Mail completed DAR Scholarship Committee application forms to the address listed under each scholarship.**

**Important:**

- All applications must be **postmarked by February 15**.
- This address is only correct during the 2013-2016 DAR Administration.
- This application form is not to be used for the [American Indian Scholarships](#) and [DAR Good Citizen Scholarships](#) - those applications are sent to different addresses for processing.

Only applications completed correctly and submitted in one package will be considered. Incorrect applications or applications mailed to the incorrect address will be discarded. No records are returned. **Do not submit a personal photo.** If your records feature a photo, it must be fully covered. Only winners are notified by the National DAR Scholarship Chairman following the approval of a ruling by the Executive Committee of NSDAR.

Consecutive-year renewals do not require additional Executive Committee rulings, but do require that an official transcript be sent from the school to the **Office of the Reporter General, NSDAR, 1776 D Street NW, Washington DC 20006-5303** by July 1st of each year. Students are only eligible for one scholarship from the National Society.

Awards are placed on deposit with the college or university; any unused portion shall be returned to the National Society. Awards are based on academic merit, commitment to the field of study and financial need. No affiliation with DAR is necessary unless specified. All applications must be received on or before the deadline indicated for each specific scholarship.

**Note: The DAR Scholarship Committee does not process DAR Good Citizens, American Indian, DAR School or state scholarships.**

### **General Scholarships**

#### **Richard and Elizabeth Dean Scholarship**

The Richard and Elizabeth Dean Scholarship is a preferred amount of \$5,000 each year for up to four consecutive years to graduating high school students. The selection process shall be based on academic merit with an initial minimum GPA of 4.0. Renewal is conditional upon maintenance of a GPA of 3.25.

This scholarship is renewable only after review and approval of the annual official transcript. Renewal transcript must be submitted to the Office of the Reporter General by July 1 of the year of renewal or the scholarship is forfeited.

#### **Mail completed scholarship application form to:**

National Vice Chair Richard and Elizabeth Dean Scholarship  
1212 Dale Dr  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

**Auburn Pulp and Paper Foundation Engineering Scholarship** provides a scholarship to a highly qualified student who is pursuing an undergraduate degree in the field of engineering at Auburn University. The scholarship award is based on academic performance (GPA, ACT, academic rigor) leadership potential (extracurricular and community service activities), critical thinking skills, and career goals (relevant to the Mill or local community needs). Diversity and local school representation are integral components of the selections process and enrollment in one of the pulp, paper, and bio-resource specializations in chemical, electrical or mechanical engineering. This scholarship opportunity is open to students of Lawrence, Limestone, Morgan, and **Madison** counties. Scholarship applications are typically available in October with a February deadline.

**AXA Achievement Community Scholarships** offers \$2,000. Selection criteria: demonstrated ambition and drive, determination to set and reach goals, respect for self, family, and community, and ability to succeed in college. Applications are available online at [www.axa-achievement.com](http://www.axa-achievement.com). Application deadline is typically mid-February.

**Best Buy “Dollars for Scholars”** scholarship for students who have made extraordinary volunteer contributions to their communities. To be eligible, students must live within 100 miles of a Best Buy store and be enrolled or plan to enroll full-time at an accredited two- or four-year college, university, or vocational-technical school in an undergraduate program of study. Applicants will be screened first on their level of volunteer community service over the past four years. Finalists will be selected by the level of volunteer service and the degree of its impact on the applicant’s life, as well as the student’s academic achievement, work experience, school activities, statement of goals, and an outside appraisal. Applications are typically due in mid March of senior year.

**Better Business Bureau Torch Award** (typically \$1,000) will go to a student based on overall personal integrity and character, personal achievements, contributions to their communities and schools, and

academic accomplishments. An essay will also be required. Applications are typically available in early fall with an early October deadline.

**Coca-Cola Scholars Program** awards 250 scholarships nationwide each year. These scholarships range from \$4,000 to \$20,000. Scholars are selected based on academic achievement, their capacity to lead, and their hours of dedicated community service. Becoming a Coca-Cola Scholar means a lifetime commitment to service; giving back to one's community. Applications are available online at [www.coca-colascholars.org](http://www.coca-colascholars.org). Click on Coca-Cola Four Year Award for Seniors. Deadline is typically October 31 of senior year.

#### **Daughters of the American Revolution scholarships:**

Alabama Society DAR scholarships are open to Alabama residents who are graduating seniors of an accredited high school. The scholarships must be used at an Alabama college or university or under the Common Market proviso if chosen curriculum is not offered in Alabama. Applications for the Alabama Society DAR scholarships are to be sent to the State Chairman: Ms. Roberta Haden Greene, 808 Lakeshore Ave., Opelika, AL 36801. National Society DAR scholarships are for students who will be majoring in American History. These are first judged on the state level and the two state winners are then judged on a Division level and finally on a National level. Students must be an American citizen and attending an accredited college or university in the United States. Applications go to Gale M. Fuller, Scholarship Chairman, Huntsville Chapter, NSDAR, 1303 Briar Hollow Trail, Huntsville, AL 35802-3803. Deadline for both scholarship applications is February 1.

DAR Good Citizens Program and Scholarship is designed to encourage and reward the qualities of good citizenship. Scholarship applicants must have been awarded the school's Good Citizen Award. The scholarship contest consists of two parts: Part I (personal) consists of several questions asking the student to describe how he/she has tried to manifest the qualities of a good citizen. This part may be completed at home and is to be submitted with a copy of official transcript and two letters of recommendation. Part II (essay) is to be administered under the supervision of a faculty or DAR member. DAR Good Citizens who enter the Scholarship Contest are eligible for awards beyond the chapter level. Each state winner receives a cash award in the amount of at least \$250 (or a savings bond). The national winner will be invited to Washington, DC, to attend DAR Continental Congress and be awarded a \$3,000 scholarship. The national second place winner will receive a \$1,000 scholarship, and the third place winner will receive a \$750 scholarship. The remaining 6 geographical division winners will each receive a cash award of \$500. Completed entry is typically due in October.

**Elks National Foundation Scholarship Program** for high school seniors. Boys and girls will compete separately for identical awards. Financial need, leadership and scholarship are the criteria by which applicants will be judged. Students of outstanding merit have the best chance to win. Experience indicates that students with scholarship ratings of 90% or better, a relative standing in the upper 10% of their class, and who have exhibited leadership abilities, generally qualify in the group given final consideration. Awards have ranged from \$1,000 to \$7,500.

**Horatio Alger Association** offers scholarships at the state and national levels. Eligibility criteria include: intend to pursue a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution (students may start their studies at a two-year institution and then transfer to a four-year institution); critical financial need (preferably \$50,000 or lower adjusted gross income per family); involvement in co-curricular and community service activities; minimum GPA of 2.0. Apply online at [www.horatioalger.org/scholarships](http://www.horatioalger.org/scholarships) ; due date is typically late October.

**Huntsville/Madison County Auburn Club** typically offers from one to four full-tuition freshman year scholarships to students from Madison County depending on their fundraising efforts. Applications are typically available in January with a late February due date.

**J. Craig and Page T. Smith Scholarship** recognizes students who have demonstrated outstanding community service and/or have provided assistance to family members. Priority is also given to students who need financial assistance and who are the first in their families to attend college. Applicants should have a C+ GPA; no minimum ACT score is required. The scholarship is a full four-year scholarship to a four-year accredited institution in Alabama that offers a bachelors degree. Applications are usually available online at [www.smithscholarships.com](http://www.smithscholarships.com) in late fall with a deadline of mid January.

**John L. Cashin, Sr. Scholarship, Xi Omicron Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.** These scholarships are awarded to freshmen entering college for the first time. Eligibility criteria: must be citizen of the United States of America; must complete all parts of the application; must score no less than 15 on the ACT or equivalent score on the SAT; must have no less than a B average upon graduation; must provide three letters of recommendation from individuals who have no family ties and a recommendation from the school counselor, all of which should be mailed under separate cover by the recommender. Need: limited or no financial support from the family; limited or no educational scholarship commitments; limited or no educational grant commitments; limited or no work study commitments. Applications are typically available in the spring with a mid-April deadline.

**John F. Kennedy Memorial Scholarship** is awarded annually by the Madison County Democratic Women's Division to a graduating senior within Madison County planning to pursue a career in political science or the law. An essay is part of the application process. Applications are typically available in the winter with an early April due date.

**John Walsh Scholarship.** This scholarship was established to assist graduates of Madison County High School in continuing their education through college. John Walsh was a teacher at Madison County High School and a long-time member of the Gurley, Alabama, community. Scholarships will be awarded for \$1,000 per academic year. Recipients of the John Walsh Scholarship may renew their scholarship to receive up to a total of \$4,000 over their four years in college. The recipient is selected based upon the following: GPA, completed application form with essay, need, resume, 3 letters of recommendation, ACT/SAT score. Applications are typically due in April of senior year when funds are available.

\*\*\* **Mensa Foundation Scholarships** vary from \$300 to \$1,000. Awards are based on an essay of no more than 550 words that describes the applicant's career, vocational, or academic goals. It is NOT necessary that the applicant be a member of Mensa. Applications are typically available online at [www.mensafoundation.org/scholarships](http://www.mensafoundation.org/scholarships), with a deadline in mid January.

**Sam Walton Community Scholarship** is a non-renewable \$1,000 award for the student's first year of undergraduate study. To qualify the student must not be a Wal-Mart Stores, Inc., or SAM'S Club Associate, or the child or legal dependent of an associate. Applications are usually available online through mid January. [www.walmartfoundation.org](http://www.walmartfoundation.org). The access code SWCS must be used to access this application process.

## HOW TO SAY NOTHING IN FIVE HUNDRED WORDS

**Paul McHenry Roberts (1917-1967) taught college English for over twenty years, first at San Jose State College and later at Cornell University. He wrote numerous books on linguistics, including *Understanding Grammar* (1954), *Patterns of English* (1956), and *Understanding English* (1958).**

*Freshman composition, like everything else, has its share of fashions. In the 1950s, when this article was written, the most popular argument raging among student essayists was the proposed abolition of college football. With the greater social consciousness of the early '60s, the topic of the day became the morality of capital punishment. Topics may change, but the core principles of good writing remain constant and this essay has become something of a minor classic in explaining them. Be concrete, says Roberts; get to the point; express your opinions colorfully. Refreshingly, he even practices what he preaches. His essay is humorous, direct, and almost salty in summarizing the working habits that all good prose writers must cultivate. -- Editors' note from JoRay McCuen & Anthony C. Winkler's *Readings for Writers*, 3rd ed., Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1980*

It's Friday afternoon, and you have almost survived another week of classes. You are just looking forward dreamily to the weekend when the English instructor says: "For Monday you will turn in a five hundred-word composition on college football."

Well, that puts a good hole in the weekend. You don't have any strong views on college football one way or the other. You get rather excited during the season and go to all the home games and find it rather more fun than not. On the other hand, the class has been reading Robert Hutchins in the anthology and perhaps Shaw's "Eighty-Yard Run," and from the class discussion you have got the idea that the instructor thinks college football is for the birds. You are no fool. You can figure out what side to take.

After dinner you get out the portable typewriter that you got for high school graduation. You might as well get it over with and enjoy Saturday and Sunday. Five hundred words is about two double-spaced pages with normal margins. You put in a sheet of paper, think up a title, and you're off:

### WHY COLLEGE FOOTBALL SHOULD BE ABOLISHED

College football should be abolished because it's bad for the school and also for the players. The players are so busy practicing that they don't have any time for their studies.

This, you feel, is a mighty good start. The only trouble is that it's only thirty-two words. You still have four hundred and sixty-eight to go, and you've pretty well exhausted the subject. It comes to you that you do your best thinking in the morning, so you put away the typewriter and go to the movies. But the next morning you have to do your washing and some math problems, and in the afternoon you go to the game. The English instructor turns up too, and you wonder if you've taken the right side after all. Saturday night you have a date, and Sunday morning you have to go to church. (You can't let English assignments interfere with your religion.) What with one thing and another, it's ten o'clock Sunday night before you get out the typewriter again. You make a pot of coffee and start to fill out your views on college football. Put a little meat on the bones.

**WHY COLLEGE FOOTBALL SHOULD BE ABOLISHED**

In my opinion, it seems to me that college football should be abolished. The reason why I think this to be true is because I feel that football is bad for the colleges in nearly every respect. As Robert Hutchins says in his article in our anthology in which he discusses college football, it would be better if the colleges had race horses and had races with one another, because then the horses would not have to attend classes. I firmly agree with Mr. Hutchins on this point, and I am sure that many other students would agree too.

One reason why it seems to me that college football is bad is that it has become too commercial. In the olden times when people played football just for the fun of it, maybe college football was all right, but they do not play college football just for the fun of it now as they used to in the old days. Nowadays college football is what you might call a big business. Maybe this is not true at all schools, and I don't think it is especially true here at State, but certainly this is the case at most colleges and universities in America nowadays, as Mr. Hutchins points out in his very interesting article. Actually the coaches and alumni go around to the high schools and offer the high school stars large salaries to come to their colleges and play football for them. There was one case where a high school star was offered a convertible if he would play football for a certain college.

Another reason for abolishing college football is that it is bad for the players. They do not have time to get a college education, because they are so busy playing football. A football player has to practice every afternoon from three to six and then he is so tired that he can't concentrate on his studies. He just feels like dropping off to sleep after dinner, and then the next day he goes to his classes without having studied and maybe he fails the test.

(Good ripe stuff so far, but you're still a hundred and fifty-one words from home. One more push.)

Also I think college football is bad for the colleges and the universities because not very many students get to participate in it. Out of a college of ten thousand students only seventy-five or a hundred play football, if that many. Football is what you might call a spectator sport. That means that most people go to watch it but do not play it themselves.

(Four hundred and fifteen. Well, you still have the conclusion, and when you retype it, you can make the margins a little wider.)

These are the reasons why I agree with Mr. Hutchins that college football should be abolished in American colleges and universities.

On Monday you turn it in, moderately hopeful, and on Friday it comes back marked "weak in content" and sporting a big "D." This essay is exaggerated a little, not much. The English instructor will recognize it as reasonably typical of what an assignment on college football will bring in. He knows that nearly half of the class will contrive in five hundred words to say that college football is too commercial and bad for the players. Most of the other half will inform him that college football builds character and prepares one for life and brings prestige to the school. As he reads paper after paper all saying the same thing in almost the same words, all bloodless, five hundred words dripping out of nothing, he wonders how he allowed himself to get trapped into teaching English when he might have had a happy and interesting life as an electrician or a confidence man.



Well, you may ask, what can you do about it? The subject is one on which you have few convictions and little information. Can you be expected to make a dull subject interesting? As a matter of fact, this is precisely what you are expected to do. This is the writer's essential task. All subjects, except sex, are dull until somebody makes them interesting. The writer's job is to find the argument, the approach, the angle, the wording that will take the reader with him. This is seldom easy, and it is particularly hard in subjects that have been much discussed: College Football, Fraternities, Popular Music, Is Chivalry Dead?, and the like. You will feel that there is nothing you can do with such subjects except repeat the old bromides. But there are some things you can do which will make your papers, if not throbbingly alive, at least less insufferably tedious than they might otherwise be.

### **AVOID THE OBVIOUS CONTENT**

Say the assignment is college football. Say that you've decided to be against it. Begin by putting down the arguments that come to your mind: it is too commercial, it takes the students' minds off their studies, it is hard on the players, it makes the university a kind of circus instead of an intellectual center, for most schools it is financially ruinous. Can you think of any more arguments, just off hand? All right. Now when you write your paper, make sure that you don't use any of the material on this list. If these are the points that leap to your mind, they will leap to everyone else's too, and whether you get a "C" or a "D" may depend on whether the instructor reads your paper early when he is fresh and tolerant or late, when the sentence "In my opinion, college football has become too commercial," inexorably repeated, has brought him to the brink of lunacy.

Be against college football for some reason or reasons of your own. If they are keen and perceptive ones, that's splendid. But even if they are trivial or foolish or indefensible, you are still ahead so long as they are not everybody else's reasons too. Be against it because the colleges don't spend enough money on it to make it worthwhile, because it is bad for the characters of the spectators, because the players are forced to attend classes, because the football stars hog all the beautiful women, because it competes with baseball and is therefore un-American and possibly Communist-inspired. There are lots of more or less unused reasons for being against college football.

Sometimes it is a good idea to sum up and dispose of the trite and conventional points before going on to your own. This has the advantage of indicating to the reader that you are going to be neither trite nor conventional. Something like this:

We are often told that college football should be abolished because it has become too commercial or because it is bad for the players. These arguments are no doubt very cogent, but they don't really go to the heart of the matter.

Then you go to the heart of the matter.

### **TAKE THE LESS USUAL SIDE**

One rather simple way of getting into your paper is to take the side of the argument that most of the citizens will want to avoid. If the assignment is an essay on dogs, you can, if you choose, explain that dogs are faithful and lovable companions, intelligent, useful as guardians of the house and protectors of children, indispensable in police work -- in short, when all is said and done, man's best

friends. Or you can suggest that those big brown eyes conceal, more often than not, a vacuity of mind and an inconstancy of purpose; that the dogs you have known most intimately have been mangy, ill-tempered brutes, incapable of instruction; and that only your nobility of mind and fear of arrest prevent you from kicking the flea-ridden animals when you pass them on the street.

Naturally personal convictions will sometimes dictate your approach. If the assigned subject is "Is Methodism Rewarding to the Individual?" and you are a pious Methodist, you have really no choice. But few assigned subjects, if any, will fall in this category. Most of them will lie in broad areas of discussion with much to be said on both sides. They are intellectual exercises, and it is legitimate to argue now one way and now another, as debaters do in similar circumstances. Always take the that looks to you hardest, least defensible. It will almost always turn out to be easier to write interestingly on that side.

This general advice applies where you have a choice of subjects. If you are to choose among "The Value of Fraternities" and "My Favorite High School Teacher" and "What I Think About Beetles," by all means plump for the beetles. By the time the instructor gets to your paper, he will be up to his ears in tedious tales about a French teacher at Bloombury High and assertions about how fraternities build character and prepare one for life. Your views on beetles, whatever they are, are bound to be a refreshing change.

Don't worry too much about figuring out what the instructor thinks about the subject so that you can cuddle up with him. Chances are his views are no stronger than yours. If he does have convictions and you oppose him, his problem is to keep from grading you higher than you deserve in order to show he is not biased. This doesn't mean that you should always cantankerously dissent from what the instructor says; that gets tiresome too. And if the subject assigned is "My Pet Peeve," do not begin, "My pet peeve is the English instructor who assigns papers on 'my pet peeve.'" This was still funny during the War of 1812, but it has sort of lost its edge since then. It is in general good manners to avoid personalities.

### **SLIP OUT OF ABSTRACTION**

If you will study the essay on college football [near the beginning of this essay], you will perceive that one reason for its appalling dullness is that it never gets down to particulars. It is just a series of not very glittering generalities: "football is bad for the colleges," "it has become too commercial," "football is big business," "it is bad for the players," and so on. Such round phrases thudding against the reader's brain are unlikely to convince him, though they may well render him unconscious.

If you want the reader to believe that college football is bad for the players, you have to do more than say so. You have to display the evil. Take your roommate, Alfred Simkins, the second-string center. Picture poor old Alfie coming home from football practice every evening, bruised and aching, agonizingly tired, scarcely able to shovel the mashed potatoes into his mouth. Let us see him staggering up to the room, getting out his econ textbook, peering desperately at it with his good eye, falling asleep and failing the test in the morning. Let us share his unbearable tension as Saturday draws near. Will he fail, be demoted, lose his monthly allowance, be forced to return to the coal mines? And if he succeeds, what will be his reward? Perhaps a slight ripple of applause when the third-string center replaces him, a

moment of elation in the locker room if the team wins, of despair if it loses. What will he look back on when he graduates from college? Toil and torn ligaments. And what will be his future? He is not good enough for pro football, and he is too obscure and weak in econ to succeed in stocks and bonds. College football is tearing the heart from Alfie Simkins and, when it finishes with him, will callously toss aside the shattered hulk.

This is no doubt a weak enough argument for the abolition of college football, but it is a sight better than saying, in three or four variations, that college football (in your opinion) is bad for the players.

Look at the work of any professional writer and notice how constantly he is moving from the generality, the abstract statement, to the concrete example, the facts and figures, the illustrations. If he is writing on juvenile delinquency, he does not just tell you that juveniles are (it seems to him) delinquent and that (in his opinion) something should be done about it. He shows you juveniles being delinquent, tearing up movie theatres in Buffalo, stabbing high school principals in Dallas, smoking marijuana in Palo Alto. And more than likely he is moving toward some specific remedy, not just a general wringing of the hands.

It is no doubt possible to be too concrete, too illustrative or anecdotal, but few inexperienced writers err this way. For most the soundest advice is to be seeking always for the picture, to be always turning general remarks into seeable examples. Don't say, "Sororities teach girls the social graces." Say, "Sorority life teaches a girl how to carry on a conversation while pouring tea, without sloshing the tea into the saucer." Don't say, "I like certain kinds of popular music very much." Say, "Whenever I hear Gerber Sprinklittie play 'Mississippi Man' on the trombone, my socks creep up my ankles."

### **GET RID OF OBVIOUS PADDING**

The student toiling away at his weekly English theme is too often tormented by a figure: five hundred words. How, he asks himself, is he to achieve this staggering total? Obviously by never using one word when he can somehow work in ten.

He is therefore seldom content with a plain statement like "Fast driving is dangerous." This has only four words in it. He takes thought, and the sentence becomes:

In my opinion, fast driving is dangerous.

Better, but he can do better still:

In my opinion, fast driving would seem to be rather dangerous.

If he is really adept, it may come out:

In my humble opinion, though I do not claim to be an expert on this complicated subject, test driving, in most circumstances, would seem to be rather dangerous in many respects, or at least so it would seem to me.

Thus four words have been turned into forty, and not an iota of content has been added.

Now this is a way to go about reaching five hundred words, and if you are content with a "D" grade, it is as good a way as any. But if you aim higher, you must work differently. Instead of stuffing your sentences with straw, you must try steadily to get rid of the padding, to make your sentences lean and tough. If you are really working at it, your first draft will greatly exceed the required total, and then you will work it down, thus:

It is thought in some quarters that fraternities do not contribute as much as might be expected to campus life.

- Some people think that fraternities contribute little to campus life.

The average doctor who practices in small towns or in the country must toil night

and day to heal the sick.

- Most country doctors work long hours.

When I was a little girl, I suffered from shyness and embarrassment in the presence of

others.

- I was a shy little girl.

It is absolutely necessary for the person employed as a marine fireman to give the

matternof steam pressure his undivided attention at all times.

- The fireman has to keep his eye on the steam gauge.

You may ask how you can arrive at five hundred words at this rate. Simple. You dig up more real content. Instead of taking a couple of obvious points off the surface of the topic and then circling warily around them for six paragraphs, you work in and explore, figure out the details. You illustrate. You say that fast driving is dangerous, and then you prove it. How long does it take to stop a car at forty and at eighty? How far can you see at night? What happens when a tire blows? What happens in a head-on collision at fifty miles an hour? Pretty soon your paper will be full of broken glass and blood and headless torsos, and reaching five hundred words will not really be a problem.

### **CALL A FOOL A FOOL**

Some of the padding in freshman themes is to be blamed not on anxiety about the word minimum but on excessive timidity. The student writes, "In my opinion, the principal of my high school acted in ways that I believe every unbiased person would have to call foolish." This isn't exactly what he means. What he means is, "My high school principal was a fool." If he was a fool, call him a fool. Hedging the thing about with "in-my-opinion's" and "it-seems-to-me's" and "as-I-see-it's" and "at-least-from-my-point-of-view's" gains you nothing. Delete these phrases whenever they creep into your paper.

The student's tendency to hedge stems from a modesty that in other circumstances would be commendable. He is, he realizes, young and inexperienced, and he half suspects that he is dopey and fuzzyminded beyond the average. Probably only too true. But it doesn't help to announce your incompetence six times in every paragraph. Decide what you want to say and say it as vigorously as possible, without apology and in plain words.

Linguistic diffidence can take various forms. One is what we call euphemism. This is the tendency to call a spade "a certain garden implement" or women's underwear "unmentionables." It is stronger in some eras than others and in some people than others but it always operates more or less in subjects that are touchy or taboo: death, sex, madness, and so on. Thus we shrink from saying "He died last night" but say instead "passed away," "left us," "joined his Maker," "went to his reward." Or we try to take off the tension with a lighter cliché: "kicked the bucket," "cashed in his chips," "handed in his dinner pail." We have found all sorts of ways to avoid saying mad: "mentally ill," "touched," "not quite right upstairs," "feeble-minded," "innocent," "simple," "off his trolley," "not in his right mind." Even such a now plain word as insane began as a euphemism with the meaning "not healthy."

Modern science, particularly psychology, contributes many polysyllables in which we can wrap our thoughts and blunt their force. To many writers there is no such thing as a bad schoolboy. Schoolboys are maladjusted or unoriented or misunderstood or in the need of guidance or lacking in continued success toward satisfactory integration of the personality as a social unit, but they are never bad. Psychology no doubt makes us better men and women, more sympathetic and tolerant, but it doesn't make writing any easier. Had Shakespeare been confronted with psychology, "To be or not to be" might have come out, "To continue as a social unit or not to do so. That is the personality problem. Whether 'tis a better sign of integration at the conscious level to display a psychic tolerance toward the maladjustments and repressions induced by one's lack of orientation in one's environment or -- " But Hamlet would never have finished the soliloquy.

Writing in the modern world, you cannot altogether avoid modern jargon. Nor, in an effort to get away from euphemism, should you salt your paper with four-letter words. But you can do much if you will mount guard against those roundabout phrases, those echoing polysyllables that tend to slip into your writing to rob it of its crispness and force.

### **BEWARE OF PAT EXPRESSIONS**

Other things being equal, avoid phrases like "other things being equal." Those sentences that come to you whole, or in two or three doughy lumps, are sure to be bad sentences. They are no creation of yours but pieces of common thought floating in the community soup.

Pat expressions are hard, often impossible, to avoid, because they come too easily to be noticed and seem too necessary to be dispensed with. No writer avoids them altogether, but good writers avoid them more often than poor writers.

By "pat expressions" we mean such tags as "to all practical intents and purposes," "the pure and simple truth," "from where I sit," "the time of his life," "to the ends of the earth," "in the twinkling of an eye," "as sure as you're born," "over my dead body," "under cover of darkness," "took the easy way

out," "when all is said and done," "told him time and time again," "parted the best of friends," "stand up and be counted," "gave him the best years of her life," "worked her fingers to the bone." Like other cliché? these expressions were once forceful. Now we should use them only when we can't possibly think of anything else.

Some pat expressions stand like a wall between the writer and thought. Such a one is "the American way of life." Many student writers feel that when they have said that something accords with the American way of life or does not they have exhausted the subject. Actually, they have stopped at the highest level of abstraction. The American way of life is the complicated set of bonds between a hundred and eighty million ways. All of us know this when we think about it, but the tag phrase too often keeps us from thinking about it.

So with many another phrase dear to the politician: "this great land of ours," "the man in the street," "our national heritage." These may prove our patriotism or give a clue to our political beliefs, but otherwise they add nothing to the paper except words.

### COLORFUL WORDS

The writer builds with words, and no builder uses a raw material more slippery and elusive and treacherous. A writer's work is a constant struggle to get the right word in the right place, to find that particular word that will convey his meaning exactly, that will persuade the reader or soothe him or startle or amuse him. He never succeeds altogether -- sometimes he feels that he scarcely succeeds at all -- but such successes as he has are what make the thing worth doing.

There is no book of rules for this game. One progresses through everlasting experiment on the basis of ever-widening experience. There are few useful generalizations that one can make about words as words, but there are perhaps a few.

Some words are what we call "colorful." By this we mean that they are calculated to produce a picture or induce an emotion. They are dressy instead of plain, specific instead of general, loud instead of soft. Thus, in place of "Her heart beat," we may write, "her heart pounded, throbbed, fluttered, danced." Instead of "He sat in his chair," we may say, "he *lounged, sprawled, coiled*." Instead of "It was hot," we may say, "It was *blistering, sultry, muggy, suffocating, steamy, wilting*."

However, it should not be supposed that the fancy word is always better. Often it is as well to write "Her heart beat" or "It was hot" if that is all it did or all it was. Ages differ in how they like their prose. The nineteenth century liked it rich and smoky. The twentieth has usually preferred it lean and cool. The twentieth century writer, like all writers, is forever seeking the exact word, but he is wary of sounding feverish. He tends to pitch it low, to understate it, to throw it away. He knows that if he gets too colorful, the audience is likely to giggle.

See how this strikes you: "As the rich, golden glow of the sunset died away along the eternal western hills, Angela's limpid blue eyes looked softly and trustingly into Montague's flashing brown ones, and her heart pounded like a drum in time with the joyous song surging in her soul." Some people like that sort of thing, but most modern readers would say, "Good grief," and turn on the television.

## COLORED WORDS

Some words we would call not so much colorful as colored -- that is, loaded with associations, good or bad. All words -- except perhaps structure words -- have associations of some sort. We have said that the meaning of a word is the sum of the contexts in which it occurs. When we hear a word, we hear with it an echo of all the situations in which we have heard it before.

In some words, these echoes are obvious and discussible. The word *mother*, for example, has, for most people, agreeable associations. When you hear *mother* you probably think of home, safety, love, food, and various other pleasant things. If one writes, "She was like a mother to me," he gets an effect which he would not get in "She was like an aunt to me." The advertiser makes use of the associations of *mother* by working it in when he talks about his product. The politician works it in when he talks about himself.

So also with such words as *home, liberty, fireside, contentment, patriot, tenderness, sacrifice, childlike, manly, bluff, limpid*. All of these words are loaded with associations that would be rather hard to indicate in a straightforward definition. There is more than a literal difference between "They sat around the fireside" and "They sat around the stove." They might have been equally warm and happy around the stove, but *fireside* suggests leisure, grace, quiet tradition, congenial company, and *stove* does not.

Conversely, some words have bad associations. *Mother* suggests pleasant things, but *mother-in-law* does not. Many mothers-in-law are heroically lovable and some mothers drink gin all day and beat their children insensible, but these facts of life are beside the point. The point is that *mother* sounds good and *mother-in-law* does not.

Or consider the word *intellectual*. This would seem to be a complimentary term, but in point of fact it is not, for it has picked up associations of impracticality and ineffectuality and general dopiness. So also such words as *liberal, reactionary, Communist, socialist, capitalist, radical, schoolteacher, truck driver; operator, salesman, huckster, speculator*. These convey meaning on the literal level, but beyond that -- sometimes, in some places -- they convey contempt on the part of the speaker.

The question of whether to use loaded words or not depends on what is being written. The scientist, the scholar, try to avoid them; for the poet, the advertising writer, the public speaker, they are standard equipment. But every writer should take care that they do not substitute for thought. If you write, "Anyone who thinks that is nothing but a Socialist (or Communist or capitalist)" you have said nothing except that you don't like people who think that, and such remarks are effective only with the most naive readers. It is always a bad mistake to think your readers more naive than they really are.

## COLORLESS WORDS

But probably most student writers come to grief not with words that are colorful or those that are colored but with those that have no color at all. A pet example is *nice*, a word we would find it hard to dispense with in casual conversation but which is no longer capable of adding much to a description. Colorless words are those of such general meaning that in a particular sentence they mean nothing.

Slang adjectives like cool ("That's real cool") tend to explode all over the language. They are applied to everything, lose their original force, and quickly die.

Beware also of nouns of very general meaning, like *circumstances, cases, instances, aspects, factors, relationships, attitudes, eventualities*, etc. In most circumstances you will find that those cases of writing which contain too many instances of words like these will in this and other aspects have factors leading to unsatisfactory relationships with the reader resulting in unfavorable attitudes on his part and perhaps other eventualities, like a grade of "D." Notice also what etc. means. It means "I'd like to make this list longer, but I can't think of any more examples."



## Elevate those words 😊

### Verbs:

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <p>suggests<br/>hints<br/>intimates<br/>implies<br/>questions<br/>casts<br/>sheds light<br/>clarifies<br/>masks<br/>notes<br/>observes<br/>asserts<br/>concedes<br/>qualifies<br/>affirms<br/>criticizes<br/>admonishes<br/>challenges<br/>debates<br/>excoriates<br/>berates<br/>belittles<br/>trivializes<br/>denigrates<br/>vilifies<br/>demonizes<br/>disparages<br/>ridicules<br/>mocks<br/>points out<br/>acknowledges<br/>emphasizes<br/>minimizes<br/>dismisses<br/>demonstrates<br/>underscores<br/>sugarcoats</p> | <p>flatters<br/>lionizes<br/>praises<br/>exaggerates<br/>downplays<br/>minimizes<br/>exposes<br/>articulates<br/>explores<br/>lists<br/>supports<br/>establishes<br/>evokes<br/>induces<br/>quotes<br/>cites<br/>draws attention to the<br/>    irony<br/>calls attention to<br/>    details</p> | <p><b>Verbs Related to Rhetorical Modes of Development</b><br/>compares<br/>contrasts<br/>classifies<br/>defines<br/>narrates<br/>describes<br/>argues<br/>persuades<br/>analyzes<br/>explains<br/>exemplifies<br/>illustrates<br/>summarizes</p> <p><b>Structure Verbs</b><br/>opens<br/>begins<br/>adds<br/>connects<br/>juxtaposes<br/>draws a parallel<br/>    between<br/>foreshadows<br/>uses an analogy<br/>turns to<br/>shifts to<br/>transitions to<br/>concludes<br/>finishes<br/>closes<br/>ends</p> |
|---|--|---|

## VARIED SUGGESTED SENTENCE OPENERS

1. Two adjectives

Tall, handsome lifeguards flirt ....

2. An appositive

Sam, the tall, handsome lifeguard, flirts ....

3. A parallel structure

Tall and handsome, Sam flirts

4. A question

Who could that tall, handsome lifeguard be?

5. A prepositional phrase

On the high tower the tall, handsome lifeguard lounged.

6. An infinitive

To sit all day in the high tower is the job of the lifeguard.

7. A gerund

Sitting all day in the high tower, watching the pretty girls is the lifeguard's duty.

8. A perfect infinitive

To have sat in the burning sun all day was a challenge for the guards.

9. A perfect participle (past participle)

Having sat all day in the tower, the lifeguard left to find a cold drink.

10. A present participle

Smiling at the happy crowds, the lifeguard keeps watch.

11. A perfect gerund

Having sat there all day was a challenge for the lifeguards.

12. A predicate adjective

The guard was tall and handsome.

13. A predicate noun

A tall, strong man was the guard.

14. Parallel structure, more complex

A tall man and a handsome one, my father loved the ocean.

15. An adverbial clause

While he swam in the ocean, the guard kept watching for sharks.

16. An adjective clause

Sam, who had the build of a wrestler, worked as a guard every summer.

17. A noun clause

That he could swim to Catalina has never been proven.

18. An exclamation

Wow! He certainly seems powerful.

## Strong Transition Words

### **Sequence:**

Initially/Foremost  
Furthermore  
Ultimately  
In Conclusion/In Essence/In Summation/

### **Exemplifying:**

For example, For instance, To illustrate, In Particular, Specifically, Chiefly, Markedly, Namely, Particularly,

### **Additional Examples:**

In addition, Additionally, Likewise, Similarly, Moreover, Comparatively, Coupled with, correspondingly,

### **Contrast: (Mix and Match)**

Indeed...However  
Granted...Nevertheless  
Admittedly...Yet  
Certainly...On the contrary  
Without a doubt/undoubtedly...Conversely  
Assuredly...However  
Unquestionably...To contrast

### **Consequence:**

accordingly, as a result, consequently, for this reason, for this purpose,  
hence, otherwise, so then, subsequently, therefore, thus, thereupon, wherefore

### **Exception:**

aside from, barring, besides, except, excepting, excluding, exclusive of, other than, outside of, save

### **Restatement:**

in essence, in other words, namely, that is, that is to say, in short, in brief,

## A Syntax Primer Review

**THE ESSENTIAL IDEA:** Like all literary features, syntax must be examined in terms of how it contributes to purpose, meaning, and effect, and helps an author achieve his/her purpose.

Therefore when analyzing, consider the following:

1). **SENTENCE LENGTH** – Are the sentences *telegraphic* (shorter than 5 words), *short*

(approximately 5 to 10 words), *medium* (approximately 15 to 20 words) or *long*

(approximately 30 words or more)?

2). **SENTENCE BEGINNINGS and ENDINGS** – Is there variety or does a pattern emerge?

(*Anaphora & epistrophe*, terms to learn here.)

3). **WORD ORDER** – Are words set out in a special way for a specific purpose or effect?

4). **RHETORICAL QUESTION** – A question that expects no answer, it draws attention to a

point or leads a reader to a specific view, answer, etc.

**Example:** Can't we all just get along?

5). **ARRANGEMENT OF IDEAS** – Are ideas set out in a special way for a purpose or effect?

The types listed below are just a few basic patterns. There are many more!

A. *loose sentence*: makes complete sense if brought to a close before the actual ending.

The main point is “front loaded.”

**Example:** We finally reached San Diego/that morning/after a long delay/ a turbulent flight/ and some exciting adventures with airline food.

B. *periodic sentence*: makes sense only when the end of the sentence is reached. The main point is “end loaded.”

## Writing Resources

**Example:** That morning, after a long delay/ a turbulent flight/ and some exciting adventures with airline food/ we finally reached San Diego.

C. *parallel structure*: 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. In essence, it is a particular kind of repetition.

Wrong: In the winter, I usually like skiing and to skate.

Right: In the winter, I usually like skiing and skating.

Right: In the winter, I usually like to ski and to skate.

**Example:** He was the kind of man who knew what he wanted, who intended to get it, and who allowed nothing or nobody to get in his way.

D. *natural order sentence*: a sentence where the subject comes before the predicate (main verb).

**Example:** Oranges grow in California.

E. *inverted order sentence*: a sentence where the predicate (main verb) comes before the subject.

**Example:** In California grow oranges.

F. *split order sentence*: divides the predicate into two parts with the subject coming in between.

**Example:** In California oranges grow.

G. *interrupted order*: the subordinate elements come in the middle, often set off by dashes.

**Example:** Oranges—beautiful, sweet, and delicious—grow in California

**6). SENTENCE CLASSIFICATIONS** – Consider the following in examining sentence structures. Learn the terminology.

A. Four Basic Sentence Types (purposes)

- *Declarative*: makes a statement

**Example:** The king seems sick.

- *Imperative*: gives a command

**Example:** Help him now.

- *Interrogative*: asks a question.

**Example:** What's the matter with him?

- *Exclamatory*: makes an exclamation

**Example:** The king is dead!

## B. Four Basic Sentence Structures

- *Simple sentence*: one independent clause

**Example:** The singer bowed to her adoring audience.

- *Compound sentence*: two or more independent clauses (joined by a coordinating conjunction—*and, but, for, or, not, yet, so*—or a semicolon).

**Example:** The singer bowed gratefully to the audience, but she sang no encores.

**Example:** The singer bowed gratefully to the audience; however, she sang no encores.

*Complex sentence*: one independent clause and one or more dependent (subordinate) clauses.

**Example:** Although the singer bowed gratefully to the audience, she sang no encores.

- *Compound-complex*: two or more independent clauses and one or more dependent (subordinate) clause(s).

**Example:** Although the audience clapped wildly, the singer sang no encores, but she did bow gratefully.

## **Research Paper: *Using Evidence***

Like a lawyer in a jury trial, a writer must convince her audience of the validity of her argument by using evidence effectively. As a writer, you must also use evidence to persuade your readers to accept your claims. But how do you use evidence to your advantage? By leading your reader through your reasoning.

The types of evidence you use change from discipline to discipline--you might use quotations from a poem or a literary critic, for example, in a literature paper; you might use data from an experiment in a lab report.

The process of putting together your argument is called analysis--it interprets evidence in order to support, test, and/or refine a claim. The chief claim in an analytical essay is called the thesis. A thesis provides the controlling idea for a paper and should be original (that is, not completely obvious), assertive, and arguable. A strong thesis also requires solid evidence to support and develop it because without evidence, a claim is merely an unsubstantiated idea or opinion.

This Web page will cover these basic issues (you can click or scroll down to a particular topic):

- Incorporating evidence effectively.
- Integrating quotations smoothly.
- Citing your sources.

## *Incorporating Evidence Into Your Essay*

### When Should You Incorporate Evidence?

Once you have formulated your claim, your thesis, you should use evidence to help strengthen your thesis and any assertion you make that relates to your thesis. Here are some ways to work evidence into your writing:

- Offer evidence that agrees with your stance up to a point, then add to it with ideas of your own.
- Present evidence that contradicts your stance, and then argue against (refute) that evidence and therefore strengthen your position.
- Use sources against each other, as if they were experts on a panel discussing your proposition.



- Use quotations to support your assertion, not merely to state or restate your claim.

### *Weak and Strong Uses of Evidence*

In order to use evidence effectively, you need to integrate it smoothly into your essay by following this pattern:

- State your claim.
- Give your evidence, remembering to relate it to the claim.
- Comment on the evidence to show how it supports the claim.

To see the differences between strong and weak uses of evidence, here are two paragraphs.

#### *Weak use of evidence*

Today, we are too self-centered. Most families no longer sit down to eat together, preferring instead to eat on the go while rushing to the next appointment (Gleick 148). Everything is about what we want.

This is a weak example of evidence because the evidence is not related to the claim. What does the claim about self-centeredness have to do with families eating together? The writer doesn't explain the connection.

The same evidence can be used to support the same claim, but only with the addition of a clear connection between claim and evidence, and some analysis of the evidence cited.

#### *Stronger use of evidence*

Today, Americans are too self-centered. Even our families don't matter as much anymore as they once did. Other people and activities take precedence. In fact, the evidence shows that most American families no longer eat together, preferring instead to eat on the go while rushing to the next appointment (Gleick 148). Sit-down meals are a time to share and connect with others; however, that connection has become less valued, as families begin to prize individual activities over shared time, promoting self-centeredness over group identity.

This is a far better example, as the evidence is more smoothly integrated into the text, the link between the claim and the evidence is strengthened, and the evidence itself is analyzed to provide support for the claim.

## *Using Quotations: A Special Type of Evidence*

One effective way to support your claim is to use quotations. However, because quotations involve someone else's words, you need to take special care to integrate this kind of evidence into your essay. Here are two examples using quotations, one less effective and one more so.

### *Ineffective Use of Quotation*

Today, we are too self-centered. "We are consumers-on-the-run . . . the very notion of the family meal as a sit-down occasion is vanishing. Adults and children alike eat . . . on the way to their next activity" (Gleick 148). Everything is about what we want.

This example is ineffective because the quotation is not integrated with the writer's ideas. Notice how the writer has dropped the quotation into the paragraph without making any connection between it and the claim. Furthermore, she has not discussed the quotation's significance, which makes it difficult for the reader to see the relationship between the evidence and the writer's point.

### *A More Effective Use of Quotation*

Today, Americans are too self-centered. Even our families don't matter as much any more as they once did. Other people and activities take precedence, as James Gleick says in his book, *Faster*. "We are consumers-on-the-run . . . the very notion of the family meal as a sit-down occasion is vanishing. Adults and children alike eat . . . on the way to their next activity" (148). Sit-down meals are a time to share and connect with others; however, that connection has become less valued, as families begin to prize individual activities over shared time, promoting self-centeredness over group identity.

The second example is more effective because it follows the guidelines for incorporating evidence into an essay. Notice, too, that it uses a lead-in phrase (" . . . as James Gleick says in his book, *Faster*") to introduce the direct quotation. This lead-in phrase helps to integrate the quotation with the writer's ideas. Also notice that the writer discusses and comments upon the quotation immediately afterwards, which allows the reader to see the quotation's connection to the writer's point.

**REMEMBER: Discussing the significance of your evidence develops and expands your paper!**

### *Citing Your Sources*

Evidence appears in essays in the form of quotations and paraphrasing. Both forms of evidence must be cited in your text. Citing evidence means distinguishing other writers' information from your own ideas and giving credit to your sources. There are plenty of general ways to do citations. Note both the lead-in phrases and the punctuation (except the brackets) in the following examples:

Quoting: According to Source X, "[direct quotation]" ([date or page #]).

Paraphrasing: Although Source Z argues that [his/her point in your own words], a better way to view the issue is [your own point] ([citation]).

Summarizing: In her book, Source P's main points are Q, R, and S [citation].

Your job during the course of your essay is to persuade your readers that your claims are feasible and are the most effective way of interpreting the evidence.

### Questions to Ask Yourself When Revising Your Paper

- Have I offered my reader evidence to substantiate each assertion I make in my paper?
- Do I thoroughly explain why/how my evidence backs up my ideas?
- Do I avoid generalizing in my paper by specifically explaining how my evidence is representative?
- Do I provide evidence that not only confirms but also qualifies my paper's main claims?
- Do I use evidence to test and evolve my ideas, rather than to just confirm them?
- Do I cite my sources thoroughly and correctly?

## Seven No-No Sins of Writing

### **The First Deadly Sin: Passive Voice**

In most instances, put the verb in the active voice rather than in the passive voice. *Passive voice* produces a sentence in which the subject *receives* an action. In contrast, *active voice* produces a sentence in which the subject *performs* an action. Passive voice often produces unclear, wordy sentences, whereas active voice produces generally clearer, more concise sentences. To change a sentence from passive to active voice, determine who or what performs the action, and use that person or thing as the subject of the sentence.

#### **Examples**

**Passive voice:**

On April 19, 1775, arms were seized at Concord, precipitating the American Revolution.

**Active voice:**

On April 19, 1775, British soldiers seized arms at Concord, precipitating the American Revolution.

**Other examples of passive voice:**

1. The process of modernization in any society is seen as a positive change.
2. The Count is presented as an honest, likeable character.
3. Thomas Jefferson's support of the new Constitution was documented in a letter to James Madison.

### **The Second Deadly Sin: Incorrect Punctuation of Two Independent Clauses**

(An independent clause has a subject and a verb and can stand alone as a sentence.)

Good writers know that correct punctuation is important to writing clear sentences. If you misuse a mark of punctuation, you risk confusing your reader and appearing careless. Notice how the placement of commas significantly affects the meaning of these sentences:

Mr. Jones, says Ms. Moore, is a boring old fool.

Mr. Jones says Ms. Moore is a boring old fool.

Writers often combine independent clauses in a single compound sentence to emphasize the relationship between ideas. The punctuation of compound sentences varies depending upon how you connect the clauses.

*The Rules*

- (a) Separate independent clauses with a **comma** when using a coordinating conjunction (*and, but, or, for, nor, so, yet*).
- (b) Separate independent clauses with a **semi-colon** when no coordinating conjunction is used.
- (c) Separate independent clauses with a **semi-colon** when using a conjunctive adverb (e.g., *however, therefore, thus, consequently, finally, nevertheless*).

**Examples of Correct Punctuation, Rule a:**

1. We all looked worse than usual, for we had stayed up studying for the exam.
2. This room is unbelievably hot, and I think that I am going to pass out.
3. Monday is a difficult day for me, so I try to prepare as much as possible on Sunday.

**Examples of Correct Punctuation, Rule b:**

1. We all looked worse than usual; we had stayed up all night studying for the exam.
2. This room is unbelievably hot; I think I am going to pass out.
3. Monday is a difficult day for me; I have three classes and two other commitments.

**Examples of Correct Punctuation, Rule c:**

1. We all looked worse than usual; however, we were relieved we had studied.
2. The discussion is really interesting; nevertheless, I think I am going to pass out.
3. Monday is a difficult day for me; however, I have figured out how to prepare for it.

**The Third Deadly Sin: Wordiness**

Concise writing is the key to clear communication. Wordiness obscures your ideas and frustrates your reader. Make your points as succinctly as possible, and move on. As Strunk and White tell us in *Elements of Style*:

Vigorous writing is concise. A sentence should contain no unnecessary words, a paragraph no unnecessary sentences.... This requires not that the writer make all sentences short, or avoid all detail and treat subjects only in outline, but that every word tell. (23)

Once you start searching for unnecessary words, you will find you can cut many without any loss of meaning. In fact, your writing will be crisper and more appealing. Remember: make "every word tell."

## *Strategies for Eliminating Wordiness*

Use action verbs rather than forms of the verb to be (is, are, was, were).

### **wordy**

The reason that General Lee invaded Pennsylvania in June, 1863, was to draw the Army of the Potomac away from Richmond.

### **revised** (replace *was* with action verb *invaded*)

General Lee invaded Pennsylvania in June, 1863, to draw the Army of the Potomac away from Richmond.

**Tip:** As a first step in reducing wordiness, identify instances of *this is*, *there are*, and *it is* at the beginning of your sentences, and ask yourself whether you can eliminate them.

Make the real subject the actual subject of the sentence; make the real verb the actual verb.

### **wordy**

In Crew's argument there are many indications of her misunderstanding of natural selection.

### **revised** (replace subject *there* with *argument*; replace verb *are* with *demonstrates*.)

Crew's argument repeatedly demonstrates misunderstanding of natural selection.

## *Common sources of wordiness*

### **Redundancies**

My personal opinion, at the present time, by means of, the basic essentials, connect together, for the purpose of, in close proximity

### **Unnecessary phrases/clauses**

- The reason why is that
- This is a subject that
- In spite of the fact that
- Due to the fact that
- in the event that
- because of the fact that
- until such time as
- by means of

### **Passive voice**

In most instances, it is better to put verbs in the active voice. Passive voice produces unclear, wordy sentences, whereas active voice produces clearer, more concise sentences.

**wordy**

In 1935 Ethiopia was invaded by Italy.

**revised**

In 1935 Italy invaded Ethiopia. (more concise and vigorous)

**The Fourth Deadly Sin: Misuse of the Apostrophe**

Use the apostrophe to indicate possession and to mark omitted letters in contractions. Writers often misuse apostrophes when forming plurals and possessives. The basic rule is quite simple: **use the apostrophe to indicate possession, not a plural.** Yes, the exceptions to the rule may seem confusing: *hers* has no apostrophe, and *it's* is not possessive. Nevertheless, with a small amount of attention, you can learn the rules and the exceptions of apostrophe use.

*Possessives*

**Form the possessive case of a singular noun by adding 's** (even if the word ends in *s*).

Hammurabi's code, Dickens's last novel, James's cello

**Form the possessive case of a plural noun by adding an apostrophe after the final letter if it is an *s* or by adding 's if the final letter is not an *s*.**

the students' disks, the children's toys

*Remember:* the apostrophe never designates the plural form of a noun.

**A common error is the use of the apostrophe to form a non-possessive plural.**

Compare the following correct sentences:

The *student's* disk was missing.

Several *students'* disks were missing.

The *students* searched for their missing disks.

**Possessive pronouns, such as *yours, hers, its, and ours*, take no apostrophe.**

The decision is yours

**Indefinite pronouns, such as *anyone, everybody, no one, somebody*, use the singular possessive form.**

Somebody's dog stayed in our suite last night.

*Contractions*

**The apostrophe is used to mark omitted letters in contractions.**

(Note that contractions are often considered too informal for academic writing.)

**Avoid the dreadful *it's/its* confusion.**

*It's* is a contraction for *it is*. *It's* is never a possessive.

*Its* is the possessive for *it*.

As Professors Strunk and White remind us in *Elements of Style*, "It's a wise dog that scratches its own fleas" (1).

### **The Fifth Deadly Sin: Misplaced and Dangling Modifiers**

Misplaced and dangling modifiers create illogical, even comical, sentences. We confuse our readers if we fail to connect modifiers (words that describe or limit other words) to the words they modify; be sure to place modifiers next to the words they modify. See the illogic in this example:

Walking back from the village, my wallet was lost. (*Does your wallet walk?*)

**revised**

Walking back from the village, I lost my wallet. (*Your wallet doesn't walk, but you do.*) A ***misplaced modifier* is a word or phrase that due to its placement mistakenly refers to the wrong word. The modifier truly is misplaced.**

**To correct a misplaced modifier, move it next to or near the word it modifies.**

A fine athlete and student, the coach honored the captain of the tennis team.  
(*The coach was not the fine athlete and student.*)

**revised**

The coach honored the captain of the tennis team, a fine athlete and student

**Limiting modifiers (*only, almost, nearly, just*) are commonly misplaced. To avoid ambiguity, place them in front of the word they modify.**

Marsh's evidence reinforces the view that the artist *only* intended the images for a local audience.

**revised**

Marsh's evidence reinforces the view that the artist intended the images *only* for a local audience.



**A *dangling modifier* is a (usually introductory) word or phrase that the writer intends to use as a modifier of a following word, but the following word is missing. The result is an illogical statement.**

**To fix a dangling modifier, add the missing word and place the modifier next to it.**

Acting on numerous complaints from students, a fox was found near Root.  
(*The fox did not act on the complaint.*)

**revised**

Acting on numerous complaints from students, security found a fox near Root.

After reading the original study, the flaws in Lee's argument are obvious.

**revised**

Reading the original study reveals obvious flaws in Lee's argument.

**Dangling modifiers go hand-in-hand with wordiness and passive voice.  
Correct one and you correct them all!**

### **The Sixth Deadly Sin: Pronoun Problems**

Pronouns are useful as substitutes for nouns, but a poorly chosen pronoun can obscure the meaning of a sentence. Common pronoun errors include

#### *Unclear Pronoun Reference*

A pronoun must refer to a specific noun (the antecedent). Ambiguous pronoun reference creates confusing sentences.

Writers should spend time thinking about their arguments to make sure *they* are not superficial.  
(Unclear antecedent: who or what are superficial?)

A key difference between banking crises of today and of yesterday is that *they* have greater global impact. (Which crises have more impact?)

If a whiff of ambiguity exists, use a noun:

A key difference between banking crises of today and yesterday is that today's crises have greater global impact.

## Vague Subject Pronoun

Pronouns such as *it*, *there*, and *this* often make weak subjects.

Pope Gregory VII forced Emperor Henry IV to wait three days in the snow at Canossa before granting him an audience. *It* was a symbolic act.

To what does *it* refer? Forcing the Emperor to wait? The waiting? The granting of the audience? The audience? The entire sentence?

Use a pronoun as subject only when its antecedent is crystal clear.

## Agreement Error

A pronoun must agree in gender and number with its antecedent. A common error is the use of the plural pronoun *they* to refer to a singular noun.

In the original state constitution, *they* allowed polygamy.

*They* (plural) refers to *constitution* (singular).

### revised:

The original state constitution allowed polygamy.

It is often better to use a plural noun and pronoun than to use a singular noun and pronoun. Note that indefinite pronouns such as *each* and *everyone* are singular.

Each student must meet *his* or *her* advisor. (correct but awkward)

Each student must meet with *their* advisor. (incorrect: singular noun, plural pronoun)

Students must meet with *their* advisors. (correct: plural noun and pronoun)

## The Seventh Deadly Sin: Committing Pet Peeves

Learning to write clearly and effectively is a central part of your education. As the *Hamilton College Catalogue* notes, "The college expects its students to think, write and speak with clarity, understanding and precision." Below is a list of professors' pet peeves you should bear in mind as you aim for "clarity, understanding and precision" in your writing.

| <i>Professor</i> | <i>Pet Peeve</i>       | <i>Example</i>  |
|------------------|------------------------|---|
| <b>JANACK</b>    | <i>utilize vs. use</i> | "Descartes <i>uses</i> the wax argument to show that we know physical objects with the mind, not the senses." |

|                    |  |   |
|--------------------|--|---|
| <b>GRANT</b>       | singular/plural disagreement                     | "The <i>student</i> finished the essay, only to discover that <i>their</i> printer did not work."                         |
| <b>MARTIN</b>      | bloated diction                                  | "Once <i>liberty</i> is <i>actualized</i> , justice will <i>burgeon</i> ."  |
| <b>RUBINO</b>      | "inflated, imprecise words"                      | The lifestyles of many individuals were difficult due to what society utilized against them.                              |
| <b>YEE</b>         | misuse of <i>prove/proof</i>                     | "The results <i>prove</i> that our hypothesis was correct. (A study <i>supports</i> a hypothesis, not <i>proves</i> it.)" |
| <b>THICKSTUN</b>   | general sloppiness                               | The English department cares <i>to</i> much about <i>grammer</i> and <i>speling</i> .                                     |
| <b>TEWKSBURY</b>   | burying the subject                              | The significance of the study is that there is....  |
| <b>DORAN</b>       | unnecessary subordinate clause and passive voice | There was one factor <i>that was ignored by the "con" side</i> : ....   |
| <b>GOLD</b>        | use of <i>I</i> as object of verb                | They went with Dido and <i>me</i> to tour the Colosseum.  |
| <b>KOLB</b>        |  | The family came to see David and <i>I</i> perform.  |
| <b>ISSERMAN</b>    | indefinite antecedent                            | President Johnson's ignoring of George Ball's Vietnam memo proved disastrous for <i>him</i> . (for whom?)                 |
| <b>WU</b>          | <i>loose vs. lose</i>                            | Forecasters fear that stocks will <i>lose</i> value next year.  |
| <b>MCKEE</b>       | treating <i>data</i> as singular                 | The <i>data show</i> that medication affects ADHD symptoms.   |
| <b>JENSEN</b>      | <i>than vs. then</i>                             | The data indicate that Americans work more hours <i>than</i> Europeans.   |
| <b>E. WILLIAMS</b> | vacuous first sentences                          | Scientists have studied DNA for years.  |
| <b>SILVERSMITH</b> | <i>affect vs. effect</i>                         | We studied the <i>effect</i> of the angle on acceleration.  |
| <b>VAUGHAN</b>     | <i>less vs. fewer</i>                            | Bush got <i>fewer</i> votes than Gore in 2000.  |

|                   |  |   |
|-------------------|--|---|
| <b>FRIEND</b>     | <i>who vs. that</i>  | Anyone <i>who</i> disagrees please speak up.            |
| <b>KINNEL</b>     | use of <i>impact</i> as a verb                                   | Logging heavily <u><i>impacted</i></u> the Adirondacks. |
| <b>J. O'NEILL</b> | use of <i>impact</i> when violent implications are inappropriate | "The poem had a quiet, gentle <i>impact</i> on me."     |
| <b>HALL</b>       | got/stronger word  | Gore received more chads than Bush.                     |
| <b>HALL</b>       | overuse of words   | The taco was awesome. It was awesome to eat.            |