**How to Analyze an Article to Write an Essay**

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Student writing an essay

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Strong essay writing and research skills are important for success in high school and college. One common type of essay is an article analysis essay. Its purpose is to evaluate the ideas or arguments presented in the article. Usually these essays are comprised of an introduction, at least three supporting paragraphs and a conclusion. Every essay should have a well-stated thesis that tells the reader what to expect from the rest of the paper as well as solid research to support the thesis.

**Items you will need**

* Assigned article

**Research and Notes**

Step 1

Read the article and take notes with your essay in mind. Even if you have read the article once already, read through it again to take notes. Highlight meaningful passages while looking for connections and think critically about what you are reading. Document your responses in the margins or on a blank sheet of paper.

Step 2

Investigate other sources to support your essay's main points and to gather ideas. Formal responses have been written about many academic articles. They may have ideas that you can use to get a deeper understanding of the article you are writing about. Visit your library or use an online academic database to find references.

Step 3

Analyze the arguments that you have gathered. Think through each perspective logically, looking for strengths and weaknesses. Form your own opinions about the topic.

**Pre-Write**

Step 1

Write one concise sentence, or thesis statement, that summarizes your thinking. This sentence should state the point of the essay. Keep in mind that, although the thesis statement is written first, it should be revisited at the end of the writing process to make any necessary changes.

Step 2

Compose at least three main points that back up your thesis. These points will eventually become topic sentences and will begin each supporting paragraph in your essay.

Step 3

Find at least one quote that backs up each point that you have. The quote might be one you found in your research or it could be from the article itself. Be sure to write down the source of each quote so that you can reference it in the essay.

**Write and Edit**

Step 1

Write an introduction to the essay. Include relevant information about the article that came up in your research. Lead into the thesis statement, which is usually the last sentence of the paragraph.

Step 2

Use the topic sentences you created to form three supporting paragraphs. Each topic sentence should act as a foundation for the rest of the paragraph and should summarize each paragraph's content.

Step 3

Construct a final concluding paragraph that restates your main points in a new way. This paragraph does not have to be long and is sometimes only a few sentences in length.

Step 4

Edit your essay and ask someone else to review it as well. Read through your essay, checking for errors and flaws in logic. It is best if a friend reads it over also to give advice and to catch any mistakes that were missed