

AP Rhetorical Analysis Introductions

Things you must know in order to accurately analyze a text:

- **Rhetorical Situation**
 - Exigence, Purpose, Message, Context, Audience, Author
- **Rhetorical Strategies**
 - Style (Diction, Syntax, Details, Imagery, Tone, etc.)
 - “Choices”
- **Why did the author choose these strategies for the particular audience, occasion, and/or purpose?**
 - This is the fun analysis part! Without this, you are merely summarizing and not fully analyzing the text! **Consider the following questions:**
 - HOW do the rhetorical strategies assist the author achieve her/his purpose?
 - WHY does the author choose those strategies for that particular audience and/or for that particular occasion?

Once you have identified the information above, it is not time to begin putting your thoughts and ideas into a format that proves you have accurately analyzed the text. There are various ways to write an effective rhetorical analysis essay. Below is merely one way that is generally effective to adopt, for its simple format is one way to get you started. You may find as you become more comfortable with analysis that you want to modify this format which is absolutely fine as long as you are still focusing on the elements from above.

INTRODUCTION

The introductory paragraph to an analysis essay is usually brief in addressing . However, it must contain some essential information of the rhetorical situation.

(Writer's credentials), (writer's first and last name), in his/her (type of text), (title of text), (strong verb—see list at end of the handout) (writer's subject). (Writer's last name)'s purpose is to (what the writer does in the text). He/She adopts a[n] (adjective describing the attitude/feeling conveyed by the writer) tone in order to (verb phrase describing what the writer wants readers to do/think/consider) in his/her (intended audience).

EXAMPLE of INTRODUCTION

Novelist Amy Tan in her narrative essay, “Fish Cheeks,” recounts an embarrassing Christmas Eve dinner when she was 14 years old. Tan’s purpose is to convey the idea that, at fourteen, she was not fully able to recognize the love her mother had for her or the sacrifices she made. She adopts a sentimental tone in order to appeal to similar feelings and experiences in her adult readers.

STRONG VERSUS WEAK VERBS

To help you move away from summary and toward ANALYSIS, you need to begin to incorporate strong verbs into your writing when discussing the writer's rhetorical choices. Below is a list of verbs that are considered weak because they imply summary and a list of verbs that are considered strong because they imply analysis. Strive to use the stronger verbs in your essays to help push yourself away from summary and toward analysis: “The writer flatters...” **NOT** “The writer says...”

WEAK VERBS (SUMMARY)

Says Relates Goes on to say Tells This quote shows Explains States Shows

STRONG VERBS (ANALYSIS)

Implies Trivializes Flatters Qualifies Processes Describes Suggests Denigrates Lionizes Dismisses Analyzes Questions Compares Vilifies Praises Supports Enumerates Contrasts Emphasizes Demonizes Establishes Admonishes Expounds Argues Defines Ridicules Minimizes Narrates

Lists Warns Delineates Attributes

POWERFUL VERBS - ALTERNATIVES TO “SHOW”

Acknowledge Address Analyze Apply Argue Assert Augment Broaden Calculate Capitalize
Characterize Claim Clarify Compare Complicate Confine Connect Consider Construct Contradict
Correct Create Convince Critique Declare Deduce Defend Demonstrate Deny Describe
Determine Differentiate Disagree Discard Discover Discuss Dismiss Distinguish Duplicate
Elaborate Emphasize Employ Enable Engage Enhance Establish Evaluate Exacerbate Examine
Exclude Exhibit Expand Explain Exploit Express Extend Facilitate Feature Forecast Formulate
Fracture Generalize Group Guide Hamper Hypothesize Identify Illuminate Illustrate Impair
Implement Implicate Imply Improve Include Incorporate Indicate Induce Incorporate Indicate
Induce Initiate Inquire Instigate Integrate Interpret Intervene Invert Isolate Justify Locate
Loosen Maintain Manifest Manipulate Measure Merge Minimize Modify Monitor Necessitate
Negate Nullify Obscure Observe Obtain Offer Omit Optimize Organize Outline Overstate
Persist Point out Possess Predict Present Probe Produce Promote Propose Prove Provide
Qualify Quantify Question Realize Recommend Reconstruct Redefine Reduce Refer Reference
Refine Reflect Refute Regard Reject Relate Rely Remove Repair Report Represent Resolve
Retrieve Reveal Revise Separate Shape Signify Simulate Solve Specify Structure Suggest
Summarize Support Suspend Sustain Tailor Terminate Testify Theorize Translate Undermine
Understand Unify Utilize Validate Vary View Vindicate Yield