

Delbarton School Guide to Analytical Writing

The English Department

*Delbarton School
Morristown, New Jersey*

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The foundation for this writing guide, *Fleury's Guide to Writing the Critical Paper*, was first introduced to the Delbarton student body in 1994. Its author, Brian Fleury, is the current Athletic Director at Delbarton School, and a member of its English Department. Now, in 2005, Delbarton's English Department has decided to issue a new edition of *Fleury's Guide*. We wanted to give the students of Delbarton School a comprehensive package – a guide that covers everything from strategies for analytical writing to approaches for avoiding plagiarism to formatting guidelines to anything else they might need to know when they sit down to write a paper for English class.

The majority of the work before you started with Brian. He is the author and inspiration behind so much of our lives at Delbarton. As you use it in your classes, or in the labs, or at home under the light of your desk, we hope you feel as we do – honored and humbled to have him in our lives. He is our coach and teacher, too, and we thank him.

The English Department of Delbarton School

General Overview:

The Writing Process:

Writing skillfully is one of the most useful crafts you can develop. You will greatly improve your chances of success in school and in your professional life if you can write clear, concise expository prose. That's the kind of writing *you will be taught and expected to write while at Delbarton.*

A good writer puts words together in concise, smooth sentences, according to the rules of standard usage. He/She puts sentences together to make paragraphs that are clear and effective, unified and well-developed. Finally, he/she puts those paragraphs together into larger forms of writing: essays, letters, stories, research papers.

A writer begins with a general plan and ends with details of wording, sentence structure, and grammar. First, he/she chooses the subject of his essay. Second, he/she formulates a clear, specific thesis (See pg. 6). Third, he/she tackles the preparation of his/her material, from rough ideas to final outline. Fourth, he/she undertakes the writing itself, beginning with a rough form (the first draft) and ending with a finished form (the final draft) that is as close to perfection as he/she can make it.

These three basic stages of composition are almost always the same for any form of writing. Each of the three stages proceeds according to certain definite steps, listed below in order. Your writing will improve if you follow these stages. Keep in mind, writing is an art and not a science. Experience and practice will improve your writing skills; following these guidelines will simply aid in the process.

1. SUBJECT

- A. Choosing and limiting the subject
- B. Developing the thesis
- C. Assembling materials

2. PREPARATION

- C. Organizing materials
- D. Outlining

3. WRITING

- E. Writing the first draft
- F. Revising
- G. Writing the final draft

From Sentence to Paragraph to Essay:

If you can write a clear, cogent sentence, then you can write a clear, cogent paragraph. Similarly, if you can write an effective paragraph, then you can write an expository essay. All sentences have an independent clause as their foundation, with any number of things that may be added to (or built upon) it. The single independent clause may stand alone as a simple sentence, or you may add sentence modifiers, like dependent clauses and various phrases, in order to make it more complex, in order to provide more information for the reader.

For example:

SENTENCES:

(Foundation) - The boy ran to the store.

(Dependent clause + Foundation) - After the barbeque dinner, the boy ran to the store.

(Dependent clause + Foundation + Adjective clause) - After the barbeque dinner, the boy ran to the store, where he bought a dozen eggs.

PARAGRAPHS:

Writing paragraphs follows a similar logic. Just think of the topic sentence as the foundation, and add pertinent details or information that develops the topic sentence. Check that your paragraphs meet the following guidelines:

1. **ONE TOPIC:** It must discuss one topic only; that is, it must have unity of subject matter.
2. **SUPPORT:** It must say all that a reader needs to know about the topic. It must be well-supported with specific evidence such as details, facts, examples, and quotations.
3. **LOGIC:** The sentences within the paragraph must follow some reasonable order that a reader can recognize and follow.
4. **COHERENCE:** The sentences within a paragraph must be tied together with transitions so that a reader can read the paragraph as a unit, not as a collection of separate sentences.

ESSAYS:

Good essays are founded on the same philosophy as good paragraphs and good sentences. An essay centers on its own foundation- the THESIS STATEMENT (See pg. 6). Like the development you use in a complex sentence or a well-developed paragraph, the body paragraphs in an essay develop and explain the thesis statement.

You want your readers to understand what you write. There is no need for suspense, no need for ambiguity. Let your readers know exactly what is on your mind and discuss it. Graceful phrasing and a rich vocabulary are great, but compared to total clarity, they are secondary.

Some Basic Directives for Writing Analytical Papers:**Preparation:**

Before you begin to actually write your paper:

1. You must have a solid knowledge of the text. Thus, you need to take notes as you read and then review the book again before you begin to write.
2. After examining your notes and the text, decide what your goal is for the paper. You need to ask yourself what topic/subject interests you (See Appendix i – *Brainstorm Worksheet*).
3. Take focused notes pertaining to that topic. For example, if you want to compare two characters, take notes on their actions, reactions, and descriptions.
4. Examine your notes and make a decision on what you want to prove (your thesis). Your topic must be clearly defined before you write.
5. Once you decide on your idea, you will need to decide how you will prove your argument. This involves developing several points that you will explore more thoroughly in the paper. All of your points must serve to prove your thesis. Creating an outline to lay out your exploration of the topic/subject is the best tool to use in the preparation process (See Appendix ii – *Model of an Outline*).

The Essay itself:

1. **The Introductory Paragraph** opens the paper. It is not to be separated from the rest of the text on a page of its own. The purpose of this paragraph is to introduce the reader to the subject matter and suggest the approach you plan to take. In order to attract the interest of your reader, make sure your ideas are as clear and confident as possible. As you write your introduction, remember that it must 1) lead the reader into your general subject 2) state your thesis, your idea about the subject and 3) show your reader your approach to proving your idea.

Thesis Statement: A thesis statement is your central idea in your essay. A thesis statement must be arguable. It will not do to state a fact for the thesis, since there is no real need to argue or prove a fact. By the end of the introduction, the reader should be familiar with both the central idea and the topics that will prove the idea. Do not begin with sentences such as “In this paper, I will prove...” or “The purpose of this paper is to...” Don’t say what you are going to do – do it! The thesis is a strong statement, inviting the reader to watch you develop your point by showing evidence from the texts.

2. **The Body Paragraphs** should clearly discuss the topics of the thesis in a logical order. Each paragraph should have a topic sentence and subsequent sentences which will support and develop the topics and, in turn, your thesis. All support should relate to the topic sentences which begin each paragraph. There is no greater sign of disorganization than a sentence that simply does not fit in with the others. Please also remember that no one will believe what you say simply because you say it: you must, therefore, support all of your ideas with textual evidence. It is not enough to state a character’s reaction to a situation; you may need to quote the pertinent lines to show your point. You must, however, introduce and comment on how the particular quotation illustrates the point you are making.
3. **Transitions** between paragraphs are significant in the success of your paper. If your paragraphs appear unrelated and random, your discussion will appear foolish and a waste of the reader’s time. Connect the paragraphs by relating the closing sentence of one paragraph to the opening sentence of the next. You may do this by reiterating an idea, or by providing a word that signals a jump in time, the result or consequence of the action, and so forth. Never think that the space and indentation that indicate a new paragraph are license to move to a new subject without warning. You must provide the reader with some indication of the relationship between the new paragraph and the previous one.

- a. **Transitional Expressions** between sentences and/or ideas are equally important. A transitional expression is a word or phrase that makes a specific logical connection between ideas. Transitional expressions tie the ideas together, show their relative importance, and generally help the reader to follow the writer's thought. Keep the thought of the paragraph flowing smoothly from sentence to sentence by using these expressions.
- b. **Transitional words** and expressions may be grouped according to the kinds of ideas they express.

For example:

Transitional expressions may link similar ideas or add an idea to one already stated.

again	for example	likewise
also	for instance	moreover
and	further	similarly
besides	in addition	too

Transitional expressions may link ideas that are dissimilar or apparently contradictory:

although	however	otherwise
on the other hand	but	conversely
instead	yet	on the contrary

Transitional expressions may indicate cause, purpose or result.

as	as a result	so
because	since	therefore
thus	hence	consequently

Transitional expressions may indicate time or position.

above	before	presently
at the present time	finally	eventually
thereafter	here	at once

Transitional expressions may indicate an example or a summary of ideas.

as a result	in any event	in other words
in brief	in short	for example
in any case	in fact	at any rate

4. **The Conclusion Paragraph** can be almost as difficult to compose as the introduction if you have not really shown anything in the paper. The conclusion should gracefully return the reader to an overview of the topic. You should try to tie together the main ideas of the paper, and without being boring or repetitious, restate the basic thesis. You should never retype the thesis sentence; rather, you should rephrase the idea. Since you have already proven your point by use of examples, there is no need to sound argumentative here. That is not to say, however, that you cannot make a point in the conclusion paragraph. Attempting to tie things together should lead you to a more general view of the argument. Under no conditions should the paper close by asking the reader a question. Your task in the paper was to develop your argument, and your conclusion should successfully bring the reader back to the purpose of your essay and leave them thinking about your ideas.

Alternative Essay Model-3 Step Essay: Once you have mastered the concept and structure of the 5-paragraph essay, you can also try the more abstract, 3-Step model. In the 3-Step model, the writer moves away from the restrictions of the 5-paragraph essay. No longer are you obligated to a single Introductory Paragraph, or to the confines of three body paragraphs. The 5-paragraph essay is similar to the training wheels on your bicycle. Once you have learned how the bicycle works and how to ride it, you no longer need the use of the training wheels. The same may be said for the 5-paragraph essay as it relates to the 3-Step Model. The major structural difference between the two is simple. With the 3-step model, your essay is a progression in function rather than of form. You may have one, two, or three paragraphs to introduce your thesis, just as long as you establish your argument. You may have any number of body paragraphs, just as long as you clarify what you have established. The same applies for the conclusion of your argument, as you comment on the importance of what you have proven.

1. **Step One:** Establish your thesis
2. **Step Two:** Clarify your thesis with specific development.
3. **Step Three:** Comment on how your thesis shapes an understanding of the larger topic.

A Few Tips on Writing More Concisely

Vigorous writing is concise. A sentence shouldn't contain unnecessary words and a paragraph shouldn't contain unnecessary sentences. The writer should not make all his/her sentences short, avoid all detail, or treat his/her subjects only in outline, but he/she must make every word count.

Many expressions in common use violate this principle:

<i>WORDY</i>	<i>CONCISE</i>
the question as to whether	whether (the question whether)
there is no doubt but that	no doubt (doubtless)
he is a man who	he
in a hasty manner	hastily
this is a subject that	this subject
His story is a strange one.	His story is strange.
the reason why is that	because

An expression that is especially debilitating is "the fact that." You should attempt to revise it out of the sentences in which it occurs:

owing to the fact that	since (because)
in spite of the fact that	though (although)
the fact that I had arrived	my arrival
He is unaware of the fact that	He is unaware that

Expressions such as who is, which was, and the like are often superfluous:

His brother, who is a member of the same firm	His brother, a member of the same firm
--	---

Remember, too, that the active voice is more concise than the passive. For an explanation of the differences between the active and passive voices, see below.

(From Strunk, William Jr. and E.B. White. *The Elements of Style*. 3rd ed. New York: Macmillan Publishing, Co., 1979.)

Points of Style

1. Choosing the Active over the Passive Voice

The English language has two principal voices for verbs: the active and the passive. The active voice is direct and strong; the passive voice, conversely, is often indirect and weak. You should avoid the passive voice of verbs whenever possible, since it often leads to vague and imprecise expression. In most cases, the voices are easy to distinguish:

ACTIVE: John drove the car.

John is the subject of the sentence and performs the action.

PASSIVE: The car was driven by John.

The car here – the subject of the sentence – is doing nothing whatsoever; it is being acted on.

The passive voice forces the reader to ask the question “By whom?” in order to make clear sense of the sentence. A sentence might have good intentions and strong ideas, but in the passive, it is weak and inconclusive. This is particularly true in topic or thesis sentences. Consider the following:

By comparing the attitudes towards love and rationality expressed by Romeo and Friar Lawrence, it is seen that the two hold irreconcilable views.

“It is seen.” Who, exactly, sees it? What is “it”? Does anyone know? If this sentence were the thesis of a paper, does the writer seem strong and confident in the assertion OR fearful that someone might ask for clarification? Consider this sentence:

In their expressed attitudes towards love and rationality, Friar Lawrence and Romeo establish clearly irreconcilable views on the importance of imagination and emotion in shaping human decisions and actions.

This sentence is clear and direct. There is no lofty claim to something being seen, and there is no confusion about the subject or verb in the sentence.

2. Writing in Present Tense

In a literary analysis essay, you should write in the present tense. While the events in the work of literature appear to have taken place in the past, the writer must discuss the work in the present tense. This includes quoting, summarizing, and paraphrasing an author's views. For example:

Once Oedipus hears the truth of his parentage, he realizes the enormity of actions.

(From Hacker, Diana. *A Writer's Reference*. 5th ed. Boston: Bedford/ St. Martins, 2003.)

3. Using Connective and Qualifying Words or Phrases.

These words or phrases, including but not restricted to words like “however,” “admittedly,” “moreover,” are necessary components in a good essay – but require careful planning. Avoid using connectives and qualifiers to begin a sentence. While there is often nothing grammatically wrong with beginning a sentence (or a clause following a semi-colon) in this way, the terms are then in their weakest possible position. Tuck them in to sentences with commas for greatest emphasis. Consider the following:

- **The opening swordfight scene in *Romeo and Juliet* is quite short. However, it is necessary to establish the tension between parties that govern the entire play.** [There is nothing grammatically incorrect here, but the sentence is bland. Let the word work for you as a fulcrum between ideas.]
- **The opening swordfight scene in *Romeo and Juliet* is quite short. It is necessary, however, to establish the tension between the two parties that governs the entire play.** [Note how the positioning of *however* highlights the qualification that the writer is making.]
- **The opening swordfight scene in *Romeo and Juliet* is, admittedly, quite short. It is, however, critical to a play that deals with familial strife and tension because it prepares the audience for both the emotional conflict and the rapid passage of time that shape the drama as a whole.** [Note two qualifiers here: one concession to admit that the scene is short, with the suggestion that it could be overlooked because of its brevity – but the assertion that is worth looking at again. Then the emphatic “however” to dispel arguments that may have been mounted on the basis of the previous objection to its length/importance.]

Points on Format

1. *Heading:* The information block should appear in the upper left corner of the first page of your paper. The type should be double-spaced and in the same font (Times New Roman) and size (12pt.) as the text of your paper, set up as follows:

Your name

The name of the course

The instructor's name

The date (due date)

2. *Pagination:* **All pages** should be numbered in the right hand block of the top margin. Your last name will appear before every page number. Use numerals and omit the word "page" before the numerals. Set up as follows:

Jones 1

3. *The Title of the Paper:* The title of your paper should never solely be the title of the work you are discussing, nor should it simply give the problem you are treating. You did not write *The Merchant of Venice*, for example-Shakespeare did. Nor will a 5-20 page paper cover the subject of the evolution in Darwin. You can often include the title (and often the author) of the work in your own title that specifies the topic. For example:

Contrasting Settings in Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*.

The title should be plain and to the point: avoid cute and inappropriate titles that do not befit the nature of a formal paper. (Creative pieces are a different animal.) The title should appear in the center of the page, double-spaced beneath the information block. It should also appear in the same font and size as the rest of your paper (no bold, no italics, no underline). Italicize or underline titles of full-length books and some epic poems (e.g., *The Aeneid*, *The Odyssey*, *Beowulf*, *Paradise Lost*) and use quotation marks around titles of articles, most poems, and short stories.

(For sample formatting, see Appendix iii)

4. *Miscellany: (A Litany of Don 'ts)*

- Never type the words “The End” in the paper: it’s quite obviously the end when nothing follows the last line of type;
- Avoid contractions (can’t, don’t, etc.) in a formal paper: they are permitted in informal writing and in conversation, but you should avoid them in formal writing whenever possible;
- Avoid asking questions in the paper itself (except for rhetorical ones: when you ask your own questions and then proceed to answer them yourself. It is equivalent to talking to yourself.) Instead, make clear statements and support them.
- Avoid the pronoun “you” in most cases, since it apparently addresses the reader personally. Your paper is not an intimate conversation with the reader; it is a presentation of your views in a formal setting.
- Avoid shifting verb tenses, and remember to use the present tense of verbs when discussing a literary text.
- Avoid nervy and arrogant phrases like “It should be obvious that...” and “As you see...” and so forth. They insult the reader’s intelligence. The reader will determine what he does or does not see and should not be ordered to do so.

A Checklist for Papers

After completing your rough draft, review the paper and ask yourself the following questions, making any necessary and appropriate changes:

1. Is the title really the exact subject of the paper?
 - a. Is the punctuation around appropriate words in the title?
2. Is the introduction carefully designed (generally in a deductive pattern)?
 - a. Are there suitable general statements that lead logically and smoothly to a clear thesis?
 - b. Is the thesis arguable? If not, fix it.
3. Does each paragraph have a clear purpose and a specific topic?
 - a. Does it carefully develop one main thought?
 - b. Are there any sentences that don’t fit?
4. Are there logical and clear transitions between all ideas and paragraphs?

5. Have you used the present tense when discussing literary texts?
6. Are the quoted texts carefully chosen?
 - a. Have you quoted needlessly?
 - b. Are your quotations too long?
7. Does each quotation have a lead-in?
8. Are there any instances of the ‘I have shown/As you can see/In this paper I will prove’ type of sentence?
9. Is the writing clear?
 - a. Have you used any vague references?
10. Have you committed any of the following errors?
 - a. Passive voice verbs?
 - b. Pronoun ‘you’?
 - c. Undocumented quotations?
11. Does the conclusion close the paper gracefully, or does it sound as though you are dying to get the paper over with at any cost?
12. Are the papers properly ordered and fastened? Use a single staple in the left corner and do not use illustrated cover pages, plastic folders etc.
13. Does the format of your paper adhere to the guidelines specified in this manual?
14. Remember that it is your paper; You are responsible for its ideas and for its presentation-no one else.

Note: Your teacher will use different rubrics to assess your paper, depending on the purpose of the assignment. Follow the previous checklist and consult the sample rubrics as you polish your final draft (See Appendix iv-vii for samples of different rubrics).

Using Outside Texts

The mark of a skilled and thoughtful academic writer is one who knows how to use evidence effectively and properly. However, if a writer uses outside evidence incorrectly, he/she may be accused of plagiarism.

What it is:

1. Plagiarism is the theft of someone else's ideas. Students plagiarize for many different reasons and often never realize they are doing it. Putting someone else's original idea in your own words (paraphrasing) is just as wrong as not using quotation marks around the person's exact words. Additionally, you need to give credit (cite) to the source of the information that you use to support your ideas, if those facts are not common knowledge.

Why you need to cite your sources:

1. The author of the particular idea(s) that you are borrowing deserves credit for helping you create your particular work. Acknowledging that you used someone else's ideas does not take away from the scholarly nature of your work.
2. The consequences of plagiarism are serious and often result in severe disciplinary action.

Tips to avoid plagiarism:

1. To avoid inadvertently committing plagiarism, take careful notes as you do research or create a paper. By distinguishing between your own ideas and those of another *while you are taking notes* you can avoid the problems and tedium of trying to find where you got your ideas. Set up a system of note-taking which will make this clear to you (ie. Q for quote; S for source; Me for your ideas.) Also, be sure to list your sources as you take notes.
2. When you paraphrase or summarize someone else's ideas in your own words, you should indicate the source in your writing. Even when you change and reorder the words, you must still give credit where credit is due.
3. If you do quote directly from a text, be sure to copy the words exactly as they are written.
4. If you are having difficulty deciding whether you should document an idea or fact, ask yourself whether the majority of people reading your work would know or recognize the fact or opinion you have included in your work. If they would, you do not need to cite it. For instance, you do not need to cite in your paper that Roosevelt was the president during World War II; yet, you would need to document a speech he wrote during the war. If you are unclear, then document it.

How to use MLA documentation:

For the complete description of use this style of documentation, consult Diane Hacker's, *A Writer's Reference*.

What it is:

All of your papers for the English department require that you use MLA (Modern Language Association of America) documentation style. This WILL be different than what your History teachers require, so you should learn both styles. MLA or parenthetical notation does not use footnotes or endnotes. Instead, after the referenced section, you will include the author and page number from the text in parentheses. In turn, at the end of the paper you will have a Works Cited page which will list all of the works you used as reference in your paper. Thus, the reader will know exactly how to find the particular source that you refer to in your paper. This system allows the reader to know where to find the source and be able to read through the paper with a minimal amount of distraction from footnotes.

Guidelines:

If you use:

1. One source, but you do not include author's name in your writing-- Place the author's name and page number after the referenced material. Parentheses go before the end punctuation and there is no punctuation between author's name and page number. End punctuation belongs outside of the parentheses. For example:

Larkin felt, in fact, that poetry should be returned to the people, that it "should keep the child from its television and the old man from his pub" (Martin 26).

2. One author, but you use author's name in your writing--Include only the page number in the parentheses. For example:

The world of the play shows us a place where men are madly driven towards death; where the only virtue-the last possible human accomplishment-is, as Clifford Leech suggests, "a mind unbroken to the end" (89).

3. More than one work by an author--Include short title in parentheses and the page number. For example:

Whereas she views her sexual innocence as “something like a present wrapped up in layers of deliciously pretty paper, to be given, with discretion, to the right person” (*The Fifth Child* 5), her girl friends at the office view her as “crazy” claiming that there “must [have been] something in her childhood that mad her like [that]” (*The Fifth Child* 5).

4. Quote more than four typed lines-indent one inch from left and double space. Do not use quotation marks or change the right margin. Here parentheses are after punctuation.

Additional recommendations:

Lead-in phrases: You must provide some sort of lead-in for every passage you quote. These can take various forms. Choose an appropriate form, and make an effort to vary the wording.

- a. Before a block quotation, you can introduce the passage by naming the book and author: In *Studies in Tragedy*, John Smith writes:
- b. You may name the author and choose to let the reader consult a Works Cited or Works Consulted list for bibliographical information: John Smith argues that:
- c. When quoting a passage from a literary text, you may compose a sentence that indicates the setting from the quoted lines, then give simply an indication of the speaker. For example: After the feast at Heorot has begun, Unferth, one of Hrothgar’s thanes, verbally attacks Beowulf and questions his reputation and prowess. To his insults and accusations, Beowulf replies calmly:

Note that in most cases, a block quotation is introduced by a colon (:). This is usually necessary unless your lead-in phrase rolls into the quoted passage, as in a shorter roll quotation within a sentence. In all cases: the reader must be able to know from the information you provide where the passage is coming from. In a research paper, we need to have enough information to be able to locate your source quickly and easily in a bibliographic listing; in a critical paper, we need to know who is speaking, with some landmarks/background indicators of when/where the passage occurs in the original text.

Useful Verbs When Quoting/Paraphrasing the Work of Others

adds	admits	agrees
analyzes	argues	assesses
classifies	compares	concludes
considers	contends	continues
contrasts	declares	defines
demonstrates	describes	develops
disagrees	discusses	distinguishes
establishes	evaluates	examines
explains	finds	identifies
illustrates	implies	insists
interprets	maintains	notes
observes	organizes	outlines
points out	proposes	recalls
recognizes	records	recounts
reports	suggests	tests
traces	verifies	

Use of these verbs will decrease reliance on “says,” “states,” and “according to.”

Please consult Hacker’s guide for the many other possibilities regarding correct notation.

Regarding electronic sources:

Obviously, many students will be referring to sources from the Internet in their papers. It is just as important to cite your Internet source of ideas as it is to cite an article or book, however, sometimes sources do not provide as much information as you would like. We recommend that you do the best you can with what is available and make sure that your reader could find the source if they wanted. When you are selecting appropriate electronic sources, the most reliable sites are those URL addresses ending in .gov, .edu, .org.

TIPS:

1. If your source has multiple dates, use the “date of access” (Wyrick 388) showing the date you found the source.
2. Include the whole network address (URL) of the online source. Enclose the URL in angle brackets, and if you divide the address, break it with a slash mark (Wyrick 388).
3. If there is no page marker on your source, the readers will have to try to find the particular source on their own (Wyrick 388).

Again, please consult Hacker’s guide should you need guidance on how to document from an internet source.

NOTE: Supplementary Notes

Brainstorm Worksheet

How to begin:

Before a writer can begin to craft their ideas into a logical, effective essay, he/she needs to explore the subject through a careful examination of and thoughtful inquiry about the topic. This involves studying the text(s) and notes to decide what question(s) the writer wants to answer.

The following are steps that you can follow as you begin to brainstorm your ideas:

1. Choose the topic (general subject) of your paper (for example, Munro's use of irony in "How I Met My Husband")
2. Pose the question you are trying to answer.
3. Jot down notes about your subject through examination of text, margin comments etc.
4. Examine your notes; look for a pattern that you can develop into an assertion about your subject. Formulate a working thesis.
5. Consider the main points that will prove your thesis.
6. Find support for these main points. Select quotations, facts, concrete actions, to prove your points.
7. Logically organize your points to prove your assertion effectively.

Now you should begin writing your rough draft.

Model of an Outline

- I. Opening Paragraph**
 - A. Brief introduction to grab attention or introduce a subject
 - B. Thesis Statement
 - 1. What am I going to prove? What is my argument?
 - C. Main Points/ What are my reasons? My support?
 - 1. Reason #1
 - 2. Reason #2
 - 3. Reason #3
- II. First Body Paragraph**
 - A. Topic Sentence - What is your first reason or first point of support?
 - B. Support for topic sentence
 - 1. Facts/ Statistics
 - 2. Sensory details
 - 3. Incidents/ Examples
 - 4. Proof from the text (quotations, anecdotes)
- III. Second Body Paragraph**
 - A. Topic Sentence
 - B. Support
- IV. Third Body Paragraph**
 - A. Topic Sentence
 - B. Support
- V. Conclusion**
 - A. Bring the reader back to the purpose of my essay (thesis).
 - B. Summarize my main points.
 - C. Tie up any loose ends.
 - D. Share important insight.
 - E. Leave the reader thinking.

Essay Rubric-Wholistic

Score:

1 2 3 4 5
(weak) (average) (well-done)

1. Content:

Comments:

a. Originality of thought:

1 2 3 4 5

b. Responsiveness to Question:

1 2 3 4 5

c. Understanding of Text:

1 2 3 4 5

d. Use of Text:

1 2 3 4 5

e. Organization/flow of ideas:

1 2 3 4 5

2. Style:

f. Clarity of Expression:

1 2 3 4 5

g. Grammar/Syntax/Spelling

1 2 3 4 5

TOTAL: _____

5 Paragraph Essay Point Count Rubric

Opening

- Introduction of subject (novel, short story, poem & author's name) (1 pt.)
- Thesis that focuses on a topic and effectively expresses an opinion (5 pts.)
- States 3 main points that support the thesis (6pts.)
- Avoids excessive plot summary (2 pts.)
- Format (spelling/punctuation) (3 pts.)
- Overall effectiveness of opening argument and structure (3 pts.)

First Body Paragraph

- Strong topic sentence that supports the overall thesis & first main point (3 pts.)
- Supporting evidence from the text (2 or more quotations) (3 pts.)
- Overall textual evidence sufficiently supports topic sentence (5 pts.)
- Avoids plot summary (2 pts.)
- Transitions from one point to the next with ease (2 pts.)
- Develops topic sentence fully throughout the paragraph (3 pts.)

Second Body Paragraph

- Strong topic sentence that supports the overall thesis & first main point (3 pts.)
- Supporting evidence from the text (2 or more quotations) (3 pts.)
- Overall textual evidence sufficiently supports topic sentence (5 pts.)
- Avoids plot summary (2 pts.)
- Transitions from one point to the next with ease (2 pts.)
- Develops topic sentence fully throughout the paragraph (3 pts.)

Third Body Paragraph

- Strong topic sentence that supports the overall thesis & first main point (3 pts.)
- Supporting evidence from the text (2 or more quotations) (3 pts.)
- Overall textual evidence sufficiently supports topic sentence (5 pts.)
- Avoids plot summary (2 pts.)
- Transitions from one point to the next with ease (2 pts.)
- Develops topic sentence fully throughout the paragraph (3 pts.)

Conclusion

- Thesis is clearly re-stated and effectively re-enforced (4 pts.)
- Main points re-stated to convince the reader of the writer's intent and focused argument (6 pts.)
- Effectiveness of overall structure and content (6 pts.)

Format

- Proper MLA format (3 pts.)
- Attentive and thorough proofreading (4 pts.)
- Effective word choice and sentence structure (3 pts.)

<p>Score of 4+/4 An essay that is outstanding, demonstrating clear and consistent mastery, although it may have a few minor errors. This essay:</p>	<p>Score of 3+/4- An essay that is effective, demonstrating reasonably consistent mastery, although it will have occasional errors or lapses in quality. This essay:</p>	<p>Score of 3/3- An essay that is competent, demonstrating adequate mastery, although it will have lapses in quality. This essay:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively and insightfully develops a point of view on the subject and outstanding critical thinking, using clear appropriate examples, reasons, and evidence to support its position. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively develops a point of view on the subject and demonstrates strong critical thinking, generally using appropriate examples, reasons, and other evidence to support its position. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develops a point of view on the subject and demonstrates competent critical thinking, using adequate examples, reasons, and other evidence to support its position.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is well organized and clearly focused, demonstrating clear coherence and smooth progression of ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is well organized and focused, demonstrating coherence and progression of ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is generally organized and focused, demonstrating some coherence and progression of ideas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exhibits skillful use of language, using a varied accurate, and apt vocabulary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exhibits facility in the use of language, using appropriate vocabulary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exhibits adequate but inconsistent facility in the use of language, using generally appropriate vocabulary.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates meaningful variety in sentence structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates variety in sentence structure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates some variety in sentence structure.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is free of most errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is generally free of most errors in grammar, usage and mechanics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has some errors in grammar, usage and mechanics.
<p>Score of 2+/2 This essay is inadequate, but demonstrates mastery, and is marked by one or more of the following weaknesses:</p>	<p>Score of 2- This essay is seriously limited, demonstrating little mastery, and is flawed by ONE OR MORE of the following weaknesses:</p>	<p>Score of 1 This essay in this category is fundamentally lacking, demonstrating very little or no mastery, and is severely flawed by one or more of the following weaknesses:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develops a point of view on the subject and demonstrates some critical thinking, but may do so inconsistently, using inadequate examples, reasons, and other evidence to support its position. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops a point of view on the subject that is vague or seriously limited, demonstrating weak critical thinking, providing inappropriate or insufficient examples, reasons, or other evidence to support its position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops or viable point of view on the issue, or provides little or no evidence to support idea.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is limited in its organization or focus, or may demonstrate some lapses in coherence or progression of ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is poorly organized and/or focused, or demonstrates serious problems with coherence or progression of ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is disorganized or unfocused, resulting in a disjointed or incoherent essay
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Displays developing facility in the use of language, but sometimes uses weak vocabulary or inappropriate word choice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Displays very little facility in the use of language, using very limited vocabulary or incorrect word choice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Displays fundamental errors in vocabulary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lacks variety or demonstrates problems in sentence structure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates frequent problems in sentence structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates severe flaws in sentence structure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contains an accumulation of errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contains errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics so serious that meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contains pervasive errors in grammar, usage, or mechanics that persistently interfere with meaning

Criteria	Advanced 4	Proficient 3	Adequate 2	Poor 1 - 0	
LAYOUT	No errors in layout.	Few errors in layout.	Multiple errors in	No layout.	Score

Margins - Spacing Heading -Font – Title Page Numbers – Appropriate Length			layout.		
GUIDELINES/CITATIONS Quotation cited correctly Identification / Context Quotation integrated into a sentence.	No errors in citation. Quotation integrated into a sentence. Perfect amount of identification/context given.	Few errors in citation. Quotation integrated, but not seamlessly. Too much or too little context.	Multiple errors in citation. Quotation integrated roughly into a sentence. Little context given.	Quotation not cited. Little to no context given. Quotation not integrated into paragraph.	Score
ANALYSIS The function of a passage analysis is to connect a quotation to a literary element of the text. The best answers will touch upon the elements of fiction and literary devices that are included in the selected quotation, such as: Theme, symbolism, plot, setting, characterization, conflict, point of view, mood/tone, metaphor, simile, foreshadowing, etc.	Multiple examples/explanations to support connection. Paper makes clear, insightful connections, is well organized and clearly focused. Exemplary quality of ideas. Selected quotation is original and allows generous room for analysis.	Example or explanation given to support connection. Demonstrates critical thinking skills, uses appropriate reason and evidence. Organized; demonstrates coherence. Quotation allows for analysis.	Weak explanation or examples given to support connection. Vague or limited critical thinking. Retells the plot. Disorganized. Insufficient examples, reasons, evidence. Quotation selected cannot be sufficiently analyzed.	No example/ explanation to support connection. No evidence. Disjointed and unfocused. No possible way to analyze selected quotation. Poor work.	Score
Style Awkward usage Spelling and Punctuation Appropriate Vocabulary Mechanics, No 1 st person Capitalization Clarity / Tone	Demonstrates mastery of the language. Outstanding work.	Occasional lapses in quality. Demonstrates adequate mastery.	Limited – demonstrates little mastery. Highly flawed work.	Fundamentally lacking. Little to no mastery.	Score
Maximum = 16 4 = 16/15 3 = 14/13 2 = 12/11 1 = 10 0 = 9-					TOTAL SCORE