REFERENCE GUIDES

Grades 3-5 TABLE OF CONTENTS

DISCUSSION REFERENCE GUIDE

Conversation Stems

Listeners ask questions:

Listener Prompt	Speaker Prompt
What do you think about _____?	My main point is _____.
How did you answer _____?	Overall, what I'm trying to say is _____.
What is the most important idea you are communicating?	
What is your main point?	

Listeners ask for evidence:

Listener Prompt	Speaker Prompt
What in the text makes you think that _____?	According to the text, _____. This means _____. In the text, it states _____. This supports my idea because/by_____.
How do you know that _____ (paraphrase the speaker's idea)?	If you look at page/paragraph/chapter _____, it says _____. This means _____. I think _____ because according to the text _____. This supports my idea because __.
Why do you think that _____ (paraphrase the speaker's idea)?	
What details and examples from the text do you have to support your claim?	
Explain how you came to your idea.	I started out thinking _____. I started by _____.
Where in the text does it say _____ ___?	When I read _____, I _____.
Where in the text does it support your point that _____(repeat the speaker's idea)?	

Listeners clarify understanding:

Listener Prompt	Speaker Response
You said _____. Did I hear you correctly?	Yes/no. I said _____.
I heard you say _____. Is that correct?	
Put another way, are you saying _____?	
Tell me more about _____.	Sure. I said _____.
Say more about _____.	
I'm confused when you say _____. Say more.	
Give me an example.	An example is _____ because _____.

Listeners challenge thinking:

Listener Prompt	Speaker Response
Who agrees/disagrees with _____ ____? Why?	I agree and would like to add _____. I see it similarly/differently because _____. I agree/disagree with _____'s idea that _____ because in the text, _____. I partially agree with _____ about ____ ____. However, I still think that _____. We all agree that _____. We still disagree about _____.
What do you think about _____'s idea?	
How does that idea compare with _____ ____'s idea?	
How do we agree and disagree with _____ __'s idea?	
Has your thinking changed as a result of this discussion? How and why has it changed?	Before I thought __, but now I think __ because __. My new thinking is _____ because _____.
Now that you've heard _____, what are you thinking? What are you still wondering about?	I still think _____, but now I wonder _____.

Sample Discussion Norms

Be prepared: Come to the discussion prepared, having formed a response and gathered evidence.

Demonstrate understanding: Support your ideas by referring to evidence from texts on the topic to demonstrate understanding.

Take notes: Record ideas, reasons, and evidence, summarizing main points of the discussion

Communicate effectively: Use language similar to the language in the conversation stems and strategies.

Engage actively: Invite and allow others to speak at least once, ensuring that all voices are heard.

Listen: Pay attention to the other classmates and thoughtfully consider their ideas.

Continue the conversation: Address your classmates, listen to and build on each other's thoughts by asking and responding to questions.

Remain open: Be willing to change your ideas based on new information.

Revise: Revisit and revise understanding and knowledge based on the discussion.

Reflect: Think about and evaluate the success of the discussion and how well you and your classmates followed these norms.

Types of Discussions

Debate: A type of discussion that includes two or more different opinions.

Fishbowl: A type of discussion that includes an inside and outside circle. The inside circle engages in discussion while the outside circle watches and takes notes. After the discussion, the inside circle moves to the outside to observe, and the outside circle moves to the inside to engage in a discussion.

Literature Circles: A type of discussion that is centered around a common text. Small groups of students have conversations to connect the common text they read to skills and knowledge practiced during the lesson.

Socratic Seminar: A type of discussion where students engage in conversation to reach a common ground of understanding.

Turn and Talk: A type of discussion that can be included during whole group instruction. Partners quickly turn and discuss a question with a partner and then engage back into the classroom instruction.

Whole Class: A type of discussion held to engage the entire class in conversation around a common topic or question.

TEXT EVIDENCE REFERENCE GUIDE

Evidence Sentence Starters

Paraphrasing	Quoting Accurately
Use the sentence starters when integrating text evidence in your own words. To summarize the text, _____ _____. The text referred to _____ _____ when it explained _____ _____ _____. For example, the text explained _____ _____. In the text, _____ was described as _____ _____. In connection with the text, _____ _____. The main idea of the text is _____ _____. In conclusion, the text included _____ _____.	**Use the sentence starters when integrating quotations to ensure you maintain the flow of ideas.** According to _____, "____ _____ _____ _____". In _____, the author says, "_____ _____ _____". This idea is supported by _____ _____, when he/she says, "_____ _____ __". On page _____ of _____ _____, it says, "_____ _____ _____". For example, on page _____ of _____ _____, it says, "_____ _____ _____".

Active, Powerful Verbs for Using Text Evidence

To strengthen your writing, replace "says" with a more accurate verb that precisely describes the action. What is the author doing with the quotation?

For example, replace "says" in the following sentence starter with "describes".

- In _____ the author says, "_____ _____."
- In _____ the author describes, "_____ _____."

Possible Active, Powerful Verbs			
Explanation adds, clarifies, emphasizes, provides, suggests, supports	**Inclusion** comments, notes, observes, relates, summarizes	**Conclusion** challenges, claims, concludes, declares, defends, questions	**Definition** defines, demonstrates, describes, develops, discusses, illustrates, introduces

INTEGRATING TEXTS REFERENCE GUIDE

Related Texts are included in every unit. These texts are paired together to build content knowledge about the topic of the unit. Readers should read more than one text on a particular topic to gather as much knowledge about the topic as possible.

Process:

1. Read, respond, and/or discuss the first text independently, with a partner, or with the class.
2. Determine the main idea of the first text and summarize the key details that relate to the topic.
3. Read, respond, and/or discuss the second text independently, with a partner, or with the class.
4. Determine the main idea of the second text and summarize the key details that relate to the topic.
5. Find connections between the two texts. How are the texts related?
6. Find similarities and differences. How was the information presented in each text? What additional details were included in one text that was not in the other?
7. Summarize the topic by using information from both texts to build content knowledge for the unit.

Reading Closely REFERENCE GUIDE

Establish understanding → **Deepen understanding** → **Extend understanding**

Establish understanding when you first read a text.

Action	Description
Read the text.	Before reading the text, make note of important information about the text. Then read the text with the reading focus in mind.
React to the text.	Answer introduction questions about the text. Summarize the text.

Deepen understanding when you reread a text.

Action	Description
Attend to the details in the text.	Notice the words, phrases, and sentences the author uses. Answer the questions about the details of the text.
Analyze relationships among the details in the text.	Think deeply about the details. Analyze the relationships among them. Pay attention to any connections, patterns, and/or contrasts. What do you understand about the text from the details? Consider the elements, such as characters and setting. What conclusions can you draw? OR Think deeply about the details. Analyze the relationships among them. Pay attention to any connections, patterns, and/or contrasts. What do you understand about how the text is developed from the details? What conclusions can you draw? Answer the questions to analyze the text.

Action	Description
Determine the information needed from the text.	Think deeply about your understanding and conclusions. Consider what information from the text is needed to support your ideas. Answer the questions to evaluate the information of the text.
Examine the changes of the text.	Think deeply about your understanding and conclusions. Consider mood, symbolism, and non-literal language. Answer the questions to evaluate the effects of the text.
Determine and describe the meaning, purpose, and perspective of the text.	Think deeply about your analysis and evaluation. What do the author's/speaker's choices reveal about the author's/speaker's point of view? What does the text mean? What is its purpose? How do the details, elements, information, and effects contribute to your understanding of the text's meaning? Answer the questions about the point of view of the author/speaker and the meaning/purpose of the text. Answer the questions about the meaning/purpose of the text.

Extend understanding as you read additional texts.

Action	Description
Compare and connect texts and ideas.	Compare texts to build knowledge. Answer the questions to compare texts.

What do you understand about the text? Provide evidence to support your response.

REFLECTION REFERENCE GUIDE

Personal Skill and Habit Reflection - Discussion

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I prepared for the discussion.	5	4	3	2	1
I added to the discussion.	5	4	3	2	1
I followed the rules we set for the conversation.	5	4	3	2	1
When asked, I explained my ideas further to make them clearer to others.	5	4	3	2	1
I provided evidence to support my ideas.	5	4	3	2	1
I used academic language similar to the conversation stems.	5	4	3	2	1
I listened to my peers and paid attention to, respected, and worked with all other participants in the discussion.	5	4	3	2	1
I invited at least one peer to add to the discussion.	5	4	3	2	1
I asked good questions that were centered on the text or topic and that helped us think more deeply.	5	4	3	2	1

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I added to or challenged the ideas of my peers by paying attention to, acknowledging, and thoughtfully considering new information and ideas from others.	5	4	3	2	1
I made valid and thoughtful connections and comparisons among my ideas and those of others.	5	4	3	2	1

Based on your reflections, set a goal for the next discussion.

Partner Skill and Habit Reflection - Discussion

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
My partner prepared for the discussion.	5	4	3	2	1
My partner added to the discussion.	5	4	3	2	1
My partner followed the rules we set for the conversation.	5	4	3	2	1
When asked, my partner explained ideas further to make them clearer to others.	5	4	3	2	1

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
My partner provided evidence to support ideas.	5	4	3	2	1
My partner used academic language similar to the conversation stems.	5	4	3	2	1
My partner listened and paid attention to, respected, and worked with all other participants in the discussion.	5	4	3	2	1
My partner invited at least one peer to add to the discussion.	5	4	3	2	1
My partner asked good questions that were centered on the text or topic and that helped us think more deeply.	5	4	3	2	1
My partner added to or challenged the ideas of my peers by paying attention to, acknowledging, and thoughtfully considering new information and ideas from others.	5	4	3	2	1
My partner made valid and thoughtful connections and comparisons among my ideas and those of others.	5	4	3	2	1

Personal Skill and Habit Reflection - Writing

Task Goals	I fully accomplished the goal.	I partially accomplished the goal.	I did not accomplish the goal.

Answer the following questions:

- What are the strengths of your writing?
- How can you improve your writing?
- Set one or more goals for your next task.

Partner Skill and Habit Reflection - Writing

Task Goals	My partner fully accomplished the goal.	My partner partially accomplished the goal.	My partner did not accomplish the goal.

Answer the following questions:

- What are the strengths of your partner's writing?
- How can your partner improve his/her writing?

RUBRICS REFERENCE GUIDE

Reading and Writing Rubric

Text Analysis, Expository, Opinion

Reading and Writing Score: _____ x2

Meets Criteria (3)	Continue Practice (2)	Needs Support (1)	Insufficient Evidence (0)
Student demonstrates *success* determining the meaning of text(s) by accurately understanding and/or integrating ideas within and across texts. **Student demonstrates *success*** forming a valid and evidence-based, response **Student demonstrates *success*** using clear reasoning supported by relevant text-based evidence. **Student demonstrates *success*** organizing writing so that it is clear and coherent. **Student demonstrates *success*** us ing language to clarify ideas.	**Student demonstrates *some success*** determining the meaning of text(s) by accurately understanding and/or integrating ideas within and across texts. **Student demonstrates *some success*** developing a valid and evidence-based response. **Student demonstrates *some success*** using clear reasoning supported by relevant text-based evidence. **Student demonstrates *some success*** organizing writing so that it is clear and coherent. **Student demonstrates *some success*** using language to clarify ideas.	**Student demonstrates *minimal success*** determining the meaning of text(s) by understanding and/or integrating ideas within and across texts. **Student demonstrates *minimal success*** developing a valid and evidence-based response. **Student demonstrates *minimal success*** using clear reasoning supported by relevant text-based evidence. **Student demonstrates *minimal success*** organizing writing so that it is clear and coherent. **Student demonstrates *minimal success*** using language to clarify ideas.	No attempt made or not enough to evaluate.

Conventions

Conventions Score: _____

Meets Criteria (3)	Continue Practice (2)	Needs Support (1)	Insufficient Evidence (0)
Student demonstrates *success* using correct and effective sentence structure, usage, and mechanics to clearly communicate ideas.	**Student demonstrates *some success*** using correct and effective sentence structure, usage, and mechanics to clearly communicate ideas.	**Student demonstrates *minimal success*** using correct and effective sentence structure, usage, and mechanics to clearly communicate ideas.	No attempt made or not enough to evaluate.

Total score: _____/9

Narrative Writing Rubric

Writing Score: _____ x2

Meets Criteria (3)	Continue Practice (2)	Needs Support (1)	Insufficient Evidence (0)
Student demonstrates *success* establishing a narrative point of view. **Student demonstrates *success*** organizing writing so that it has a well-structured and coherent sequence of events. **Student demonstrates *success*** effectively developing narrative elements appropriate to the task. **Student demonstrates *success*** using language to clarify ideas.	**Student demonstrates *some success*** establishing a narrative point of view. **Student demonstrates *some success*** organizing writing so that it has a well-structured and coherent sequence of events. **Student demonstrates *some success*** effectively developing narrative elements appropriate to the task. **Student demonstrates *some success*** using language to clarify ideas.	**Student demonstrates *minimal success*** establishing a narrative point of view. **Student demonstrates *minimal success*** organizing writing so that it has a well-structured and coherent sequence of events. **Student demonstrates *minimal success*** effectively developing narrative elements appropriate to the task. **Student demonstrates *minimal success*** using language to clarify ideas.	No attempt made or not enough to evaluate.

Conventions

Conventions Score: _____

Meets Criteria (3)	Continue Practice (2)	Needs Support (1)	Insufficient Evidence (0)
Student demonstrates *success* using correct and effective sentence structure, usage, and mechanics to clearly communicate ideas.	**Student demonstrates *some success*** using correct and effective sentence structure, usage, and mechanics to clearly communicate ideas.	**Student demonstrates *minimal success*** using correct and effective sentence structure, usage, and mechanics to clearly communicate ideas.	No attempt made or not enough to evaluate.

Total score: _____/9

Reading and Presentation

Reading and Writing Score: _____ x2

Meets Criteria (3)	Continue Practice (2)	Needs Support (1)	Insufficient Evidence (0)
Student demonstrates *success* determining the meaning of text(s) by accurately understanding and/or integrating ideas within and across texts. **Student demonstrates *success*** forming a valid and evidence-based response. **Student demonstrates *success*** developing reasons logically with relevant text-based evidence. **Student demonstrates *success*** organizing a presentation so that it is clear and coherent. **Student demonstrates *success*** using visuals/graphics and/or multimedia elements to develop the presentation.	**Student demonstrates *some success*** determining the meaning of text(s) by accurately understanding and/or integrating ideas within and across texts. **Student demonstrates *some success*** forming a valid and evidence-based response. **Student demonstrates *some success*** developing reasons logically with relevant and sufficient textual evidence. **Student demonstrates *some success*** organizing a presentation so that it is clear and coherent. **Student demonstrates *some success*** using visuals/graphics and/or multimedia elements to develop the presentation.	**Student demonstrates *minimal success*** determining the meaning of text(s) by accurately understanding and/or integrating ideas within and across texts. **Student demonstrates *minimal success*** forming a valid and evidence-based response. **Student demonstrates *minimal success*** developing reasons logically with relevant and sufficient textual evidence. **Student demonstrates *minimal success*** organizing a presentation so that it is clear and coherent. **Student demonstrates *minimal success*** using visuals/graphics and/or multimedia elements to develop the presentation.	No attempt made or not enough to evaluate.

Communicate Effectively

Communicate Effectively Score: _____

Meets Criteria (3)	Continue Practice (2)	Needs Support (1)	Insufficient Evidence (0)
Student demonstrates *success* using appropriate and purposeful language and strategies to communicate to various audiences.	**Student demonstrates *some success*** using appropriate and purposeful language and strategies to communicate to various audiences.	**Student demonstrates *minimal success*** using appropriate and purposeful language and strategies to communicate to various audiences.	No attempt made or not enough to evaluate.

Total score: _____/9

TEXT STRUCTURE REFERENCE GUIDE

Literary Text Structures

Text Type	Text Structures	What does the reader do?
Narratives	Prose - sentences grouped into paragraphs Chapters - sections of a text that fit together sequentially to tell a story	Read a group of sentences in order from beginning to end. The events in the story are written in sequential order (first, second, etc.). Novels contain chapters that build the story. Each chapter adds more to the story elements. Readers notice how these chapters connect to analyze the structure of the story.
Poetry	Line - the text included in each line of the poem Stanza - a group of lines Meter - the syllable patterns of the words create a rhythm when read Verse - a collection of lines that contains a specific pattern and rhythm. Frequently, it also includes rhymes.	Read the lines sequentially in the poem. Pause after each stanza to consider its meaning before moving on. Readers notice patterns, rhythms, and rhymes while reading the poem. This helps readers understand the connections the author is making.

Text Type	Text Structures	What does the reader do?
Drama (play)	Cast List - a list of characters and descriptions Setting Descriptions - a detailed description of what the setting would like if the reader viewed the play onstage. Stage Directions - detailed directions for the actor to know what to do and where to go when saying a line Lines - the dialogue the actors say when interacting on stage Scenes - a group of related lines and actions that go with one setting or event.	Read a script with one or more partners and take turns reading the lines. Read the stage directions in parentheses silently before reading the line aloud. The reader can imagine what the scenes would look like if viewing the play onstage.

Informational Text Structures

Text Structure	Definition
Chronology	A text written sequentially, or in order, from beginning to end.
Comparison	A text written to compare two or more topics to explain similarities and differences.
Cause and Effect	A text written to explain what events happened and why the events happened.
Problem and Solution	A text written that identifies a problem and provides one or more solutions to the problem.

Informational Text Features

Text Type	Text Features
Digital	Keywords - words that are highlighted from the rest of the text to show significance to the topic.
	Sidebar - a bar on the side of a webpage that provides additional topics, links, information, etc.
	Hyperlink - a link embedded in the text that will take the reader to additional information. The text that is hyperlinked will most likely be underlined and/or a different color from the main text.
	Pictures/Captions - provides a reader with visual representation of the information in the text.
	Videos - provides a reader with a more detailed visual representation of information in the text.
	Tables/Graphs - additional information organized for the reader to understand visually.
Print	Keywords/Glossary - words that are highlighted from the rest of the text to show significance to the topic. These words are oftentimes defined in a glossary located at the end of the text.
	Footnotes - additional information to add understanding to a certain idea.
	Table of Contents - a list of topics included with page numbers.
	Appendix - a section of the text that includes additional information, charts, examples, etc. that were discussed in the text.
	Index - a more detailed list of topics included in the text with additional page numbers for reference.

Text Type	Text Features
	Pictures/Captions - provides a reader with visual representation of the information in the text. Tables/Graphs - additional information organized for the reader to understand visually.

THEME REFERENCE GUIDE

This is a list of some ideas, which can name the lesson the main character learns in a literary text.

Common Themes	
love	fairness or justice
anger or hate	learning, knowledge, or understanding
friendship	intelligence or wisdom
acceptance, tolerance, empathy	courage or bravery
belonging	beginnings or endings
not fitting in, loneliness	death
conflict	sadness or grief
growing up or stages of life	hope
power	kindness
jealousy	perseverance or overcoming failure
lack of individuality	success or talent
self-awareness or self-respect	failure
individuality	honesty
freedom	good versus evil
rebellion	man's relationship with nature

VOCABULARY REFERENCE GUIDE

Literal vs Nonliteral Language

Literal Language: a word or phrase that is used as defined.

I was super excited when my mom offered me **a piece of cake** after dinner.
"A piece of cake" = a dessert to eat

Nonliteral Language: a word or phrase that is not used as defined and has an alternative meaning.

I passed my Social Studies test today. It was **a piece of cake**.
"A piece of cake" = very easy

1. Read the phrase in the text.
2. Ask yourself: Does the literal meaning make sense? If not, it must have a nonliteral meaning. Keep reading and look for more clues.
3. Ask yourself: What is the author describing?
4. Determine the non-literal meaning of the phrase.

Context Clues

When reading, you may come across an unknown word. An author sometimes will use context clues to help you figure out the unknown word's meaning.

Types of Context Clues	How does this clue help readers?	Example
Definition	The author defines the unknown word in or around the sentence the unknown word is included in.	The student was **flabbergasted**, **very surprised**, to learn that she won the science fair.
Synonym	The author uses a word that has the same definition as the unknown word in or around the sentence.	Mr. Roy left his house **flabbergasted** when he learned that he won the lottery. He was **shocked** for sure.
Antonym	The author uses a word that has the opposite definition as the unknown word in or around the sentence.	Miranda knew today was nothing **predictable**. She was **flabbergasted** after talking to her friend.
Example	The author further explains the unknown word using an example.	Ms. Taylor's children were **flabbergasted**. They were shocked to learn how fast she could run.
Inference	The author gives enough information for the reader to understand how the unknown word word is used in the text.	Donovan finally landed his new skateboard trick and his friends were left **flabbergasted**.

Affixes

Common Prefixes	Definition	Example
de-	opposite	deconstruct
dis-	not	disapprove
pre-	before	prepare
un-	not	unfold
im-	not	improper
re-	again	redo
mis-	wrongly	misinterpret

Common Roots	Definition	Example
bio	life	biography
geo	earth	geography
ject	throw	reject
mono	one	monopoly
script	write	scripture
magni	big	magnify
demos	people	demonstration
cede	go	recede

Common Suffixes	Definition	Example
-al	process of	historical
-ance, -ence	state of	existence
-able, -ible	capable of	relatable
-ify, -fy	make	exemplify
-ship	position	friendship
-ness	state of being	happiness
-sion, -tion	state of being	construction
-ful	notable for	careful
-less	without	worthless

Grades 9-12 TABLE OF CONTENTS

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ACADEMIC CONVERSATION

The Basics

What? Academic conversations are conversations or discussions during which participants exchange thoughts, ideas, and questions about texts and topics to increase their understanding and refine ideas or claims based on peer feedback.

When? Before reading a text, while reading a text, after reading a text.

Why? Academic conversation allows for an exchange of ideas in a professional manner.

Digging Deeper - The Process

1. Come to the conversation or discussion prepared. This includes reading the text(s) or researching the topic, forming claims based on the question(s) or prompt(s), and gathering your evidence. Use the tools you have been working with, as well as your learning log to help prepare for the discussion.
2. Determine your role in the discussion--speaker, listener, etc. This role may change as the discussion progresses.
3. Review the norms and expectations of the conversation or discussion, including any role-specific norms or expectations. For example, if you are supposed to take notes as a listener, be sure to understand what is expected in taking notes.
4. Participate in the conversation or discussion while following the norms. As needed, use the conversation stems to support you in following the norms and meeting the expectations of the conversation.

Additional Information

Academic conversations allow for a rich understanding of a variety of viewpoints on texts and topics. They also present opportunities for you to use academic language and new vocabulary, practice your listening and speaking skills, and assess whether you are clearly expressing your ideas and claims to demonstrate your knowledge of the text or topic. The academic language used during academic conversations also allows for disagreements to be discussed in a polite, but critical way.

Resources

- Conversation Stems
- Sample Discussion Norms

Conversation Stems

Listeners ask questions about the speaker's observations, ideas, and claims (Listener Prompt). Speakers clearly express their observations, ideas, and claims (Speaker Prompt).

Listener Prompt	Speaker Prompt
What do you think about _____?	My main point is _____.
How did you answer _____?	Overall, what I'm trying to say is _____.
What is the most important idea you are communicating?	
What is your main point?	

Listeners ask for evidence to support the speaker's observations, ideas, and claims. Speakers use evidence from the text to explain and support their observations, ideas, and claims.

Listener Prompt	Speaker Prompt
What in the text makes you think that _____?	According to the text, _____. This means _____. In the text, it states _____. This supports my claim because/by_____.
How do you know that _____ (paraphrase the speaker's idea)? Why do you think that _____ (paraphrase the speaker's idea)? What evidence do you have to support your claim?	If you look at page/paragraph/chapter _____, it says _____. This means _____. I think _____ because according to the text _____. This supports my idea because _____.
Explain how you came to your idea. Explain how you came to your claim.	I started out thinking _____. I started by _____.

Listener Prompt	Speaker Prompt
Where in the text does it say _____ ____? Where in the text does it support your point that _____(paraphrase the speaker's idea)?	When I read _____, I _____.

Listeners check their understanding and push speakers to clarify their observations, ideas, and claims. Speakers clarify their thinking to ensure it is valid and based on textual evidence.

Listener Prompt	Speaker Response
You said _____. Did I hear you correctly?	Yes/no. I said _____.
I heard you say _____. Is that correct?	Yes/no. I said _____.
Put another way, are you saying _____?	Yes/no. I said _____.
Tell me more about _____. Say more about _____.	Sure. I said __[restate what was said and add further explanation or examples]__.
I'm confused when you say _____. Say more.	Sure. I said __[restate what was said and add further explanation or examples]__.
Give me an example.	An example is _____ because __[explain why]__.
Rephrase what X said.	X said _____.

Listeners challenge the thinking of others to establish new ways of thinking. Speakers explain how their observations, ideas, and claims relate to those of others.

Listener Prompt	Speaker Response

Listener Prompt	Speaker Response
Who agrees/disagrees with X? Why? What do you think about X's idea? How does that idea compare with X's idea? How do we agree and disagree?	I agree and would like to add _____. I see it similarly/differently because _____. I agree/disagree with X's view that _____ because in the text, _____. On one hand I agree with X that _____. But on the other hand, I insist that _____. X's point _____ is important/flawed because _____. I agree that _____, but we also have to consider _____. Although I grant that _____, I still maintain that _____. While it is true that _____, it does not necessarily follow that _____. Certainly _____, but _____. or Perhaps _____, yet _____. We all agree that _____. We still disagree about _____.
Has your thinking changed as a result of this discussion? How and why has it changed?	Before I thought __, but now I think __ because __. My new thinking is _____ because _____.
Now that you've heard __[summarize the discussion]__, what are you thinking? What are you still wondering about?	I still think _____, but now I wonder _____.

Sample Discussion Norms

Be prepared: Come to the discussion prepared, having formed a claim and gathered evidence.

Demonstrate understanding: Support your ideas by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to demonstrate understanding.

Take notes: Record the claims, reasons, and evidence, summarizing points of agreement and disagreement and taking note of how to support or refine your claim.

Communicate effectively: Use language similar to the language in the conversation stems and strategies to accomplish your purpose in communicating.

Engage actively: Invite and allow others to speak at least once, stimulating a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas and ensuring that a full range of positions on a topic or issue are heard.

Listen: Pay attention to and acknowledge others, thoughtfully considering their ideas.

Continue the conversation: Address your peers and listen to and build on each other's thoughts by posing and responding to questions that make connections among ideas and probe the thinking of others.

Remain open: Be willing to change your ideas or perspective based on new, credible information.

Refine and revise: Revisit, refine, and revise understanding and knowledge based on the discussion, resolving contradictions when possible and determining when additional information or research is required.

Reflect critically: Think about and evaluate the success of the discussion and how well you and your peers followed these norms.

ANNOTATION

The Basics

What? Annotation is a method of note-taking to identify details of the text and to analyze the way those details relate to one another and to the meaning of the text.

When? While reading a text.

Why? Annotating the text helps deepen your understanding of text, as you take note of the details, relationships, effects and information, and meaning, purpose, and perspective within and across texts.

Digging Deeper - The Process

1. Determine your purpose for annotating the text.
2. Review the annotation key in this guide or the annotation key provided by your teacher and identify the annotation marks you will use.
3. As you read the text, annotate the text for your specific purpose, using the annotation marks from the annotation key.

Additional Information

- Do not annotate for everything in the key every time you annotate. Your annotations should relate to your purpose for reading the text.

Resources

- Annotation Key

Annotation Key

Use the appropriate annotation marks to annotate the text as you read.

	Annotation Key
___	Underline unknown words or phrases.
○	Circle words and phrases that stick out to you. Write a synonym or antonym above each word.
□	Box sentences with similar structure.
!	Put an exclamation point next to details that surprise you.
?	Put a question mark next to details that confuse you.
↷	Draw an arrow when you see a connection among the details/events/ideas.
1	Number (1. 2. 3. . .) arguments or key details.
M	Mark words, phrases, and details that have an effect and convey a mood with “M”.
I	Write an “I” next to places in the text that reflect irony.
S	Mark words or phrases that reflect symbolism with an “S.”
Mt	Locate any motifs that you see in the text. Mark with an “Mt.”
R	Mark any use of rhetorical devices or appeals with an “R.”
Th	Mark any part of the text that develops the theme with a Th.
	In the margin, note the tone created by the author’s word choice or diction.
	In the margin, note any effects created by the details and elements used in the text.

	Annotation Key
	In the margin, identify the author's/speaker's perspective and the point of view expressed.
	In the margin, note the central idea, theme, or purpose being developed by the details and elements used in the text.

ARGUMENT

The Basics

What? An argument is a logically organized work (e.g., essay, speech, presentation) that presents a position on an issue with supporting claims and evidence.

When? While reading a text, when composing

Why? In all aspects of our lives, we are surrounded by arguments, some that we create and some that we read or hear. Being able to read, delineate, evaluate, and compose arguments is important to help you be a productive student and citizen.

Digging Deeper - The Components of Argumentation

- The purpose of an argument is to explain a position with valid, credible evidence. Persuasion is organized similarly to an argument and contains many of the same elements, but its purpose is to convince readers or listeners to change their perspective or opinion. As such, it includes emotional appeals, evidence is often based on personal opinion, and only one side of an issue might be presented. Thus, the differences between argument and persuasion are in the purpose, tone, and style rather than the organization.

- The position an author/speaker takes on an issue is based on the perspective of the author/speaker and the available evidence. To form a stronger argument, find out what others have thought and argued regarding the issue. Read arguments about an issue with different positions and perspectives to understand what others think about the issue and to further develop your own perspective and position. This may involve conducting research.

- A strong argument must address all sides of an issue by presenting evidence for both claims and counterclaims. Without this, the argument becomes one-sided, which weakens it.

- To form an argument, take a position on an issue and use supporting claims, evidence, and logical explanations to substantiate or prove the position.

- To delineate and evaluate an argument, identify the components of the argument and evaluate whether each is accurate, relevant, and credible.

Additional Information

Arguments are not only found in literature and politics. For example, sermons can be a type of argument. Scientific studies and articles are also arguments with supporting evidence from validated research. In history and social studies, many interpretations of an historical event or figure are arguments.

Argument Terminology

Term	Definition
Issue	An important aspect of society for which there are many different opinions and perspectives. Many issues can be framed as a problem-based question.
Relationship to the issue	People's personal involvement with an issue based on experience, education, occupation, socio-economic/geographical status, interests, or other characteristics.
Perspective	How people understand and view an issue based on their current relationship to the issue and their analysis of the issue.
Position	The stance people take on what to do or think about an issue based on their perspective and understanding of the issue. When writing an argument, the position is expressed in the thesis statement.
Thesis statement	A statement that presents the author's/speaker's position and supporting claims, which set up the organization of the argument.
Supporting claim	A personal conclusion about an issue, topic, text, event or idea that develops and supports the position of an argument.
Counterclaim	A claim that contradicts or opposes the supporting claims of the argument and supports an alternate or opposing position.
Implications	The practical and logical consequences, both anticipated and unanticipated, of a position, which result from acting on the position.
Evidence	Information, facts, examples, quotations, etc. from which the position and supporting claims arise and which are also cited to support the argument.
Reasoning	The logical relationships that connect the position, supporting claims, and evidence; sometimes considered the "logical tissue" of the argument, reasoning ties together all the components of an argument.

Resources

- Delineating and Evaluating Arguments
- Counterclaims

Delineating and Evaluating Arguments

"Delineating" an argument is the process of identifying the components or parts of the argument: the issue, the perspective, the position, the thesis statement, the supporting claims, the counterclaims, the evidence, and reasoning.

Use the questions to help you **delineate** an argument.

- What do you know about the author/speaker?
- What is the issue that the argument is addressing?
- Who is the audience? What is the occasion for which the author/speaker has created the argument?
- What is the author's/speaker's position on the issue?
- What claims does the author/speaker identify in support of the position?
- Does the author acknowledge other positions on the issue and respond to them through counterclaims?
- What evidence does the author/speaker provide to support the position and supporting claims?
- How does the author/speaker explain the connections among the position, supporting claims, and evidence?

Once you delineate an argument, you are then able to evaluate its effectiveness, including how accurate, relevant, and credible the evidence and reasoning is.

Use the questions to help you **evaluate** how well an author/speaker develops an argument.

- What aspects of the argument make it seem convincing to you? What aspects make you doubt or not accept the argument?
- Does the writer sufficiently support and develop the position in a fair and even manner, including addressing counterclaims?
- How accurate and relevant are the supporting claims?
- Does the author/speaker present the supporting claims so that they connect to and build on one another?
- Does the author/speaker provide sufficient evidence to support and develop the supporting claims?
- How accurate, relevant, and credible is the provided evidence?
- How well does the author/speaker distinguish among the claims and counterclaims?
- How valid is the author's/speaker's reasoning? How well do the author's/speaker's explanations connect the position, supporting claims, and evidence?

Counterclaims

Strong arguments address multiple sides of an issue in a way that strengthens the position. This is done through the use of counterclaims, which are claims that support an alternate or opposing position.

Position	Claim	Counterclaim
The United States should move from war to diplomacy in Afghanistan.	The cost of war outweighs the outcomes of war because there have been so many civilian casualties.	The war in Afghanistan has reduced Taliban control and established a more stable government with the potential of a greater quality of life for the people of Afghanistan.

Acknowledge alternate or opposing positions in the introduction, and address counterclaims in the body paragraphs. If you do not address counterclaims and their supporting evidence, the argument becomes one-sided, which weakens it. Addressing counterclaims in a way that supports the position and supporting claims, strengthens the argument.

Addressing Counterclaims Model
The cost of war outweighs the outcomes of war because there have been so many civilian casualties. Based on numbers from several sources, approximately 28 percent of deaths from the war in Afghanistan have been civilian casualties. While the war in Afghanistan has reduced Taliban control and established a more stable government with the potential of a greater quality of life for the people of Afghanistan, that government came at a huge cost. The Taliban still maintain control over nine percent of the population in Afghanistan and the Afghan government only maintains control of about 60 percent of the population (Coffey). Given these meager results, losing 28 percent of a population is too high a cost.

Use the evidence sentence starters in the integrating quotations reference guide and transitions: “whereas,” “despite,” “while,” “however,” “even though,” “regardless,” and “nevertheless” to address counterclaims.

Approaches for Addressing Counterclaims

- Acknowledge that the alternate/opposing position or counterclaim might be reasonable, but present new evidence or thinking that explains why your position and supporting claim make more sense.
- Prove that a counterclaim is inaccurate, misleading, or not supported by credible evidence.
- Challenge the evidence presented to support a counterclaim as insufficient, inaccurate, biased, or irrelevant to the argument.
- Challenge the validity of the reasoning or the explanation of the connections between the counterclaim and the evidence.

- Challenge the credibility of the source of the counterclaim and/or supporting evidence by calling the author's background or expertise into question.

AVOIDING PLAGIARISM

The Basics

What? Plagiarism is the act of using someone else's thoughts or words as your own, and it is illegal.

When? When conducting research, when composing

Why? Including information from sources in your work adds credibility. However, this information must be cited or called out as coming from a source so that you are not taking credit for someone else's ideas or plagiarizing.

Digging Deeper - Key Components

Acknowledging sources using parenthetical citations and a Works Cited page gives appropriate credit and allows others to locate more information on your topic. Read the general description of each of these components below and review the resources to learn how to avoid plagiarism.

Note: Different style guides direct you to avoid plagiarism in different ways, so it is important to know what style guide to follow when writing. For example, most writing for English class follows the MLA Style Manual, while most scientific writing follows APA Style.

- **Parenthetical Citations:** Once you locate information that you want to include in your work, determine how you will integrate it. Review the integrating quotations reference guide to learn how to integrate the information. Once you've integrated the information, determine how you will cite it to avoid plagiarism.
    - Direct quotations: If you take information directly from another source and use it in your work exactly as written, put it in quotations marks and use a parenthetical citation.
    - Paraphrase: If you use information from another source that is unique to that source, but you put it into your own words, quotation marks are not needed. However, because the information is unique to a source, you must still use a parenthetical citation.
- **Works Cited Page:** The Works Cited page is its own page at the end of a written work and contains entries for all the sources or works cited in your work.
    - A Works Cited page differs from a bibliography or resources page because it contains only those sources which are cited in the written work. A bibliography or resources page will include all the sources you consulted for the work even if you do not cite them.
    - A "bibliographic entry" is the same thing as an entry on a Works Cited page, but it may use a different order or format based on the style guide being followed.

Resources

- How to Create Parenthetical Citations
- How to Create a Works Cited Page

How to Create Parenthetical Citations

A parenthetical citation is a way to cite evidence within a sentence or paragraph. The citation goes within parentheses, hence the name "parenthetical citation." Different style guides direct you to cite work differently, so it is important to know what style guide to follow when writing. Most writing for an English class follows the MLA Style Manual.

The basic structure for a parenthetical citation in MLA format is (<AUTHOR'S LAST NAME> <PAGE NUMBER>).

Example	Description
"Kids love research" (Smith 2).	This is a direct quotation. The parenthetical citation--(Smith 2)--begins after the closed quotation mark. The period is outside of the quotation mark, as the parenthetical citation is considered part of the sentence.
Research is an activity that kids enjoy (Smith 2).	This is a paraphrase. The parenthetical citation--(Smith 2)--is at the end of the sentence but before the period, as the parenthetical citation is considered part of the sentence.
According to Smith, "Kids love research" (2).	This is a direct quotation with the author's name included in the sentence. Since the author's name is already mentioned, it does not need to be provided in the citation. The parenthetical citation--(2)--begins after the closed quotation mark. The period is outside of the quotation mark, as the parenthetical citation is considered part of the sentence.
On page 2 of Smith's essay it says, "Kids love research."	This is a direct quotation with the author's name and page number included in the sentence. Since the author's name and page number are already mentioned, there is no need for a parenthetical citation.
On page 2 it says, "Kids love research" (Smith).	This is a direct quotation with the page number included in the sentence. Since the page number is already mentioned, it does not need to be provided in the citation. The parenthetical citation--(Smith)--begins after the closed quotation mark. The period is outside of the quotation mark, as the parenthetical citation is considered part of the sentence.

Example	Description
This is true because “there are many ways to cite authors” (Jones and Washington 13).	This is a direct quotation with two authors. The parenthetical citation--(Jones and Washington 13)--begins after the closed quotation mark. The period is outside of the quotation mark, as the parenthetical citation is considered part of the sentence.
“There are many opportunities to do research” (Boudreaux, Brown, and Fontenot 20).	This is a direct quotation with more than two authors. The parenthetical citation--(Boudreaux, Brown, and Fontenot 20)--begins after the closed quotation mark. The period is outside of the quotation mark, as the parenthetical citation is considered part of the sentence.
Researching takes time, but “it adds credibility” (Holmes).	For online sources with author(s) listed, use the last name(s) in the parenthetical citation. No page numbers are needed.
Some think “research is fun” (“Researching Basics”).	For online sources with no author(s) listed, include in the parenthetical citation the first part of the entry for the source on the Works Cited page. The parenthetical citation--(“Researching Basics”)--includes the title of the article in quotation marks. Again, no page numbers are needed.
Conducting research “takes time and resources” (*Educational Tips*).	For online sources with no author(s) listed, include in the parenthetical citation the first part of the entry for the source on the Works Cited page. The parenthetical citation--(*Educational Tips*)--includes the title of the website. Again, no page numbers are needed.

How to Create a Works Cited Page

A Works Cited page contains entries for all the sources cited in your work. If a source or work is not cited in your written work, it should not be included on your Works Cited page.

Model (MLA)

Works Cited

Boudreaux, Ann, et. al. *Research Basics*. Ed Publishing, 2010.

Graff, Gerald and Cathy Birkenstein. *They Say, I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing*. 1st ed.,
W.W. Norton & Company, 2006.

Holmes, Joseph. "When to Quote and When to Paraphrase." *SchoolEDU*, schooledu.com/research. Accessed
29 Aug. 2017.

Jones, Edward and Michael Washington. *Conducting Research: A Guide for Beginners*. Cherry Tree Press,
2012.

"Researching Basics." *KidsOnline*, 6 May 2012, www.kidsonine.com/research101. Accessed 29 Aug. 2017.

The Purdue OWL Family of Sites. The Writing Lab and OWL at Purdue and Purdue U, 2008,
owl.english.purdue.edu/owl. Accessed 18 June. 2018.

Smith, Cierra. "Researching with Kids." *Early Education Journal*, vol. 1, no. 3, 2015, pp. 10-12.

Tips for Creating a Works Cited Page

- The Works Cited page should be titled Works Cited. The title should be centered without quotation marks or italics.
- If an entry goes beyond a single line, indent the second line. This is called a hanging indentation.
- The entries should be alphabetized by the first word of the entries.
- All entries should end with a period.
- Use the following models as guides for writing entries. If you need to create an entry for a kind of text not listed, refer to the MLA Style Manual or online writing guides from universities which

provide guidance in using the MLA Style Guide for creating a Works Cited page. There are also online citation machines which can help with creating entries.

Book with a Single Author
Author's Last Name, First Name. *Book Title*. Publisher, Publication Date.

Book with Two Authors
First Author's Last Name, First Name and Second Author's First Name Last Name. *Book Title*. Publisher, Publication Date.

Book with Three or More Authors
First Author's Last Name, First Name, et. al. *Book Title*. Publisher, Publication Date.

Article in a Magazine
Author's Last Name, First Name. "Article Title." *Magazine Name*, publication day Month year, pp. starting page-ending page.

Article in a Newspaper
Author's Last Name, First Name. "Article Title." *Newspaper Name*, publication day Month year, p. single page.

Article in a Scholarly Journal
Author's Last Name, First Name. "Article Title." *Journal Title*, vol. #, no. #, year, pp. starting page-ending page.

Online Article
Author's Last Name, First Name. "Article Title." *Website Name*, publication day Month year, URL. Accessed day
Month year.

Interview in a Magazine
Interviewer's Last Name, First Name. Interview with Interviewee's First Name Last Name. *Magazine*, publication day Month year, pp. starting page-ending page.

Speech/Presentation
Speaker's Last Name, First Name. "Speech Name." Particular Conference or Venue, speech day Month year,
Venue Location. Type of Speech/Presentation.

Website
Author's Last Name, First Name. *Website Name*. Sponsor or Publisher, publication day Month year, URL. Accessed day Month year.

A Tweet
@handle. "Tweet." *Twitter*, posting day Month year, time, URL.

CLAIMS

The Basics

What? A claim is an opinion or conclusion that someone wants others to consider or accept. A claim can be supported by solid evidence or unsupported. A supported claim can be referred to as an "evidence-based claim."

When? While reading a text, after reading a text, when composing

Why? The process of identifying and evaluating claims in a text helps you understand and think about the ideas in the text and the author's/speaker's perspective and purpose. Forming a claim helps you express your understanding.

Digging Deeper - Tips

- As a reader and writer, you will identify and evaluate claims, as well as form your own claims about texts.
- When identifying claims in a text, pay attention to the topic sentences for paragraphs, as claims are typically stated there, but they may also come at the end of a paragraph as sentences that summarize the provided evidence.
- When evaluating claims in a text, consider:
    - What is the author's likely purpose in making the claim?
    - Is the claim specific, original, clearly stated, supported, and explained?
    - Does the claim use active, powerful verbs?
    - Does the claim communicate an opinion or conclusion about text(s) or topic(s)?
    - Does the claim demonstrate deep understanding of text(s) or topic(s)?
    - Is the claim based on evidence?
    - How accurate, relevant, and credible is the evidence?
- When forming a claim, use the forming claims tool to help support your thinking.
- Your claim will be one or more sentences that express an evidence-based conclusion or an opinion about the text or the topic. Avoid using the phrases "I think…" or "I believe…" because that is implied. Be sure to use active, powerful verbs to make your claim a strong statement.

Additional Information

Claims are developed and presented for various reasons and purposes.

Type of Claim	Purpose of Claim
Factual/Informational	State verifiable facts or direct observations to inform others
Summary/Synthesis	State conclusions that summarize information or ideas
Analytical/Interpretive	State observations or conclusions reached by closely examining information or ideas, such as interpretations of themes and how they are developed and communicated in a text
Comparative	State comparisons between two or more sets of ideas, perspectives, claims, or texts
Evaluative	State informed opinions about the accuracy, relevance, and/or credibility of sources, evidence, claims, or arguments
Argumentative (Position)	State a position based on evidence and analysis of an issue that can be defended by other claims and evidence
Persuasive	State opinions or beliefs that are intended to convince others to change their own opinions or beliefs
Counter	State opinions or conclusions that support a different position and are opposed to the claims of others

Resources

- Claim Starters
- Active, Powerful Verbs for Forming Claims

Claim Starters

Type of Claim	Possible Claim Starters
Factual/Informational	The evidence from valid scientific research clearly indicates that…
Summary/Synthesis	Overall, the ideas presented add up to…
Analytical/Interpretive	After carefully studying these details, we can conclude that… The author's tone and word choice suggests… The recurring use of _____ develops the theme _____. _____'s changes over the course of the text develops the theme ____ __.
Comparative	While there are similarities between these two views, overall they present contrasting perspectives about…
Evaluative	The evidence presented is not credible because… The argument is clearly biased against…
Persuasive	If we don't act to change this situation, we run the risk of…
Counter	While some agree with his assessment of the situation, his claim is challenged by more credible evidence which suggests… (See the evidence sentence starters in the integrating quotations reference guide for additional counterclaim starters.)

Active, Powerful Verbs for Forming Claims

When forming a claim, write your claim as a strong, direct statement, using active and powerful verbs that precisely describe the action and communicate your understanding.

Active, powerful verbs are also commonly known as "rhetorically accurate verbs" because they accurately describe the action being communicated in a sentence.

Common Verbs for Claims

- develops
- reveals
- emphasizes
- suggests
- concludes
- indicates

Additional Verbs for Claims

- accentuates, adds, affirms, amplifies, attests, bolsters, clarifies, contributes, elevates, exemplifies, expands, extends, fosters, magnifies, provides, reinforces, supports
- comments, considers, declares, delineates, maintains, notes, observes, outlines, presents, refers, relates, remarks, summarizes, traces
- characterizes, conveys, demonstrates, describes, defines, details, discusses, displays, evokes, exhibits, explains, expresses, identifies, illuminates, illustrates, portrays, rationalizes
- analyzes, determines, establishes, generalizes, interprets, introduces, understands
- alludes, hints, implies, infers, postulates, presumes
- advocates, champions
- alleges, argues, asserts, challenges, claims, condemns, contends, critiques, defends, justifies, opposes, persuades, questions, reasons, refutes, rejects, speculates, verifies
- achieves, accomplishes
- compares, differentiates, distinguishes
- avoids, distorts, minimizes

CONNECTING IDEAS

The Basics

What? Transitions are words, phrases, and sentences used to signal relationships among ideas. They connect words and phrases together in a sentence and paragraphs together in a longer work. Conjunctions are a kind of transition. Conjunctions signal relationships among words, phrases, and/or clauses in a sentence.

When? While reading a text, when composing

Why? Transitions create logic and coherence in writing and speaking. They show how ideas relate so we better understand what a writer means. Transitions, particularly conjunctions, help us expand our sentences when we write to make sure our meaning is clear and give the reader more information.

Digging Deeper - The Process

1. Start with two or more ideas that are clearly stated.
2. Determine the relationship among the ideas. Ask yourself:
    a. Are these ideas reflecting a cause and effect relationship?
    b. Are these ideas reflecting a sequence of events or steps?
    c. Are these ideas reflecting a special set of circumstances (e.g., an exception to a general rule or set of expectations)?
    d. Is one of these ideas being added to another? Is one idea being used as an example of the other?
    e. Are you trying to show that the ideas are similar or different?
    f. Are you clarifying your thinking?
3. Once you have determined the relationship among your ideas, choose the corresponding column from the chart.
4. Choose a word or phrase from the column to link your ideas together. Remember that the transition is signaling a relationship, so be sure to select the appropriate transition and place it in the sentence or paragraph accordingly with the correct punctuation, if necessary.

Resources

- Transitions

Transitions

The most common relationships that transitions signal are listed at the top of the chart. The words and phrases below the headings (e.g., "so" and "until") are the transitions writers can use to signal the relationship.

Relationship	Transition Examples
Addition/Repetition/Emphasis or Examples	and in addition/additionally as well/also/too further/furthermore moreover not only _____, but also _____ in particular/ particularly such as/like in fact especially/notably specifically including for example/for instance that is/in other words similarly in the same way equally likewise again to illustrate/as an illustration to demonstrate
Compare	similarly in the same way/in like manner/in similar fashion likewise

Relationship	Transition Examples
Contrast	but/however yet although/even though while whereas unlike on the other hand despite/in spite of even/but even so instead actually nevertheless/nonetheless conversely still notwithstanding regardless besides otherwise on the contrary/in contrast
Sequence	initially/first of all/at first in the first place/in the second place, etc. secondly/thirdly/lastly then subsequently next before after/afterwards until previously at present eventually at last in the end finally

Relationship	Transition Examples
Cause and Effect (Give a Reason)	because owing to the fact that/due to the fact that (reason) since in that as
Cause and Effect (Give a Result)	so therefore thus hence as a result consequently/as a consequence for this reason on account of accordingly
Under Certain Conditions	unless either/neither or/nor when so long as if/then in the event that given that provided that even if only if on the condition in case almost nearly probably always frequently

CONVENTIONS

The Basics

What? Conventions are the standard way of doing something; in writing, the conventions include rules for standard English grammar, usage, and mechanics. Grammar and usage includes how you use words, phrases, and clauses to create and structure a sentence and mechanics includes capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.

When? When composing

Why? Demonstrating command of the conventions of standard English grammar, usage, and mechanics ensures that your final product clearly and effectively communicates your ideas.

Additional Information

Convention	Definition	Examples
Phrases	A group of words that act as a part of speech, such as an adjective or adverb Phrases do not contain both a subject and a verb. They are found within other sentences.	The cat, **clinging to the chair**, ruined the piece **of furniture**. The future **of the CEO** was uncertain **after the scandal**. **Having raised enough money**, the student was able to attend the event.
Appositive	A noun or noun phrase that renames the noun it follows	The boy, **Michael's neighbor**, had been missing for several hours. Romeo and Juliet, **the main characters**, fall in love at first sight.

Convention	Definition	Examples
Clauses	A group of words that contains a subject and a verb Clauses either stand alone as a sentence (independent clause) or do not stand alone as a sentence (*dependent clause*).	*After she followed the man*, Lydia discovered the truth. *Despite the amount of time it takes*, teachers grade students' essays, and they try to be as fair as possible.
Semicolon	A punctuation mark (;) that combines two independent clauses into a single sentence without a conjunction	Teachers grade students' essays; they try to be as fair as possible.
Parallel structure	Using the same pattern of words or phrases to show that all elements in the series have equal importance Verbs in a series should be in the same tense. Words in a series should all be the same part of speech. Join elements with a coordinating conjunction (e.g., and, but, so) or a correlative conjunction (e.g., not only/but also, neither/nor).	Simple parallelism: We need to remember **kindness, honesty,** and **genuineness**. Complex parallelism: When writing an essay, **it is important to pay attention** not only **to the content of the essay** but also **to the organization**. In the complex parallelism example, two sentences are combined with a correlative conjunction to reduce wordiness: • When writing an essay, it is important to pay attention to the content of the essay. • When writing an essay, it is important to pay attention to the organization.
Colon	A punctuation mark (:) that can be used to introduce a list or a quotation	When camping, you should bring survival items: matches, water purifier tabs, a sleep sack, and a knife. This idea is further supported by the narrator's words: "He was surprised by how easily he located the object after other, more talented searchers had difficulty" (Smith 65).

Convention	Definition	Examples
Hyphen	A punctuation mark (-) that combines words and separates numbers, such as in a phone number	Despite his best attempt, the well-intentioned waiter failed to get the orders right. Be sure to dial 225-555-1234 and leave a message.
Em dash	A punctuation mark (--) that indicates a break, but is stronger than a comma Em dashes can be used in pairs--like parentheses--to set off a word, phrase, or clause. Em dashes are often a stylistic element used to emphasize parts of a sentence.	After he removed the cap, he was drawn to the object--shiny and sparkling like a diamond. As the students walked across the stage, the principal called their names--Sheila, Damon, and Ruthie--and shook their hands knowing that he may not see them after that day.

Resources

- Mentor Sentences

Mentor Sentences

Mentor sentences are sentences worth imitating--their structure is particularly effective or interesting.

Select one or more mentor sentences that you want to imitate in your own writing. Use the structure as a frame, including the punctuation and/or conjunctions, and insert your own content.

Example
Mentor sentence from *The Kite Runner*: "I wondered if that was how forgiveness budded; not with the fanfare of epiphany, but with pain gathering its things, packing up, and slipping away unannounced in the middle of the night" (Hosseini 359). **Imitated sentence:** I disagree with Okonkwo's severe reaction to Nwoye's conversion; not because Okonkwo punishes and essentially disowns Nwoye, but because Okonkwo doesn't recognize that it is his words, actions, and feelings that lead Nwoye to convert to Christianity.

Additional Mentor Sentences (or find your own in a text you are reading)

- "And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you--ask what you can do for your country." John F. Kennedy's Inaugural Address
- "He stepped down, trying not to look long at her, as if she were the sun, yet he saw her, like the sun, even without looking." *Anna Karenina*, Leo Tolstoy
- "And now that you don't have to be perfect, you can be good." *East of Eden*, John Steinbeck
- "I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty, or give me death!" Patrick Henry's "Speech to the Second Virginia Convention"
- "If our house be on fire, without inquiring whether it was fired from within or without, we must try to extinguish it." Thomas Jefferson
- "It made the endless sky into a ceiling just above his head, and the words bounced back, landing somewhere on the floor of limping Jewish feet." *The Book Thief*, Markus Zusak
- "So I opened it--you cannot imagine how stealthily, stealthily--until, at length, a single dim ray, like the thread of the spider, shot from out the crevice and fell upon the vulture eye." "The Tell-Tale Heart," Edgar Allan Poe

EVALUATING SOURCES

The Basics

What? Evaluating sources is the act of determining the usefulness of a source for research. Useful resources are relevant, accurate, and credible. Relevance means that the source relates to the topic you are researching and credible means that you can believe the information in the source.

When? Before reading a text, while reading a text

Why? Evaluating sources is key to conducting research effectively because using relevant, accurate, and credible resources will strengthen your research findings and ensure that readers will believe what you share.

Digging Deeper - The Process

1. As you look for research sources, record basic bibliographic information in your research notes so you know which sources you have evaluated.
2. To begin evaluating a source, identify the type of text. Knowing the type of text signals how credible the text might be. For example, a peer-reviewed scientific journal article is more likely to be credible than an editorial.
3. Determine how accessible the information is. If it isn't accessible, it isn't a useful source. Move onto the next source.
4. If the source is accessible, evaluate how useful the information is based on the scope of the information provided, how well the information relates to your research task and questions, and how accurate the information is.
5. Evaluate how credible the source is.
    a. Examine the credentials of the author and/or publisher and determine any potential biases.
    b. Verify who the author and/or publisher is affiliated with and/or what their purpose might be in writing/publishing the text.
    c. Also, verify whether the article is up-to-date with the latest knowledge about the topic.
6. Corroborate information across multiple sources. Verify that the same information in the source is being shared in other sources and take note of any discrepancies or differences, as those discrepancies usually signal possible bias. For example, a news article may include only a portion of a quotation. Compare the shortened quotation with the original quotation to reveal any possible manipulation of information.
7. Lastly, determine whether you will select the source for your research. If so, record the full bibliographic information in your research notes.

8. To locate additional credible sources, use the bibliography or embedded references or links in credible sources.

Additional Information

When evaluating online sources, there are some additional considerations.

- Odd domain names generally do not contain truthful information. However, remember that foreign news organizations may have country-specific domains.
- Websites which end in “lo” (e.g., Newslo) typically repackage accurate information with false or misleading information for comedy or satire. Websites which end in “.com.co” are often fake versions of real news sources.
- A total lack of “About Us,” “Contact us,” or author attribution may mean that the source or website is not a legitimate source of information.
- Review the source’s “Legal” or “Disclaimer” section (if applicable). Many satirical websites disclose this information in those sections.
- Rule out hoaxes by looking up the story in credibility checkers (e.g., Hoax-Slayer, Snopes, FactCheck.org, Fact Checker (Washington Post)).
- Determine whether the source or website has a consistent style (e.g., spacing, font size, citations), correct spelling and grammar, and an aesthetically pleasing look (e.g., well-used images and logos, consistent and complementary colors)
- Take note of sources or websites that use exaggerated and provocative headlines and frequently use ALL CAPS in headlines and/or body text (e.g., WOW! SLAUGHTER! DESTROY!). This stylistic practice and these types of hyperbolic word choices are often used to create emotional responses with readers that are avoided in more traditional styles of journalism.
- If the source or website is sensational (e.g., too unbelievable to be true), keep reading about the topic via other sources to make sure the story you read wasn’t purposefully trying to engage you emotionally with misleading or false information.
- Be careful with photographs. Images can be easily manipulated. Do a Google reverse image search to see if you can discover the source of an image and its possible variations.
- Be aware of information shared over social media (e.g., Facebook, Tumblr, Instagram, etc.), or from links shared via email or text-messaging. Apply the criteria mentioned above when accessing these links and information, being extra cautious about the quality of the source and information.

Resources

- Questions for Evaluating Sources

Questions for Evaluating Sources

When selecting sources for research, evaluate them for their usefulness. Useful resources are relevant, accurate, and credible. Use the questions when evaluating sources.

Overall Considerations for Usefulness

- What type of text is it?
- Am I able to read and comprehend the text easily?
- Do I have adequate background knowledge to understand the terminology, information, and ideas in the text?
- Does the text present ideas or information that I find interesting?
- How long is the text and what is the scope of the topics it addresses?

Relevance and Accuracy

- What information does the text provide on the topic?
- How extensive and supported is the information it provides?
- Does the text provide accurate and current information?
- How is the text related to the subtopic or question I am investigating?
- How does the information in the source relate to other texts?
- Have I corroborated the information?
- How might the text help me accomplish my purpose for research?

Credibility

- What is the author's and/or publisher's relationship to the topic area?
- What are the author's qualifications/credentials relative to the topic area?
- What economic and/or political stake might the author and/or publisher have in the topic area?
- When was the text first published?
- How current is the information on the topic?
- How does the publishing date relate to the history of the topic?

Author	Bias	Content	Date

Author	Bias	Content	Date
Is the author... • qualified? • reliable? • biased? • affiliated with organizations?	Does the information... • address all perspectives? • remain neutral? • provide a clear purpose?	Is the content... • detailed? • relevant? • accurate?	Is the information... • up-to-date? • revised? • current with the topic?

INTEGRATING QUOTATIONS

The Basics

What? Evidence directly quoted from another text should be incorporated into a sentence so that the sentence makes sense and the language and ideas flow naturally.

When? When composing

Why? Effective work relies on the effective use of evidence, which includes ensuring that the evidence enhances the work and does not detract from the overall purpose.

Digging Deeper - The Process

1. Select evidence to integrate into your work.
2. Determine how you want to use the evidence in a sentence. Be sure to quote only what you need to support your ideas. This might mean that you will start the quotation in the middle rather than the beginning of the original quotation. This may also mean that you might paraphrase the quotation rather than directly quoting it. Directly quote evidence when you want to use the author's exact words. Paraphrase evidence when you want to use the idea, but the author's exact words don't fit well into your work.
3. Insert the evidence into a sentence. Use the evidence sentence starters to help you introduce the evidence.
4. Use a parenthetical citation to cite the source. Review the avoiding plagiarism reference guide to learn how to cite sources.
5. Explain how the evidence supports your supporting claims or points and connects to the thesis statement.

Additional Information

- Avoid using two quotations immediately following each other.
- Avoid using a quotation as an entire sentence--consider how you can integrate the quotation into your sentences.
- If you change words in the quotation to make it fit into the sentence, use brackets.
    - Original quotation: “It excited him, too, that many men had already loved Daisy—it increased her value in his eyes" (Fitzgerald 125).
    - Integrated quotation: In *The Great Gatsby*, Fitzgerald adds, “It excited [Gatsby], too, that many men had already loved Daisy—it increased her value in his eyes” (Fitzgerald 125).
- If you must omit something within a quotation, use ellipses.
    - Original quotation: “I married him because I thought he was a gentleman,” she said finally. “I thought he knew something about breeding, but he wasn’t fit to lick my shoe” (Fitzgerald 40).
    - Integrated quotation: This is seen in *The Great Gatsby* when Myrtle declares: “I married him because I thought he was a gentleman. . . . I thought he knew something about breeding, but he wasn’t fit to lick my shoe” (Fitzgerald 40).
    - Note: Maintain the integrity of the quotation when you omit words and do not omit words that would alter the intended meaning of the quotation.
    - Note: You do no have to signal omission of words at the beginning or ending of a quotation--only use ellipses when words or phrases are removed from within a quotation.

Resources

- Evidence Sentence Starters
- Active, Powerful Verbs for Integrating Evidence

Evidence Sentence Starters

Use the sentence starters when integrating quotations to ensure you maintain the flow of ideas.

- According to <TEXT TITLE>, "<QUOTATION>" (<AUTHOR NAME> <PAGE NUMBER>).
- In <TEXT TITLE> the author says, "<QUOTATION>" (<AUTHOR NAME> <PAGE NUMBER>).
- This is seen in <TEXT TITLE> when it says, "<QUOTATION>" (<AUTHOR NAME> <PAGE NUMBER>).
- This idea is supported by <AUTHOR NAME>, when he/she says, "<QUOTATION>" (<PAGE NUMBER>).
- On page <PAGE NUMBER> of <TEXT TITLE>, it says, "<QUOTATION>" (<PAGE NUMBER>).
- For example, on page <PAGE NUMBER> of <TEXT TITLE>, it says, "<QUOTATION>" (<AUTHOR NAME>).

Counterclaims are opposite or run counter to the supporting claims of an argument. When making an argument, it is important to acknowledge alternate or opposing positions and address counterclaims to strengthen the argument. This can done through the use of transitions.

Use the sentence starters when integrating quotations that support counterclaims so as to ensure that the use of counterclaims strengthens the argument.

- While some agree with <TEXT TITLE> when <AUTHOR NAME> says, "<QUOTATION>" (<PAGE NUMBER>), <AUTHOR NAME> of <TEXT TITLE> says, "<QUOTATION>" (<PAGE NUMBER>), which <REASON FOR AGREEING WITH THIS TEXT>.

- Whereas <TEXT TITLE> indicates that <SUMMARY OF TEXT> (<AUTHOR NAME PAGE NUMBER>), <TEXT TITLE> illustrates the opposite is accurate when it says, "<QUOTATION>" (<AUTHOR NAME PAGE NUMBER>).

- When <AUTHOR NAME> says, "<QUOTATION>" (<PAGE NUMBER>) in <TEXT TITLE>, he/she disagrees with <AUTHOR NAME> who says, "<QUOTATION>" (<PAGE NUMBER>) in <TEXT TITLE>.

- The author of <TEXT TITLE> disagrees with the author of <TEXT TITLE> because in <TEXT TITLE> it says, "<QUOTATION>" (<PAGE NUMBER>). <EXPLAIN HOW THIS IS A DISAGREEMENT>.

- By saying, "<QUOTATION>" (<AUTHOR NAME PAGE NUMBER>) in <TEXT TITLE>, <AUTHOR NAME> overlooks the deeper problem <AUTHOR NAME> presents in <TEXT TITLE>. In that text, <AUTHOR NAME> presents/describes/indicates <SUMMARY OF TEXT> (<AUTHOR NAME PAGE NUMBER>).

- On the one hand, <AUTHOR NAME> says, “<QUOTATION>” (<PAGE NUMBER>) in <TEXT TITLE>, but on the other hand, <AUTHOR NAME> says, “<QUOTATION>” (<PAGE NUMBER>) in <TEXT TITLE>.

- Although most of what <AUTHOR NAME> says in <TEXT TITLE> is inaccurate/misleading/unsupported, he/she is accurate when he/she says, “<QUOTATION>” (<PAGE NUMBER>). In <TEXT TITLE>, <AUTHOR NAME> provides further evidence which supports this point. According to <TEXT TITLE>, “<QUOTATION>” (<PAGE NUMBER>).

Active, Powerful Verbs for Integrating Evidence

To strengthen your writing, replace "says" with a more rhetorically accurate verb that precisely describes the action. What is the author doing in with the quotation?

For example, replace "says" in the following sentence starter with "describes" or "reveals" when those verbs appropriately describe the action of the author.

- In <TEXT TITLE> the author says, "<QUOTATION>" (<AUTHOR NAME PAGE NUMBER>).

Possible Active, Powerful Verbs for Integrating Evidence

- adds, affirms, clarifies, emphasizes, provides, reinforces, suggests, supports
- comments, maintains, notes, observes, relates, remarks, summarizes
- alleges, argues, asserts, challenges, claims, concludes, contends, declares, defends, implies, justifies, questions, refutes, rejects, speculates
- conveys, defines, demonstrates, describes, details, develops, discusses, establishes, expresses, illustrates, indicates, introduces, portrays, reveals

IRONY

The Basics

What? Irony involves contrast, a difference between what is expected and what actually happens. Irony can occur within the events of a story, play, or film. Irony can also be conveyed through language, when a speaker intentionally says something he does not mean.

When? While reading a text, after reading a text

Why? Discovering and understanding instances of irony help you dig deeper into the meaning of a literary work and appreciate the surprises, understatements, or paradoxes that occur as evidence of the author's craft.

Digging Deeper - The Process

1. Pay attention to what actually happens, what is being said, who is involved, etc. You may not initially notice incidents that are ironic because irony involves a contrast between what is literally happening and what is meant.
2. As you read:
    a. Look for events or situations that surprise you.
    b. Look for times when a character does one thing, but the opposite is meant.
    c. Look for characters who seem clueless to what is going on, but you are clear on what is happening.
3. After you read, ask yourself:
    a. What surprised me?
    b. Is there a sense that what is being shared on the surface feels like the opposite of what is meant? How so?
    c. How is the story being told? Does the narrator know more (or less) than other characters or you, the reader?
    d. Are a character's words, actions, or outcomes the opposite of what you expected? If so, how and why?
    e. Is there anything unexpected in the way figurative language is used?
4. Consider how irony relates to the overall meaning or purpose of the text. How does the author use irony to communicate a message or idea or achieve a particular effect?

Additional Information

Type of Irony	Description	Example
Verbal irony	When what is said is the opposite of what is meant (i.e., sarcasm); the effect is typically humor	"There was a town down there, as flat as a flannel-cake, and called Summit, of course" (O'Henry 1).
Situational irony	What what actually happens differs from what is expected; the effect is typically surprise	"We selected for our victim the only child of a prominent citizen named Ebenezer Dorset. . . . Bill and me figured that Ebenezer would melt down for a ransom of two thousand dollars to a cent. . . . Gentlemen: I received your letter . . . , in regard to the ransom you ask for the return of my son. I think you are a little high in your demands, and I hereby make you a counter-proposition . . . . You bring Johnny home and pay me two hundred and fifty dollars in cash, and I agree to take him off your hands" (O'Henry).
Dramatic irony	When the audience or other characters are aware of something that a character is not; the effect is typically suspense or humor	At the end of *Romeo and Juliet*, Romeo is unaware that Juliet is not actually dead, while the audience is aware that she has feigned her death. The letter informing Romeo of this doesn't arrive to him. When he sees Juliet and thinks she is dead, he drinks poison because he would rather die than live without Juliet.

MOOD

The Basics

What? Mood is the emotional atmosphere of a text. Mood describes the effect of the tone, imagery, characters, setting, etc. on the reader. Your understanding of the text, how you feel about the text, and how the text impacts you are all related to the mood.

When? While reading a text, after reading a text

Why? Understanding the mood of a text contributes to your understanding of the meaning and purpose of the text.

Digging Deeper - The Process

1. Analyze the author's/speaker's style to identify the images used, how the characters and/or setting are described, and the tone used.
2. Evaluate the effects of the author's/speaker's style. How does it make you feel? What atmosphere does the style convey?
3. Use the mood words to locate a word that best describes the mood of the text.

Resources

- Mood Words

Mood Words

The following chart contains sample mood words, which can be used to describe the mood of a text.

Positive Mood Words		Negative Mood Words	
amused	light-hearted	aggravated	hostile
awed	loving	annoyed	insidious
bouncy	mellow	anxious	intimidated
calm	nostalgic	apathetic	irate
cheerful	optimistic	apprehensive	irritated
confident	passionate	cold	jealous
contemplative	peaceful	confining	lethargic
content	playful	confused	lonely
determined	pleased	crushed	melancholy
dignified	refreshed	cynical	nervous
dreamy	rejuvenated	depressed	nightmarish
ecstatic	relaxed	disappointed	numb
empowered	relieved	discontented	overwhelmed
energetic	satiated	distressed	pessimistic
enlightened	satisfied	drained	rejected
enthralled	sentimental	embarrassed	restless
excited	surprised	empty	scared
exhilarated	sympathetic	enraged	serious
grateful	thankful	foreboding	somber
harmonious	thoughtful/pensive	frustrated	stressed
hopeful	touched	gloomy	suspenseful
hyper	trustful	grumpy	tense
joyous	vivacious	haunting	terrifying
jubilant	warm	heartbroken	threatening
liberating	welcoming	hopeless	uncomfortable

NOTE-TAKING

The Basics

What? Note-taking is a process for remembering information when you are conducting research. It allows you to capture your thoughts and ideas as well as the thoughts and ideas of others.

When? While reading a text, when conducting research

Why? Taking notes is important because it helps you organize your thoughts so when you have to speak or write about them, they make sense. When you are researching, write down not only the ideas, but also the source of the ideas, to avoid plagiarism.

Digging Deeper - Tips for Note-Taking

A good note-taking system should help you:

- Document important information to answer your research question(s).
- Remember where you got your information so you can go back to it again if you need more information.
- Organize your thoughts and conclusions from your research.

To take notes effectively, understand how and when to summarize, paraphrase, and directly quote information.

- A summary is a shortened version of what the text says. It captures who, what, when, where, why, and how. Summaries are useful to include in notes when the source is really long and all you need are the main ideas from that source.
- Paraphrasing is when you take an author's ideas and put them into your own words using about the same number of words. While you might think that putting an idea into your own words makes it your own, it doesn't. What is original is the idea, so you have to give credit for the idea to the author. If you don't, you are plagiarizing.
- A direct quotation is when you take the exact words and order of the words. Direct quotations must have quotation marks around them. You should directly quote a text any time you want to use the author's exact words. Maybe the author says it really well or the part you want to use is really short. Either way, directly quoting a text is a way to use what someone else says while giving them the credit for saying it.

Additional Information

- Don’t write down everything you read. Only include information that answers your research question(s) that you don’t already know.
- Use the text features to locate information more quickly (e.g., headings, bolded words, sidebars, index, etc.).
- Break down a larger text into chunks or sections. Read each section and take notes after, rather than trying to read and take notes at the same time.
- You can use sticky notes to mark parts of texts with notes or thoughts as a less formal way to take notes. The sticky notes can then be pulled, organized, and used for whatever product you are producing.

Resources

- Cornell Note-Taking System Sample
- Sample Note-Taking Sheet

Cornell Note-Taking System Sample

Where did you get your information? Write an entry for a Works Cited page.

_____
_____
_____
_____

Key Points/Questions	Notes and Page Numbers
	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

What did you learn?

Sample Note-Taking Sheet

Idea: Subtopic or question being researched; each notes page should focus on a different idea, and the notes on each page will support or challenge the idea at the top.
Source: An entry for a Works Cited page for the source of the notes.
Page(s): The pages from where the information is gathered.
Notes: The details, ideas, information, and/or evidence captured during research that relate to the idea.
Comments: Explanation of why the details are important, including how the notes relate to the idea.

Idea: _____
_____

_____
_____

Source	Page(s)	Notes	Comments

ORGANIZATION

The Basics

What? The organization of an essay, speech, or presentation is determined by the author's central ideas, purpose, audience, and the type of communication being developed (e.g., an explanation, analysis, argument, narrative).

When? While reading a text, after reading a text, when composing

Why? Paying attention to the organization of a text and your own work can help you get your thinking straight. Using a logical and consistent organization is essential for communicating your central idea clearly.

Digging Deeper - The Process

1. Determine the audience and purpose for the work. Consider:
    a. Who is my audience?
    b. What information should I share with my audience?
    c. What should my audience do with the information?
    d. Am I crafting an argument, an analysis, an informative piece, or a narrative?
2. Review any claims or thematic statements you've formed related to the topic of the work and gather and/or review evidence.
3. Determine your position (argument), response (literary analysis), or focus (informative/explanatory) and your supporting claims or points.
4. Draft your thesis statement.
5. Draft the organization for your work in an outline. Think about what your readers will need to know first and how your ideas can build upon each other.
6. Draft the topic sentence for each paragraph.
7. Develop your supporting claims or points. Incorporate evidence and provide explanations which reveal how the evidence develops the position, response, or focus in the thesis statement. As needed, gather and cite additional evidence and/or provide additional supporting claims or points to develop your position, response, or focus.
8. Draft an introduction and conclusion.

Additional Information

- Analyzing the organization of the texts you read can help you understand how to organize your own work and understanding how to organize your own work can help you better analyze the texts you read.

- Your organization should be logical and coherent, meaning that it is clear, well thought out, and others can follow it. You can achieve this by making sure every sentence and idea in your work leads back to and supports your thesis statement.

Resources

- Organization Cheat Sheet
- Sample Organizational Structures

Organization Cheat Sheet

Introduction

- Begin with a lead "hook" for the reader.
- Explain your purpose and introduce the topic or issue and/or frame the question or prompt you are addressing in your work.
- Provide any necessary background information for your thesis statement.
- Present your thesis statement.
- Review the style reference guide to learn various ways to begin an essay.

Thesis Statement

- Your thesis statement is generally a sentence or two at the end of your introduction that states your position, response, or focus and orients the reader to the organization of your work.
- Your thesis statement provides an organizational map for your work.

Type of Writing	Thesis Statement Components	Example
Argument	POSITION + SUPPORTING CLAIMS	The wetlands of Louisiana should be preserved because they offer both economic and ecological benefits.
Informative/ Explanatory	FOCUS/STATEMENT OF FACT + SUPPORTING POINTS	The "Roaring Twenties" was a time of significant change in America as a result of several social movements and an increase in the nation's wealth.
Literary analysis	RESPONSE + SUPPORTING CLAIMS	In *The Great Gatsby*, Fitzgerald explores the thematic idea of appearance versus reality through the setting and the development of Jay Gatsby and Daisy Buchanan.

Your introduction should state your thesis statement and your conclusion should restate your thesis statement. Your body paragraphs should include supporting claims or points that support your thesis statement and that are supported by evidence. The order of claims or points in your thesis statement should match the order you present your supporting claims or points in your work.

Example

Thesis statement: The wetlands of Louisiana should be preserved because they offer both economic and ecological benefits.

- Supporting claim one: Louisiana's wetlands offer economic benefits.
- Supporting claim two: Louisiana's wetlands offer ecological benefits.

The focus of the first few body paragraphs should be on explaining the economic benefits of Louisiana's wetlands and how those benefits support the idea that the wetlands should be preserved.

The focus of the next few body paragraphs should be on explaining the ecological benefits of Louisiana's wetlands and how those benefits support the idea that the wetlands should be preserved.

In between the first and second section, there should be a transition from the first supporting claim to the second supporting claim, such as: Not only do the wetlands support commercial fishing and agricultural, but they also provide biodiversity and protection against natural disasters.

Topic Sentences

- Each topic sentence should connect to and reflect the supporting claims or points in your thesis statement.
- Begin with a transitional word or phrase. See the connecting ideas reference guide for possible transitions.
- Continue the topic sentence by introducing the first supporting claim or point.
- Be sure to use rhetorically accurate verbs or active verbs such as "introduces," "demonstrates," or "reveals." See the claims reference guide for additional active verbs.

Example

Thesis statement: In *The Great Gatsby*, Fitzgerald explores the thematic idea of appearance versus reality through the setting and the development of Jay Gatsby and Daisy Buchanan.

Topic Sentence Example: Throughout *The Great Gatsby*, Fitzgerald explores the concept of appearance versus reality through the contrasting settings of West Egg and East Egg.

Conclusion

- You can restate or extend your thesis statement and summarize how it has been developed by the supporting points or claims of your work.
- You can also add some additional, final thinking that builds off your thesis statement. For example:
    - Discuss the aspects of your position, response, or focus that you did not explore but could be explored.
    - Explain how your position, response, or focus or experiences, observations, or solutions connects to other issues, topics, or ideas.
- You may also want to mention the lead you provided in your introduction.

Sample Organizational Structures

Most writing is based on the same general organizational structure, even a presentation or speech. The one general exception is narrative writing, which typically has a chronological organizational structure. What differentiates an argument from an informative presentation from a problem/solution essay isn't typically the organization--it is the audience, purpose, content, tone, and style.

Argument Organizational Structure
Introduction and thesis statement
Body paragraphs: Supporting claim one and supporting evidence, including acknowledging opposing viewpoints and addressing counterclaims when appropriate to strengthen the argument
Body paragraphs: Supporting claim two and supporting evidence, including acknowledging opposing viewpoints and addressing counterclaims when appropriate to strengthen the argument
Body paragraphs: Supporting claim three and supporting evidence, including acknowledging opposing viewpoints and addressing counterclaims when appropriate to strengthen the argument
Conclusion and restatement of thesis statement

What makes arguments unique?

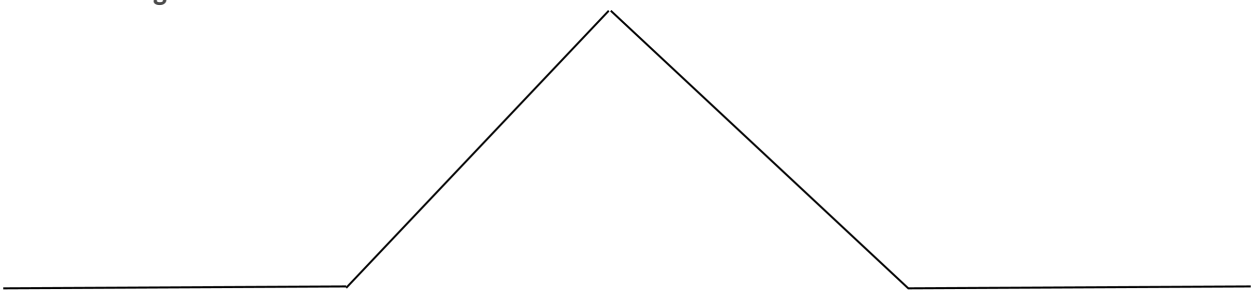
- The introduction introduces the issue and the thesis statement presents the position on the issue and the supporting claims, which establish the organization of the work.
- A strong argument must address all sides of an issue by presenting evidence for both claims and counterclaims. Without this, the argument becomes one-sided, which weakens the argument.
- The purpose of an argument is to explain a position with valid, credible evidence. It is not to convince readers or listeners to change their perspective or opinion, although, a strong argument might result in that. Persuasion follows the same organizational structure of an argument, but its purpose is to convince readers or listeners to change their perspective or opinion. As such, it includes emotional appeals, evidence is often based on personal opinion, and only one side of an issue might be presented. Thus, the differences lie in the purpose, tone, and style rather than the organization.

Informative/Explanatory Organizational Structure
Introduction and thesis statement
Body paragraphs: Supporting point one and supporting evidence, including graphics and multimedia when necessary
Body paragraphs: Supporting point two and supporting evidence, including graphics and multimedia when necessary
Body paragraphs: Supporting point three and supporting evidence, including graphics and multimedia when necessary
Conclusion and restatement of thesis statement

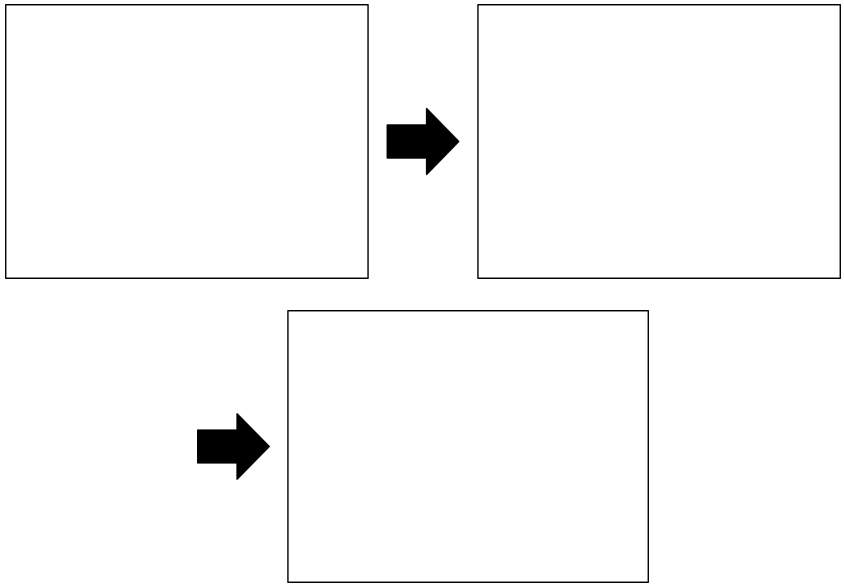
What makes informative/explanatory works unique?

- The introduction introduces the topic and the thesis statement presents a particular focus of that topic and the supporting points, which establish the organization of the work.
- Stylistically, Informative/explanatory works typically include formatting, such as headings and specialized font (e.g., bold, italics, underline), and graphics and multimedia to emphasize the organization of supporting points into sections or connections among supporting points or evidence across sections of the work and to clarify important supporting points or evidence.

Narrative Organizational Structure



Exposition → Rising Action → Climax → Falling Action → Resolution



What makes narratives unique?

- Narrative writing is used in many text forms: in fictional storytelling (short stories and novels), in personal narratives and memoirs, in recounting historical events or people (historical narratives), in scientific accounts of how phenomena occur, and in personal reflections on life and learning (reflective narratives).
- What is common across all these narrative forms is that they are almost always organized chronologically. That is, they report and describe events and occurrences in the order in which they happened.
- Narratives also are unique in that they have a "narrative voice." The narrative voice is the point of view and perspective from which the story is told. It has a particular tone and style that may differ from the author. Informative/explanatory works and arguments use the point of view, perspective, style, and tone of the author or speaker.
- To organize a narrative:

- Make a list of all the steps, occurrences, episodes, or events that are important in the story.
- Determine which of the steps, occurrences, episodes, or events are most critical.
- Organize the list chronologically. Alternately, think about how to shift backward or forward in time through flashbacks, explanations, or time jumps. Also, think about how to present and describe the steps, occurrences, episodes, or events, and how to link them across time so that the story has a full development and even flow.

Literary Analysis Organizational Structure
Introduction and thesis statement
Body paragraphs: Supporting claim one and supporting evidence, including acknowledging opposing viewpoints and addressing counterclaims when appropriate
Body paragraphs: Supporting claim two and supporting evidence, including acknowledging opposing viewpoints and addressing counterclaims when appropriate
Body paragraphs: Supporting claim three and supporting evidence, including acknowledging opposing viewpoints and addressing counterclaims when appropriate
Conclusion and restatement of thesis statement

What makes literary analyses unique?

- The introduction introduces the text and prompt and the thesis statement presents a brief response to the prompt and the supporting claims, which establish the organization of the work.
- Literary analyses typically focus on how the methods the author uses influence the meaning. For example, how the details (e.g., language, literary devices), elements (e.g., characters, setting), and/or structure (e.g., plot, pacing) of a text impact the meaning of a text.

Comparison Organizational Structure (Block)
Introduction and thesis statement: In 2013, berries and apples were the two most popular fruits purchased in the US. Despite both being fruits, berries and apples have more differences than similarities.
Body paragraphs: Focus on berries (e.g., types, colors, sizes, tastes, textures, origins and growing methods)
Body paragraphs: Focus on apples (e.g., types, colors, sizes, tastes, textures, origins and growing methods)
Body paragraphs: Similarities and differences among berries and apples
Conclusion and restatement of thesis statement

Comparison Organizational Structure (Point-by-Point)
Introduction and thesis statement: In 2013, berries and apples were the two most popular fruits purchased in the US. Despite both being fruits, berries and apples have more differences than similarities.
Body paragraphs: Focus on types of berries and apples and similarities and differences
Body paragraphs: Focus on colors of berries and apples and similarities and differences
Body paragraphs: Focus on sizes of berries and apples and similarities and differences
Body paragraphs: Focus on tastes of berries and apples and similarities and differences
Body paragraphs: Focus on textures of berries and apples and similarities and differences
Body paragraphs: Focus on origins and growing methods for berries and apples and similarities and differences
Conclusion and restatement of thesis statement

What makes comparisons unique?

- The organization still follows the same general organizational structure as an informative/explanatory work. The difference is that instead of having a singular focus, the focus is on two or more topics or texts.
- In the block comparison organizational structure, the writer introduces and explains the first subject of comparison and then introduces and explains the second subject of comparison. Then the writer compares the two subjects to note similarities and differences.
- In the point-by-point comparison organizational structure, the writer introduces and explains each point of comparison for each subject.

Organizational Structures for Other Writing Types

Cause and Effect Option One*
Introduction and thesis statement: The extreme rise of temperatures and drought during the weather event of 1985 resulted in widespread impacts on people, animals, and plants.
Body paragraphs focus on the causes: • The temperature rose to extreme high levels for three weeks. • The rains ceased during the same time period.
Body paragraphs focus on the effects: • Several elderly people suffered from a heat stroke. • Children were not allowed to play outdoors from 10 am to 5 pm. • Animals were forced to compete for water creating conflicts between species. • Many crops died, resulting in a food shortage.
Conclusion and restatement of thesis statement

Cause and Effect Option Two*
Introduction and thesis statement: The extreme rise of temperatures and drought during the weather event of 1985 resulted in widespread impacts on people, animals, and plants.
Body paragraphs focus on a cause and its effects: • The temperature rose to extreme high levels for three weeks. • That resulted in several elderly people suffering from a heat stroke. • That resulted in children not being allowed to play outdoors from 10 am to 5 pm.
Body paragraphs focus on a cause and its effects: • The rains ceased during the same time period. • That resulted in many animals competing for water, creating conflicts between species. • That resulted in many crops dying and a food shortage.
Conclusion and restatement of thesis statement

*A cause and effect work generally uses an informative/explanatory organizational structure.

Character Analysis/Study**
Introduction and thesis statement: Introduce the character and present the focus of why the character is important and/or what makes the character worth analyzing or studying
Body paragraphs focus on different aspects of the character: Supporting point one and supporting evidence (How is the character introduced? What is the character's story?)
Body paragraphs focus on different aspects of the character: Supporting point two and supporting evidence (How do we come to know the character?)
Body paragraphs focus on different aspects of the character: Supporting point three and supporting evidence (What conflicts does the character face and how do they affect the character?)
Body paragraphs focus on different aspects of the character: Supporting point four and supporting evidence (How does the character change and evolve or why does the character not change?)
Conclusion and restatement of thesis statement

**A character analysis/study generally uses an informative/explanatory organizational structure.

Problem and Solution***
Introduction and thesis statement: The problem of decreasing sales presented by the chairman can be solved through a four-step process of evaluation, reflection, planning, and implementation
Body paragraphs: Focus on the problem, including a summary of the issues, potential causes, and evidence and explanations that illustrate both and the connections between them
Body paragraphs: Focus on the solution, including describing the solution and how it will specifically address the issues; evidence can include examples from similar successful situations, case studies, anecdotes, projections with explanations of how the evidence illustrates the likely success of the solution
Conclusion and restatement of thesis statement

***A problem and solution work generally uses an argument organizational structure. The introduction introduces the problem and the thesis statement presents a solution to the problem and the supporting claims, which establish the organization of the work. Like an argument, a problem/solution work must

address other possible solutions and present evidence for both claims and counterclaims to emphasize why the suggested solution in the thesis statement is the best option.

Process Explanations

- Process explanations generally use a narrative organizational structure because they are written chronologically in steps.
- This type of writing is important for scientific and technical writing.
- The introduction and conclusion include an explanation of what the steps in the process add up to and why the process is important or interesting.
- The body paragraphs include the sequence of steps in the process along with a description and explanation for each step as well as an explanation of the progression from step to step.

Summary

- The purpose of a summary is to provide an account of the central idea of a text, including the text's audience and purpose when appropriate, and its supporting ideas and features.
- A summary can either use an informative/explanatory organizational structure or it can follow the organization of the text being summarized (e.g., line by line or paragraph by paragraph).

Explication

- An explication is a kind of literary analysis often used for poems or plays. An argument analysis and diction analysis are types of explications.
- An explication follows the organization of the literary work and explains how the author develops the work from line to line, stanza to stanza, or scene to scene, so it can be organized similarly to a summary.

QUESTIONING

The Basics

What? Questioning and inquiry focus on investigation; you should ask questions and engage in inquiry to seek answers and/or information.

When? Before reading a text, while reading a text, when conducting research, after reading a text

Why? Forming questions about texts can help you pay close attention to what you are reading or researching and develop a deeper understanding of a text or topic. Asking questions during a discussion can help clarify your understanding and bring others into the conversation.

Digging Deeper - Tips for Good Questioning

- Text-specific questions require you to refer to evidence from the text to support your response. They help you pay closer attention to the language and details of a text.
- Good text-specific questions cause a reader to think and read closely, not arrive at a single answer. Thus, try to ask questions that are open-ended and lead to many possible responses rather than questions that have a “yes/no” or single word response.
- Inquiry questions are questions that identify things you need to know about a topic and that will help guide your research. Some questions will lead to dead ends, while others will lead to a new knowledge, or best of all--more questions!
- To start your research, you should generate and select inquiry questions and then use your inquiry questions to look for sources.
- As you seek answers to your inquiry questions through research sources, make sure to continually refine your inquiry based on new information.

Additional Information

Questions are often specific to a particular type or genre of text. Thus, questions that are relevant to informational texts, or arguments, may be somewhat different than questions used to read and analyze literary texts more closely.

Resources

- Question Stems
- Inquiry Questions

Question Stems

Use the stems to pose questions about texts.

- What is the main reason you believe _____?
- How would you describe _____?
- How would you summarize _____?
- Can you explain how _____ affected _____?
- What can you say about _____?
- What is the meaning of _____?
- What is implied by _____?
- How does _____ contribute to the tone of the text?
- How does _____ develop or change over the course of the text?
- How does _____ affect other characters in the text?
- How does _____ advance the plot?
- How does _____ develop the theme of the text?
- How does the repetition of _____ help develop the _____?
- What conclusions can you draw about _____?
- What reasons/facts best support _____?
- What is the author's/narrator's/speaker's view of _____?
- What best analyzes how the author responds to the counterargument of (counterargument)?
- How does the author's/speaker's use of _____ reveal the author's perspective in the text?
- How does the author's/speaker's use of _____ support the purpose in the text?
- How does _____ develop the theme/central idea?
- Why do you think the author chose to _____?
- How does the author use _____ to develop the central idea?
- How does the author use _____ to develop the theme?
- How is _____ related to _____?
- How are _____ alike? How are _____ different?

Inquiry Questions

Generate Inquiry Questions

When thinking of inquiry questions to help you define or refine your area of investigation, think of as many as possible. Starting with lots of questions helps you find the best ones.

When generating inquiry questions about a topic or area of investigation, consider:

- How is it defined?
- What are its major aspects or subtopics?
- Where did it originate? What is its history?
- What are its causes and implications?
- What other ideas or topic is it connected to or associated with?
- What are its important places, things, people, and experts?

Select and Refine Inquiry Questions

Once you have a list of possible questions, select and refine them. Good inquiry questions are rich enough to support lots of investigation that may even lead to multiple answers, and more questions. As you become more knowledgeable about the topic, your questions should become more specific.

When selecting and refining inquiry questions about a topic or area of investigation, consider:

- Are you genuinely interested in answering your question?
- Can your question be answered through research?
- Is your question clear and specific?
- Are there multiple possible answers to your question?

Use Inquiry Questions to Look for Sources

Use your inquiry questions to look for sources that will help you answer your questions and advance your research.

When using inquiry questions to look for sources, consider what kind of information you are seeking.

- If you are looking for answers relating to specific domains like medicine, biology, history, art, law, or architecture, you should search specialized libraries or library sections, online journals, or websites.
- If you are looking for facts and numbers, you might want to search for reports by governments, large organizations, or journals.
- If you are looking for an explanation of an historical or political event, you might look into articles in a specialized magazine or books on the subject.
- If you are looking for a public figure's opinion on a topic, you might look for speeches delivered or articles written by this person, or interviews with this person on the topic.
- If you are investigating a topic that has physical components (agriculture, health care facilities, etc.), you may consider visiting those places to observe and interview people.

Refine Your Research Based on New Information
Ask your inquiry questions as you research. At various points in the research process, review your inquiry questions and research notes.

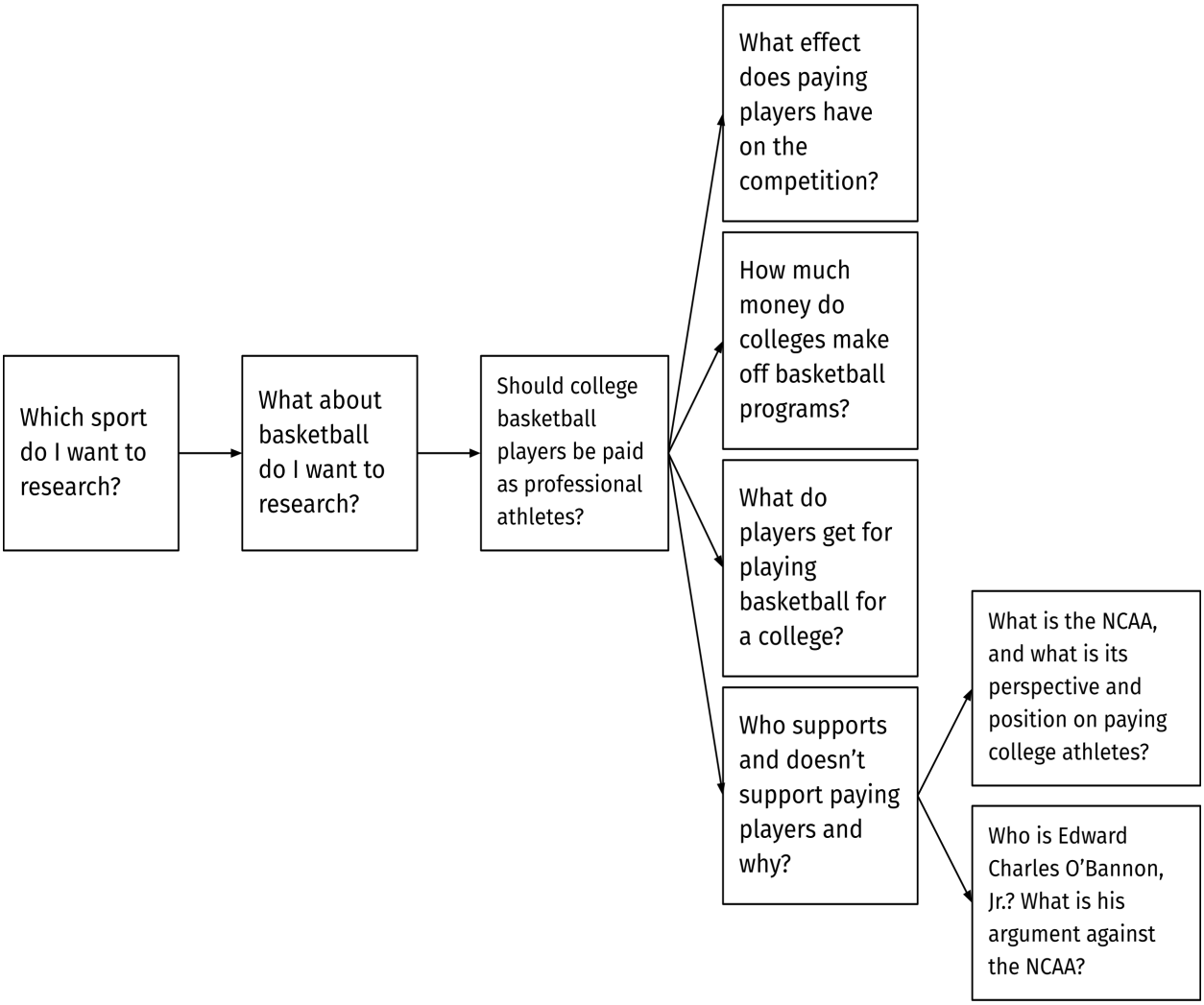
Consider:

- Have you been able to locate a variety of useful sources to answer your questions?
- Do the sources provide sufficient evidence to support your answers to your questions?
- Do you have enough unique evidence to support all of your ideas sufficiently?

If you answer "No" to any of the questions, you may need to broaden or narrow your inquiry.

Revise or add to your inquiry questions.

The graphic below illustrates the refinement process from more general inquiry questions to specific inquiry questions.


Which sport do I want to research?
What about basketball do I want to research?
Should college basketball players be paid as professional athletes?
What effect does paying players have on the competition?
How much money do colleges make off basketball programs?
What do players get for playing basketball for a college?
Who supports and doesn't support paying players and why?
What is the NCAA, and what is its perspective and position on paying college athletes?
Who is Edward Charles O'Bannon, Jr.? What is his argument against the NCAA?

STYLE

The Basics

What? Style refers to the way an author/speaker uses language, sentence structure, and literary devices and techniques to establish tone, mood, images, and meaning in a text.

When? While reading a text, when composing

Why? Recognizing and analyzing an author's/speaker's style as you read helps you determine the purpose and meaning of a text. Establishing and maintaining an effective style when writing or speaking can create reader interest and more effectively communicate your ideas.

Digging Deeper - The Components of Style

- **Word choice/diction:** An author/speaker uses words and phrases in a text to develop the tone and reveal the author's/narrator's/speaker's perspective and/or attitude toward the subject being described or explained.

- **Sentence structure/syntax:** An author/speaker uses the structure of individual sentences as well as a variety, rhythm, or flow of sentences across an entire work to create a style. The structure of a sentence can emphasize a particular idea or create a particular effect. Including a variety of sentence structures within work can create reader interest. Using repetition of sentence types or a series of shorter sentences can alter the pacing of the work, creating emphasis and reader interest.

- **Devices and techniques:** An author/speaker draws on different established ways of using and structuring words, phrases, and sentences to create an effect and/or develop the aesthetics of work.

- **Voice:** In narrative writing particularly, voice is determined by the author's style and narrative point of view. It is the "personality" of the writing, and it is typically distinct or different from the author's perspective and point of view. In arguments and analyses, an author's/speaker's "voice" and style are reflective of the author's/speaker's perspective and point of view.

Additional Information

Sentence Structures

Sentence Structure	Description/Use	Example
Loose/Cumulative	This sentence structure communicates an idea and builds details about that idea. The main clause/sentence is first and is followed by phrases and dependent clauses.	I lived with this secret boiling inside of me like a volcano about to erupt at any second.
Periodic	This sentence structure is often used for emphasis or persuasion. It can also create suspense. The main clause/sentence is at the end.	Boiling inside of me like a volcano about to erupt, the secret was my burden.
Balanced	This sentence structure is made up of similar parts. For example, two main clauses equal in length and importance joined by a conjunction.	The secret was too embarrassing to be told, but my shame was too burdensome to remain quiet.

Syntax Techniques

Syntax Technique	Purpose	Example
Longer sentences (compound, complex, or compound-complex)	To slow down the pacing of your work and zoom in on an idea you want your readers to think about, or to describe a character, setting, or event you want your readers to visualize	“Emma Woodhouse, handsome, clever, and rich, with a comfortable home and happy disposition, seemed to unite some of the best blessings of existence; and had lived nearly twenty-one years in the world with very little to distress or vex her” (Austen 1).
Shorter sentences (simple or fragments)	To speed up the pacing of your work; useful when describing an action-packed event.	“Almighty God! --no, no! They heard! --they suspected! --they knew! --they were making a mockery of my horror!” (Poe).

Syntax Technique	Purpose	Example
Sentences with repeated structures, sentence beginnings or endings, words, or images	To emphasize an idea and create a rhythm or cadence, almost like a song	“Some of you have come fresh from narrow jail cells. Some of you have come from areas where your quest for freedom left you battered” (King 4). I was angry at my mother, angry at the situation, angry at my horrible luck. "I was too good for this war. Too smart, too compassionate, too everything" (O'Brien 41).
Inverted sentences	To create variety and interest; the normal sentence structure is reversed	Seldom was she aware of the danger around her. Little did he know, the beginning was actually the end.
Sentences with interruptions	To create personality; a phrase is inserted in the middle of a sentence and is typically set off from the rest of the sentence with a pair of commas or em dashes	That situation, believe me, is a complete mess. Playing with fire will--shockingly--often get you burned.
Sentences which use juxtaposition	To draw attention to and create greater clarity about an idea	"Better to get hurt by the truth than comforted with a lie" (Hosseini 58).

Literary Devices and Techniques

Device/Technique	Definition	Example
Allusion	A brief, indirect reference to something of historical, literary, or cultural importance. Can be used in arguments, analyses, informative works, and narratives.	At first glance, she realized he was the Romeo to her Juliet and their relationship was doomed before it even began.

Device/Technique	Definition	Example
Alliteration	Repetition of a consonant sound for effect. Can be used in arguments, analyses, informative works, and narratives.	The sarcastic slurs that spilled from her mouth broke my heart.
Analogy	Comparing a lesser known idea or concept to a well-known idea or concept so that the reader/listener can better understand the lesser known idea or concept. Can be used in arguments, analyses, informative works, and narratives.	Allowing John Smith to remain in office would be tantamount to leaving a wolf in a hen house.
Anecdote	A short story used to illustrate a point or an idea. Can be used in arguments and informative works.	
Euphemism	Using more pleasing terms to describe something unpleasant or unappealing. Can be used in arguments, analyses, informative works, and narratives.	“pre-owned” instead of “used”
Flashback	A scene or event that takes place earlier than the events of the story. Can be used in narratives.	As I walked in my grandmother’s house the day before the sale, I thought back to the last summer I spent there as a child. I was seven and my grandmother, while already elderly, greeted me in the driveway with youthful glee.
Foreshadowing	A hint within the beginning of the story about events that will happen later. Can be used in narratives.	Walking out of the house on that fateful Halloween night, I heard the thunder in the distance and saw a flash of lightning.

Device/Technique	Definition	Example
Hyperbole	A statement of exaggeration. Can be used in arguments, analyses, informative works, and narratives.	"I have told you one hundred times today to clean up your room!" yelled Mom. To continue to ignore this national crisis will result in millions of children suffering.
Imagery	Creating an image through the use of vivid details. Can be used in arguments, analyses, informative works, and narratives.	"It was a large, handsome stone building, standing well on rising ground, and backed by a ridge of high woody hills" (Austen). "The spice of hot soapsuds is added to the air already tainted with the smell of boiling cabbage, of rags and uncleanliness all about. It makes an overpowering compound" (Riis).
Juxtaposition	Placing two images, words, or phrases near each other for contrasting effect. Can be used in arguments, analyses, informative works, and narratives.	The fresh, sweet fragrance of the delicate, baby-pink roses assaulted me as I entered the funeral home. "Tonight while we sleep, several thousand little girls will be working in textile mills, all the night through, in the deafening noise of the spindles and the looms spinning and weaving cotton and wool, silks and ribbons for us to buy" (Kelley).
Paradox	A statement that seems to contradict itself, but is actually true. Can be used in arguments, analyses, and informative works, and narratives.	"I must be cruel only to be kind" (Hamlet, III.IV.181).

Device/Technique	Definition	Example
Stream of consciousness	The presentation of a character's thoughts as they are thought in a natural flow with minimal structure. Can be used in narratives.	"It was a special pleasure to see things eaten, to see things blackened and *changed*. With the brass nozzle in his fists, with this great python spitting its venomous kerosene upon the world, the blood pounded in his head, and his hands were the hands of some amazing conductor playing all the symphonies of blazing and burning to bring down the tatters and charcoal ruins of history" (Bradbury 1).
Understatement	Making a situation seem less important than it actually is. Can be used in arguments, analyses, informative works, and narratives.	Flunking out of college after accruing $30,000 in debt was pretty inconvenient for me.

Resources

- Analyzing Style
- Creating Style

Analyzing Style

Recognizing and analyzing an author's/speaker's style helps you determine the purpose and meaning of a text. Analyzing an author's/speaker's style involves determining the cumulative effects of the word choice/diction, the sentence structures, the devices and techniques used, and the voice.

After reviewing each of the components below, consider how they work together to create a style. Develop a claim that describes the author's/speaker's style and its effects. For example: "The author's consistent use of informal words, short sentences, vivid descriptions and humorous anecdotes creates a familiar and friendly style that engages the reader and sustains interest."

Word Choice/Diction

1. Pay attention to and mark the words and phrases that stand out or are repeated.
2. Identify a set of words and phrases the author uses to describe a character, setting, or event or explain an idea.
3. Analyze the words and phrases and determine the tone. Review the tone reference guide to learn how to identify tone.
4. Determine the effects of the tone and how that is achieved through the author's/speaker's word choice or diction.
5. How would you describe the author's/speaker's overall word choice or diction?
6. Explain how the author's/speaker's word choice or diction contributes to the style of the work.

Sentence Structure/Syntax

1. Locate one or more sentences which stand out to you--maybe they have an interesting structure, unique punctuation, or are meaningful.
2. Highlight the different sentence types in a text.
    a. Simple: One subject and verb
    b. Compound: Contains two or more independent clauses joined by a conjunction or semicolon
    c. Complex: Contains one independent clause and one or more dependent clause(s)
    d. Compound-Complex: Contains two or more independent and one or more dependent clauses
3. Note the sentence structures used (e.g., loose, periodic, balanced).
4. Determine whether there is a variety of sentence types and structures and whether there are any patterns. What is the effect of the sentence patterns? Does it create emphasis? Does it affect pacing?
5. Pay attention to the verb voice or mood of the sentences. Look for sentences in which the action of the sentence is receiving the action of the verb rather than doing the action of the verb: "The question was answered by the boy" rather than "The boy answered the question." Passive voice typically minimizes the responsibility of the subject and is often used in scientific writing.

6. Determine the effects of the sentence structure and syntax.
7. How would you describe the author's/speaker's overall sentence structure or syntax?
8. Explain how the author's/speaker's sentence structure or syntax contributes to the style of the work.

Devices and Techniques

1. Identify any devices or techniques the author/speaker uses in the work.
2. Are certain techniques repeated or used consistently throughout the work? For example, does the author/speaker use repeated imagery or symbols? Does the author/speaker use a lot of anecdotes?
3. Interpret the meaning of central or repeated techniques. How do the techniques develop the work's overall meaning?
4. Determine the effects of the devices and techniques.
5. Explain how the author's/speaker's use of devices and techniques contributes to the style of the work.

Creating Style

Creating a consistent and engaging style helps you strongly convey your purpose and meaning in a text.

Word Choice/Diction

1. Decide upon a general tone for your work. Start with "negative" or "positive," and then narrow it down to a more specific tone. For example, a "negative tone" is general while an "accusatory tone" is more specific. See the tone reference guide for a list of tone words.
2. As you compose your work, use words that convey that tone. For example, if the tone is accusatory, the words "guilty," "negligent," and "monster" would convey the tone.
3. Decide on how formal or informal you want your work. Use words that convey your level of formality.
4. During the revision process, replace non-specific words with words that more clearly convey the tone and formality of the work.

Sentence Structure/Syntax

1. As you compose your work, pay attention to the sentence structures you use, and structure your sentences to create a rhythm or flow across your work. Vary sentence structures to create reader interest and effect and to emphasize particular ideas or moments.
2. Expand or combine sentences, break sentences apart, and use different syntax techniques to create variety and different effects. Use the transitions reference guide and conventions reference guide to help you craft various sentences.

Devices and techniques

Incorporate specific techniques into your writing to strengthen your expression and build interest. For example, you might use vivid description and imagery to describe settings and characters. You might use a personal anecdote as an example in developing an argument. In a narrative, you might sequence your events using flashback in order to emphasize certain parts of the plot or to create suspense.

Voice

Creating your voice involves combining all your stylistic elements into a clear "personality." In narrative writing, that includes establishing a distinct narrative point of view and ensuring the tone matches the narrative point of view. This may include establishing a dialect for your narrator and characters (if necessary) when you craft dialogue. Dialogue can also be used to create dramatic or comedic interest.

SYMBOLISM AND MOTIFS

The Basics

What? A symbol is a person, object, or idea that represents a more abstract idea (e.g., a flag represents a country, an arrow represents "go this way," or Abraham Lincoln represents honesty and emancipation). Symbolism is the use of symbols. Interpreting symbols is key to understanding the implied meaning or theme of a text. A motif is a recurring symbol that develops and communicates a theme of a literary text. Motifs which are universally recognized are often referred to as "archetypes." An archetype is a typical example that represents something else across different cultures and types of texts.

When? While reading a text, after reading a text

Why? Literary texts can have meaning on multiple levels. Identifying and interpreting symbols is often a key to unlocking the meaning of a text. Recognizing motifs and archetypes, or recurring symbols, helps you understand the implied meaning of a text or what an author is trying to communicate about the focus or topic of the text, which is also known as a theme.

Digging Deeper - The Process

Symbols

1. Look for images, characters, events, objects, or places that may have multiple levels of meaning--both what it actually is as well as an implied, symbolic meaning. See the common literary symbols and motifs page for possible symbols.
2. In literary texts, symbolism is based on the specific work and its meaning or themes. So, a symbol in one text may not be a symbol in another text. For this reason, you may have to understand the themes of a text before you are able to recognize the symbols used to communicate those themes. This may mean that you won't be able to recognize symbols until after you've read and determined a theme of a text.

Motifs

3. Locate symbols which repeat or recur throughout the text. This is a motif.
4. Determine what the motif might be communicating about the characters, setting, and/or events of the text.
5. Identify a focus or topic of the text. Review the theme reference guide for thematic ideas.
6. Determine what the motif might be communicating about a thematic idea of the text.

Additional Information

- Readers interpret the symbolism in a text. While an author may attempt to create symbolism through the use of particular characters, objects, or images, the readers are ultimately the ones who apply meaning to those and consider them symbolic. Interpreting symbols is also based on a person's cultural and individual experiences and beliefs. So, listening to others' interpretations of potential symbols and comparing them to your own can be helpful.

- When an entire literary work and the elements within it are symbolic, it is considered an allegory or parable. Readers are intended to apply their understanding of the story and the lessons learned or messages conveyed to a similar real-life situation. Allegories and parables are often used to teach with the goal of changing the behavior of the reader. For example, Aesop's Fables are stories that are symbolic of real-life situations. Readers are meant to learn from the character's experiences.

Resources

- Common Literary Symbols and Motifs

Common Literary Symbols and Motifs

Symbols such as the American flag, the cross, or a red stop light are often referred to as conventional symbols. They are generally understood by most people within a culture to have a specific and shared symbolic meaning.

Symbolism in texts can also be conventional, but is more often specific to the context of the text. Thus, a rose may conventionally be symbolic of love, but it may also represent another idea based on how it is presented and used in a text.

The chart describes the many different ways that authors can use symbols and what they could mean.

Element	Description	Examples
Characters	Symbolic characters are typically archetypes because they are used and have the same symbolic meaning across cultures and texts. Symbolic characters act similarly no matter the context (e.g., the characteristics and behavior of the "hero" are the same across many different texts with different settings and events). Fairy tales contain symbolic characters (e.g., the hero, the villain, the damsel in distress). Other characters might be symbolic based on their occupation (e.g., a minister is expected to be spiritual and honest and a teacher is expected to be wise and caring). When an author uses a symbolic character in a different way than typically expected (e.g., Prince Charming is the villain rather than the hero), it creates irony and helps to communicate a theme.	**Hero:** Often the main character; resolves the conflict and restores order after overcoming challenges; typically honest and moral--someone others want to copy **Villain:** Works against the hero and is the opposite--dishonest and evil; tries to trick the hero or convince the hero to make a decision which will result in the hero's failure and the villain's success **Sidekick:** Helps and protects the hero; loyal and sometimes funny **The novice:** Young, uneducated, and untrained, but has natural ability, talent, and good instincts; the hero is sometimes a novice to start **The mentor:** Teachers, counselors, and role models that educate and train the novices; similar to a mother or father **The reformed:** This character either starts as the villain or works with the villain, but is reformed or changed for the better based on interactions with the hero **The sacrifice:** This character dies and the death motivates the hero **Baby:** Represents new life, new beginnings, and innocence

Element	Description	Examples
Color	Authors use color when describing characters, places, and objects. Using the same color or shades of a color to describe a particular character, setting, or event over the course of a text creates a motif (e.g., white: snow, hair, buildings, a dove; black: character wearing black, events happen at night). Nathaniel Hawthorne commonly used color symbolism and motifs in his texts; for example, the use of the color black in "The Minister's Black Veil" or the red "A" in *The Scarlet Letter*.	**White (light):** Purity, innocence, peace, religion, cleanliness **Black (darkness):** Mystery, power, death, evil, deceit **Red:** Passion, love, anger/rage, blood, war, fire, heat, extreme/intense emotion **Blue:** Peace, calmness, water, sky, spirituality, healing, depth, intelligence **Green:** Nature, growth, fertility, freshness, healing, greed, jealousy, money **Orange:** Stimulation, enthusiasm, creativity, heat, fire **Gold:** Wisdom, wealth, luxury **Yellow:** Joy, sunshine, cheer, cowardice **Purple:** Royalty, power, pride, ambition, luxury, mystery, magic
Contrasts	Authors juxtapose symbols or use contrasting symbols over the course of a text to reveal meaning about both sets of symbols based on their contrast. Using contrasting symbols over the course of a texts creates a motif, which suggests a theme of the text. Shakespeare's plays often use motifs based on contrasts; for example, in *Romeo and Juliet*, Romeo says Juliet "teaches the torches to burn bright" and is a "snowy dove" among crows but because their love is forbidden, they must keep it hidden and meet at night. As such, their love is the light in the darkness of their situation.	**Light versus dark:** Light represents hope, knowledge, and awareness while dark represents despair, ignorance, and the unknown **Heaven versus hell:** Heaven represents peace and righteousness and is often viewed as being above the earth, while hell represents discord, chaos, and a lack of morality and is often viewed as being below the earth **Country versus city:** The country represents slowing down, simplicity, safety, and renewal while the city represents speeding up, complexity, danger, excitement, and progress **Tradition versus progress:** Tradition represents the past, ease, simplicity, safety, and security and doing things in a particular way that characters want to get back to, while progress represents the future, challenge, complexity, risk, innovation, and technology

Element	Description	Examples
Objects	Authors use objects which can be symbolic. Using the same object over the course of a text creates a motif. For example: The hatchet in *Hatchet* represents survival. Fire in *Fahrenheit 451* destroys physical books and represents the destruction of civilization.	**Mask:** Hiding **Bridge:** Changes, connections **Heart:** Love, life **Flowers:** Various meanings based on the flower, e.g., a rose often means love **Clocks:** Passage of time **Key:** Gain access to answers or knowledge (good or bad), freedom **Lock:** Secrets, privacy, protection, being trapped **Air:** Creativity, freedom, lightness, breath **Water:** Life, renewal, rebirth **River:** Direction, life **Rain:** Renewal **Fire:** Passion, destruction with chance for regeneration, intensity **Sun:** Life, knowledge, fire, resurrection **Stars:** Direction, guidance **Tree:** Knowledge **Forests/woods/wilderness:** Mystery, evil, fear, privacy **Storms:** Fear, danger

Element	Description	Examples
Situations/event sequences	Symbolic situations are typically archetypes because they are used and have the same symbolic meaning across cultures and texts. Symbolic situations and event sequences follow the same general structure and order no matter the context.	**Quest:** A type of journey that a character or set of characters goes on to accomplish a particular goal; throughout the quest, the hero will have to accomplish tasks to demonstrate knowledge and ability **Death and Rebirth:** Reflecting the cycle of life, something or someone is destroyed or dies and is followed by a sign of birth or renewal **Good versus evil:** Forces of good fight forces of evil and good is ultimately victorious **Unhealable wound:** A character has a physical or mental "wound" that represents sin or immorality and despite the character's best efforts, the wound is never able to be healed fully **Parent/child conflict:** Through the process of growing up, the child feels unheard and misunderstood by a parent, and thus seeks independence and separation from the parent, resulting in the child experiencing challenges; reconciliation often happens as part of the resolution of the text **Wisdom versus education:** A character, typically younger, possesses wisdom and strong instincts which prove more successful than another character, typically older, who is educated and should presumably have more knowledge and experience

TEXT STRUCTURE

The Basics

What? The structure of the text is how the text is set up. Texts are organized in a specific manner and understanding this can help you better understand the text.

Common Literary Text Structures

Text Type	Text Structure	What does the reader do?
Narratives	Prose - sentences grouped into paragraphs Chapters - sections of a text that fit together sequentially to tell a story	Read a group of sentences in order from beginning to end. The events in the story are written in sequential order (first, second, etc.). Novels contain chapters that build the story. Each chapter adds more to the story elements. Readers notice how these chapters connect to analyze the structure of the story.
Poetry	Line - the text included in each line of the poem Stanza - a group of lines Meter - the syllable patterns of the words create a rhythm when read Verse - a collection of lines that contains a specific pattern and rhythm. Frequently, it also includes rhymes.	Read the lines sequentially in the poem. Pause after each stanza to consider its meaning before moving on. Readers notice patterns, rhythms, and rhymes while reading the poem. This helps readers understand the connections the author is making.

Text Type	Text Structure	What does the reader do?
Drama (play)	Cast List - a list of characters and descriptions Setting Descriptions - a detailed description of what the setting would like if the reader viewed the play onstage. Stage Directions - detailed directions for the actor to know what to do and where to go when saying a line Lines - the dialogue the actors say when interacting on stage Scenes - a group of related lines and actions that go with one setting or event.	Read a script with one or more partners and take turns reading the lines. Read the stage directions in parentheses silently before reading the line aloud. The reader can imagine what the scenes would look like if viewing the play onstage.

Common Informational Text Structures

Text Structure	Definition
Chronology	A text written sequentially, or in order, from beginning to end.
Comparison	A text written to compare two or more topics to explain similarities and differences.
Cause and Effect	A text written to explain what events happened and why the events happened.
Problem and Solution	A text written that identifies a problem and provides one or more solutions to the problem.

THEME

The Basics

What? A theme in a literary text is the implied meaning. It is the underlying message or "big idea" about life and the human experience. A theme is what a text communicates about the focus or topic of the text. Themes are usually not directly stated; rather, they are developed and suggested through the language, details, elements, structure, and effects of a text. Themes are often universal in that many texts across many cultures and experiences share common themes.

When? While reading a text, after reading a text

Why? Understanding the themes of a text helps you understand the text's meaning or significance. Comparing themes can also help you see relationships among various works, authors, and artistic forms.

Digging Deeper - The Process

1. Review the text to deepen your understanding of the text's implied meaning.
    a. How has the main characters changed or not? What are the outcomes of either? Are those outcomes positive or negative? Did the main characters learn any lessons as a result?
    b. What is the main conflict in the text? What are the key events in the text?
    c. What does the author focus on or emphasize? Are ideas, elements, or devices repeated?
2. Determine a general focus or topic of a text. See the thematic ideas list.
3. Review the text with this thematic idea in mind. Think about the relationships among the language, details, elements, structure, and effects of the text.
    a. What events in the text are connected to the thematic idea?
    b. How do the characters relate to or what do they think about the thematic idea? What are the narrator's views on the thematic idea?
    c. How does the structure of the text connect to the thematic idea?
    d. Do the events and/or the characters in the text convey a positive or negative view of the thematic idea?
    e. What does the text or author seem to be saying about the thematic idea?
    f. Is this thematic idea fully supported by evidence from the text?
4. Write a thematic statement based on your answers to these questions: What theme is being communicated through the text?
5. Determine how the author uses language (e.g., word choice, tone), details, elements (e.g., characters, setting), structure, and creates effects (e.g., mood, motifs, symbolism, irony) to develop the theme.

Resources

- Thematic Ideas
- Thematic Statements

Thematic Ideas

This is a list of abstract nouns and ideas, which can name the general focus or topic of a literary text. This list does not include every possible focus or topic.

- Love
- Anger or hate
- Indifference, apathy, or disconnectedness
- Friendship
- Acceptance, tolerance, empathy
- Belonging
- Not fitting in, alienation, or loneliness
- Conflict
- Growing up or stages of life
- Power or corruption
- Control, oppression, or subjection
- Pride or hubris
- Jealousy
- Conformity and the lack of individuality
- Search for self
- Self-awareness or self-respect
- Individuality
- Freedom

Thematic Statements

A thematic statement is the same as a "theme" of a text. Thematic statements are claims.

To write a thematic statement, you need the thematic idea of a text along with what the text communicates about that thematic idea. Like a claim, write a thematic statement as a strong, direct statement, using active and powerful verbs that precisely describe the action and communicate your understanding.

A thematic statement can also be a thesis statement in a literary analysis if it contains the response (theme) along with a supporting claim (how the theme is developed) that guides the organization of the essay.

Thematic Statement Non-Examples	Thematic Statement Examples
The theme is love.	A theme of the text is that unconditional love will persevere through the toughest of situations.
I see hope in the text.	The author suggests that hope is the main state of mind a person must have to overcome a tragic situation.
Good versus evil is the theme.	Ultimately Devon is successful while Brianna is exposed as a fraud, which reveals the theme that those who seek to treat others with kindness are able to triumph over those who seek to deceive others. *(Note: This can be the thesis statement in a literary analysis.)*
Growing up is hard to do.	While Mariella is able to make it through her adolescence relatively successfully, her experiences with school, friends, and her parents illustrate that growing up is hard to do. *(Note: This can be the thesis statement in a literary analysis.)*

Possible Active, Powerful Verbs for Thematic Statements

- accentuates, adds, affirms, amplifies, elevates, emphasizes, exemplifies, expands, extends, fosters, magnifies, provides, reinforces, supports
- comments, considers, declares, indicates, maintains, notes, observes, outlines, presents, refers, relates, suggests

- characterizes, conveys, demonstrates, describes, defines, details, develops, discusses, displays, evokes, exhibits, explains, expresses, identifies, illuminates, illustrates, portrays, reveals
- determines, establishes, generalizes, interprets, introduces, understands
- alludes, hints, implies, infers, postulates, presumes, reasons
- compares, differentiates, distinguishes

TONE

The Basics

What? The attitude or viewpoint the author has toward the characters, subject/theme, and/or audience of a text; tone is generally conveyed through the words the author uses

When? While reading a text, after reading a text

Why? To understand the meaning the author is trying to convey

Digging Deeper - The Process

1. Identify a set of words and phrases the author uses to describe a character, setting, or event or explain an idea.
2. Analyze the set of words and phrases.
    a. Identify synonyms and/or antonyms for the identified words and phrases.
    b. Note any trends within the set of words and phrases. For example, are the words generally positive or negative? Are the words casual, technical, informal, formal?
    c. Identify the effects of the words on you, the reader: What emotions do you feel when you read the set of words and phrases? How does the text affect you (e.g., Do you laugh? Do you become anxious? Do you get angry?)? If you were to replace the words with their synonyms or antonyms, how does the passage change? Does it affect you in a different way?
3. Name the tone.

Additional Information

- Tone is related to but different from mood. Tone is something the author sets through the words the author chooses. Mood is the effect of tone and setting on the reader. The reader determines the mood. For example, the tone might be suspenseful and the setting might be at night during a storm in the 1800s; the mood is how the reader is affected by those two elements. So, the mood might be scary, dark, or ominous.

- Tone is not what a character is feeling or what a character wants to have happen--it is how the author portrays the character's desires and motivations. For example, a character badly wants to win a school competition. He wants to win so badly that he practices for hours and focuses only on the competition, neglecting his friend who needs his help. The author uses words such as "foolhardy," "arrogant," and "insensitive" to describe the character's actions. As such, the tone would be critical (the author's attitude toward the character) rather than passionate (the character's feelings).

Resources

- Tone Words

Tone Words

Tone is the speaker's attitude toward the subject of a text and is revealed through the author's word choice, organization, choice of detail, and sentence structure. The tone of a text affects the meaning. Your understanding of the text, how you feel about the text (e.g., the characters, the events, the ideas), and how the text affects you are all related to the tone.

The following are sample tone words, which can be used to describe the tone of a text.

Positive Tone	Neutral Tone	Negative Tone
Eager, zealous	Conversational, informal	Accusatory, pointed
Imaginative, fanciful, whimsical	Matter-of-fact	Cynical, bitter, biting, sharp
Humorous, playful, comical	Reflective	Satirical, critical
Respectful, admiring, approving	Impartial, objective, indifferent	Condescending, arrogant, haughty
Sincere	Scholarly, instructive	Contemptuous, scornful
Powerful, confident	Practical, pragmatic	Sarcastic, ironic, mocking, wry
Complimentary, proud	Subdued, restrained, low-key	Silly, childish
Calm, tranquil, peaceful	Serious, formal, solemn	Sad, depressed, melancholy
Sentimental, nostalgic, wistful	Uncertain	Angry, indignant, harsh
Excited, exuberant, exhilarated	Straightforward, direct, candid	Fearful, panicked, anxious
Happy, joyful, giddy, contented		Demanding, insistent, urgent
		Skeptical, dubious, questioning
		Pretentious, pompous