

Writing an Analytical Essay

These are guidelines intended to function as a point of reference and to make writing an analytical essay a less daunting task. These are not hard and fast rules; the best *essays* are those that deviate in creative and appropriate ways.

Introduction

Point of interest—something that will catch the reader's attention

Context—information that frames and narrows the scope of the essay

Thesis—what the essay will do or show

Definition of Key terms—clarification of subjective words in the thesis

Articulation—brief chronology of main topics

II. Body Paragraphs

The easiest way to write body paragraphs is to begin with the evidence since it should be the basis for your analysis, and then build each paragraph around it, writing the parts 1 through 5, though they will still be arranged in conventional order—as written below.

4. **Topic Sentence**—mini-thesis/what the paragraph will do or show

2. **Context**—information necessary to understand the evidence

1. **Evidence**—(quotation) from where in the text the ideas are derived

3. **Analysis**—interpretation of the evidence/what it means or suggests

5. **Return to Thesis**—how the analysis supports the thesis

III. Conclusion

Restatement of Thesis and Summarization of Key Points—reworking of major trains of thought that together serve to establish a deeper understanding of the text than each previously did alone

Opinion or Recommendation—discussion of consequences (personal or otherwise] and, if relevant, a proposed course of action