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## Analytical essay fiction

Do you need to write an analytical essay for school? What sets this kind of essay apart from other types, and what must you include when you write your own analytical essay? In this guide, we break down the process of writing an analytical essay by explaining the key factors your essay needs to have, providing you with an outline to help you structure your essay, and analyzing a complete analytical essay example so you can see what a finished essay looks like. What Is an Analytical Essay? Before you begin writing an analytical essay, you must know what this type of essay is and what it includes. Analytical essays analyze something, often (but not always) a piece of writing or a film. An analytical essay is more than just a synopsis of the issue though; in this type of essay you need to go beyond surface-level analysis and look at what the key arguments/points of this issue are and why. If you're writing an analytical essay about a piece of writing, you'll look into how the text was written and why the author chose to write it that way. Instead of summarizing, an analytical essay typically takes a narrower focus and looks at areas such as major themes in the work, how the author constructed and supported their argument, how the essay used literary devices to enhance its messages, etc. While you certainly want people to agree with what you've written, unlike with persuasive and argumentative essays, your main purpose when writing an analytical essay isn't to try to convert readers to your side of the issue. Therefore, you won't be using strong persuasive language like you would in those essay types. Rather, your goal is to have enough analysis and examples that the strength of your argument is clear to readers. Besides typical essay components like an introduction and conclusion, a good analytical essay will include: A thesis that states your main argument Analysis that relates back to your thesis and supports it Examples to support your analysis and allow a more in-depth look at the issue In the rest of this article, we'll explain how to include each of these in your analytical essay. How to Structure Your Analytical Essay Analytical essays are structured similarly to many other essays you've written, with an introduction (including a thesis), several body paragraphs, and a conclusion. Below is an outline you can follow when structuring your essay, and in the next section we go into more detail on how to write an analytical essay. Introduction Your introduction will begin with some sort of attention-grabbing sentence to get your audience interested, then you'll give a few sentences setting up the topic so that readers have some context, and you'll end with your thesis statement. Your introduction will include: A hook Brief background information explaining the issue/text Your thesis Body Paragraphs Your analytical essay will typically have three or four body paragraphs, each covering a different point of analysis. Begin each body paragraph with a sentence that sets up the main point you'll be discussing. Then you'll give some analysis on that point, backing it up with evidence to support your claim. Continue analyzing and giving evidence for your analysis until you're out of strong points for the topic. At the end of each body paragraph, you may choose to have a transition sentence that sets up what the next paragraph will be about, but this isn't required. Body paragraphs will include: Introductory sentence explaining what you'll cover in the paragraph (sort of like a mini-thesis) Analysis point Evidence (either passages from the text or data/facts) that supports the analysis (Repeat analysis and evidence until you run out of examples) Conclusion You won't be making any new points in your conclusion; at this point you're just reiterating key points you've already made and wrapping things up. Begin by rephrasing your thesis and summarizing the main points you made in the essay. Someone who reads just your conclusion should be able to come away with a basic idea of what your essay was about and how it was structured. After this, you may choose to make some final concluding thoughts, potentially by connecting your essay topic to larger issues to show why it's important. A conclusion will include: Paraphrase of thesis Summary of key points of analysis Final concluding thought(s) 5 Steps for Writing an Analytical Essay Follow these five tips to break down writing an analytical essay into manageable steps. By the end, you'll have a fully-crafted analytical essay with both in-depth analysis and enough evidence to support your argument. All of these steps use the completed analytical essay in the next section as an example. #1: Pick a Topic You may have already had a topic assigned to you, and if that's the case, you can skip this step. However, if you haven't, or if the topic you've been assigned is broad enough that you still need to narrow it down, then you'll need to decide on a topic for yourself. Choosing the right topic can mean the difference between an analytical essay that's easy to research (and gets you a good grade) and one that takes hours just to find a few decent points to analyze Before you decide on an analytical essay topic, do a bit of research to make sure you have enough examples to support your analysis. If you choose a topic that's too narrow, you'll struggle to find enough to write about. For example, say your teacher assigns you to write an analytical essay about the theme in John Steinbeck's The Grapes of Wrath of exposing injustices against migrants. For it to be an analytical essay, you can't just recount the injustices characters in the book faced; that's only a summary and doesn't include analysis. You need to choose a topic that allows you to analyze the theme. One of the best ways to explore a theme is to analyze how the author made his/her argument. One example here is that Steinbeck used literary devices in the intercalary chapters (short chapters that didn't relate to the plot or contain the main characters of the book) to show what life was like for migrants as a whole during the Dust Bowl. You could write about how Steinbeck used literary devices throughout the whole book, but, in the essay below, I chose to just focus on the intercalary chapters since they gave me enough examples. Having a narrower focus will nearly always result in a tighter and more convincing essay (and can make compiling examples less overwhelming). #2: Write a Thesis Statement Your thesis statement is the most important sentence of your essay; a reader should be able to read just your thesis and understand what the entire essay is about and what you'll be analyzing. When you begin writing, remember that each sentence in your analytical essay should relate back to your thesis In the analytical essay example below, the thesis is the final sentence of the first paragraph (the traditional spot for it). The thesis is: "In The Grapes of Wrath's intercalary chapters, John Steinbeck employs a variety of literary devices and stylistic choices to better expose the injustices committed against migrants in the 1930s." So what will this essay analyze? How Steinbeck used literary devices in the intercalary chapters to show how rough migrants could have it. Crystal clear. #3: Do Research to Find Your Main Points This is where you determine the bulk of your analysis--the information that makes your essay an analytical essay. My preferred method is to list every idea that I can think of, then research each of those and use the three or four strongest ones for your essay. Weaker points may be those that don't relate back to the thesis, that you don't have much analysis to discuss, or that you can't find good examples for. A good rule of thumb is to have one body paragraph per main point This essay has four main points, each of which analyzes a different literary device Steinbeck uses to better illustrate how difficult life was for migrants during the Dust Bowl. The four literary devices and their impact on the book are: Lack of individual names in intercalary chapters to illustrate the scope of the problem Parallels to the Bible to induce sympathy for the migrants Non-showy, often grammatically-incorrect language so the migrants are more realistic and relatable to readers Nature-related metaphors to affect the mood of the writing and reflect the plight of migrants #4: Find Excerpts or Evidence to Support Your Analysis Now that you have your main points, you need to back them up. If you're writing a paper about a text or film, use passages/clips from it as your main source of evidence. If you're writing about something else, your evidence can come from a variety of sources, such as surveys, experiments, quotes from knowledgeable sources etc. Any evidence that would work for a regular research paper works here. In this example, I quoted multiple passages from The Grapes of Wrath in each paragraph to support my argument. You should be able to back up every claim you make with evidence in order to have a strong essay. #5: Put It All Together Now it's time to begin writing your essay, if you haven't already. Create an introductory paragraph that ends with the thesis, make a body paragraph for each of your main points, including both analysis and evidence to back up your claims, and wrap it all up with a conclusion that recaps your thesis and main points and potentially explains the big picture importance of the topic. Analytical Essay Example + Analysis So that you can see for yourself what a completed analytical essay looks like, here's an essay I wrote back in my high school days. It's followed by analysis of how I structured my essay, what its strengths are, and how it could be improved. Essay American author Rita Mae Brown stated, "Language exerts hidden power, like a moon on the tides." Applying rhetoric well has been the goal of countless writers throughout history. Effective use of language in literature has had the ability to affect people for generations. John Steinbeck's novel, The Grapes of Wrath, is an instance of an enduring piece of writing that contains compelling and powerful language. The Grapes of Wrath details the journey of the Joad family as they migrate west after being thrown off their land. The Joads must deal with a severe lack of basic necessities and unjustified hatred towards them even after they arrive in California. Steinbeck uses his intercalary chapters to express his view points and describe the difficulties and indignities migrants had to face. Powerful language is a crucial aspect in getting people to understand the author's beliefs. In The Grapes of Wrath's intercalary chapters, John Steinbeck employs a variety of literary devices and stylistic choices to better expose the plight of migrants in the 1930s. One way Steinbeck illustrates the connections all migrant people possessed and the struggles they faced is by refraining from using specific titles and names in his intercalary chapters. While The Grapes of Wrath focuses on the Joad family, the intercalary chapters show that all migrants share the same struggles and triumphs as the Joads. No individual names are used in these chapters; instead the people are referred to as part of a group. Steinbeck writes, "Frantic men pounded on the doors of the doctors; and the doctors were busy. And sad men left word at country stores for the coroner to send a car." (553). By using generic terms, Steinbeck shows how the migrants are all linked because they have gone through the same experiences. The grievances committed against one family were committed against thousands of other families; the abuse extends far beyond what the Joads experienced. The Grapes of Wrath frequently refers to the importance of coming together; how, when people connect with others their power and influence multiplies immensely. Throughout the novel, the goal of the migrants, the key to their triumph, has been to unite. While their plans are repeatedly frustrated by the government and police, Steinbeck's intercalary chapters provide a way for the migrants to relate to one another because they have encountered the same experiences. Hundreds of thousands of migrants fled to the promised land of California, but Steinbeck was aware that numbers alone were impersonal and lacked the passion he desired to spread. Steinbeck created the intercalary chapters to show the massive numbers of people suffering, and he created the Joad family to evoke compassion from readers. Because readers come to sympathize with the Joads, they become more sensitive to the struggles of migrants in general. However, John Steinbeck frequently made clear that the Joads were not an isolated incident; they were not unique. Their struggles and triumphs were part of something greater. Refraining from specific names in his intercalary chapters allows Steinbeck to show the vastness of the atrocities committed against migrants. Steinbeck also creates significant parallels to the Bible in his intercalary chapters in order to enhance his writing and characters. By using simple sentences and stylized writing, Steinbeck evokes Biblical passages. The migrants despair, "No work till spring. No work," (556). Short, direct sentences help to better convey the desperateness of the migrants' situation. Throughout his novel, John Steinbeck makes connections to the Bible through his characters and storyline. Jim Casey's allusions to Christ and the cycle of drought and flooding are clear biblical references. By choosing to relate The Grapes of Wrath to the Bible, Steinbeck's characters become greater than themselves. Starving migrants become more than destitute vagrants; they are now the chosen people escaping to the promised land. When a forgotten man dies alone and unnoticed, it becomes a tragedy. Steinbeck writes, "If [the migrants] were shot at, they did not run, but splashed sullenly away; and if they were hit, they sank tiredly in the mud," (556). Injustices committed against the migrants become greater because they are seen as children of God through Steinbeck's choice of language. Referencing the Bible strengthens Steinbeck's novel and purpose: to create understanding for the dispossessed. It is easy for people to feel disdain for shabby vagabonds, but connecting them to such a fundamental aspect of Christianity induces sympathy from readers who might have otherwise disregarded the migrants as so many other people did. The simple, uneducated dialogue Steinbeck employs also helps to create a more honest and meaningful representation of the migrants, and it makes the migrants more relatable to readers. Steinbeck chooses to accurately represent the language of the migrants in order to more clearly illustrate their lives and make them seem more like real paper than just characters in a book. The migrants lament, "They ain't gonna be no kinda work for three months," (555). There are multiple grammatical errors in that single sentence, but it vividly conveys the despair the migrants felt better than a technically perfect sentence would. The Grapes of Wrath is intended to show the severe difficulties facing the migrants so Steinbeck employs a clear, pragmatic style of writing. Steinbeck shows the harsh, truthful realities of the migrants' lives and he would be hypocritical if he chose to give the migrants a more refined voice and not portray them with all their shortcomings. The depiction of the migrants as imperfect through their language also makes them easier to relate to. Steinbeck's primary audience was the middle class, the less affluent of society. Repeatedly in The Grapes of Wrath, the wealthy make it obvious that they scorn the plight of the migrants. The wealthy, not bad luck or natural disasters, were the prominent cause of the suffering of migrant families such as the Joads. Thus, Steinbeck turns to the less prosperous for support in his novel. When referring to the superior living conditions barnyard animals have, the migrants remark, "Them's horses-we're men," (556). The perfect simplicity of this quote expresses the absurdness of the migrants' situation better than any flowery expression could. In The Grapes of Wrath, John Steinbeck uses metaphors, particularly about nature, in order to illustrate the mood and the overall plight of migrants. Throughout most of the book, the land is described as dusty, barren, and dead. Towards the end, however, floods come and the landscape begins to change. At the end of chapter twenty-nine, Steinbeck describes a hill after the floods saying, "Tiny points of grass came through the earth, and in a few days the hills were pale green with the beginning year," (556). This description offers a stark contrast from the earlier passages which were filled with despair and destruction. Steinbeck's tone from the beginning of the chapter changes drastically. Early in the chapter, Steinbeck had used heavy imagery in order to convey the destruction caused by the rain. "The streams and the little rivers edged up to the bank sides and worked at willows and tree roots, bent the willows deep in the current, cut out the roots of cottonwoods and brought down the trees," (553). However, at the end of the chapter the rain has caused new life to grow in California. The new grass becomes a metaphor representing hope. When the migrants are at a loss over how they will survive the winter, the grass offers reassurance. The story of the migrants in the intercalary chapters parallels that of the Joads. At the end of the novel, the family is breaking apart and has been forced to flee their home. However, both the book and final intercalary chapter end on a hopeful note after so much suffering has occurred. The grass metaphor strengthens Steinbeck's message because it offers a tangible example of hope. Through his language Steinbeck's themes become apparent at the end of the novel. Steinbeck affirms that persistence, even when problems appear insurmountable, leads to success. These metaphors help to strengthen Steinbeck's themes in The Grapes of Wrath because they provide a more memorable way to recall important messages. John Steinbeck's language choices help to intensify his writing in his intercalary chapters and allow him to more clearly show how difficult life for migrants could be. Refraining from using specific names and terms allows Steinbeck to show that many thousands of migrants suffered through the same wrongs. Imitating the style of the Bible strengthens Steinbeck's characters and connects them to the Bible, perhaps the most famous book in history. When Steinbeck writes in the imperfect dialogue of the migrants, he creates a more accurate portrayal and makes the migrants easier to relate to for a less affluent audience. Metaphors, particularly relating to nature, strengthen the themes in The Grapes of Wrath by enhancing the mood Steinbeck wants readers to feel at different points in the book. Overall, the intercalary chapters that Steinbeck includes improve his novel by making it more memorable and reinforcing the themes Steinbeck embraces throughout the novel. Exemplary stylistic devices further persuade readers of John Steinbeck's personal beliefs. Steinbeck wrote The Grapes of Wrath to bring to light cruelties against migrants, and by using literary devices effectively, he continuously reminds readers of his purpose. Steinbeck's impressive language choices in his intercalary chapters advance the entire novel and help to create a classic work of literature that people still are able to relate to today. Analysis This essay sticks pretty closely to the standard analytical essay outline. It starts with an introduction, where I chose to use a quote to start off the essay. (This became my favorite way to start essays in high school because, if I wasn't sure what to say, I could outsource the work and find a quote that related to what I'd be writing about.) The quote in this essay doesn't relate to the themes I'm discussing quite as much as it could, but it's still a slightly different way to start an essay and can intrigue readers. I then give a bit of background on The Grapes of Wrath and its themes before ending the intro paragraph with my thesis: that Steinbeck used literary devices in intercalary chapters to show how rough migrants had it. Each of my four body paragraphs is formatted in roughly the same way: an intro sentence that explains what I'll be discussing, analysis of that main point, and at least two quotes from the book as evidence. My conclusion restates my thesis, summarizes each of four points I discussed in my body paragraphs, and ends the essay by briefly discussing how Steinbeck's writing helped introduce a world of readers to the injustices migrants experienced during the dust bowl. What does this analytical essay example do well? For starters, it contains everything that a strong analytical essay should, and it makes that easy to find. The thesis clearly lays out what the essay will be about, the first sentence of each of the body paragraph introduces the topic it'll cover, and the conclusion neatly recaps all the main points. Within each of the body paragraphs, there's analysis along with multiple excerpts from the book in order to add legitimacy to my points. Additionally, the essay does a good job of taking an in-depth look at the issue introduced in the thesis. Four ways Steinbeck used literary devices are discussed, and for each of the examples are given and analysis is provided so readers can understand why Steinbeck included those devices and how they helped shaped how readers viewed migrants and their plight. Where could this essay be improved? I believe the weakest body paragraph is the third one, the one that discusses how Steinbeck used plain, grammatically incorrect language to both accurately depict the migrants and make them more relatable to readers. The paragraph tries to touch on both of those reasons and ends up being somewhat unfocused as a result. It would have been better for it to focus on just one of those reasons (likely how it made the migrants more relatable) in order to be clearer and more effective. It's a good example of how adding more ideas to an essay often doesn't make it better if they don't work with the rest of what you're writing. This essay also could explain the excerpts that are included more and how they relate to the points being made. Sometimes they're just dropped in the essay with the expectation that the readers will make the connection between the example and the analysis. This is perhaps especially true in the second body paragraph, the one that discusses similarities to Biblical passages. Additional analysis of the quotes would have strengthened it. Summary: How to Write an Analytical Essay What is an analytical essay? A critical analytical essay analyzes a topic, often a text or film. The analysis paper uses evidence to support the argument, such as excerpts from the piece of writing. All analytical papers include a thesis, analysis of the topic, and evidence to support that analysis. When developing an analytical essay outline and writing your essay, follow these five steps: #3: Decide on your main points #4: Gather evidence to support your analysis Reading analytical essay examples can also give you a better sense of how to structure your essay and what to include in it. What's Next? Learning about different writing styles in school? There are four main writing styles, and it's important to understand each of them. Learn about them in our guide to writing styles, complete with examples. Writing a research paper for school but not sure what to write about? Our guide to research paper topics has over 100 topics in ten categories so you can be sure to find the perfect topic for you. Have friends who also need help with test prep? Share this article! Student and Parent Forum Our new student and parent forum, at ExpertHub.PrepScholar.com, allow you to interact with your peers and the PrepScholar staff. 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