

Analysis Essay

An analysis essay is a paper that presents a critical assessment of a text, concept, behavior, or other entity in a thorough and academic way. As its name suggests, an analysis essay is intended **to analyze using a variety of critical thinking skills and approaches**. Unlike many other types of essays that include the views of the author, and particularly unlike persuasive essays, which attempt to convince the reader of the merits of a particular issue or idea, **analysis essays examine a topic in an almost scientific way, seeking to uncover the way the object of analysis operates and acts**.

Indeed, analysis essays are a favorite assignment of many teachers because they require critical assessment, sharp attention to detail, and keen insight. All three of these qualities must figure prominently in an effective analysis essay.

First, an **analysis essay** must put forth a **thesis statement** somewhere in the first ¼ of the text. A thesis is a sentence or two that states **WHAT a paper is about**—the point or argument—and **HOW that point or argument is going to be explained and defended**. In **an analysis paper, the WHAT of the paper is typically the object of analysis, and the HOW is the way in which the writer is going to analyze that object**. For instance, an analysis essay on campaign advertisements during an election might look at television commercials, political mailings, and newspaper advertisements to make a point about the ways the advertisements manipulate language to bend the truth about candidates. In this analysis essay, the thesis would be as follows: "In the recent election, campaign advertisements of both political parties manipulated language to bend the truth and suggest damaging claims about opposition candidates. An examination of television commercials, political mailings, and newspaper advertisements in the months leading to the election reveals increasingly incendiary accusations directed at both candidates presented through the effective "spin" of political jargon."

In this essay, **the writer would critically examine the language used in various types** of campaign advertising to make her claim that the advertisements used specific wording to manipulate the truth. This essay might compare advertisement claims to the sources from which they were drawn in order to determine the accuracy of the statements and whether they were taken out of context. For each example the author used, she would examine each aspect of the campaign wording and explain how it was manipulating reality. Through this careful, detailed analysis, she would be able to defend her ultimate point, which is that "in the recent election, campaign advertisements of both political parties manipulated language to bend the truth and suggest damaging claims about opposition candidates."

Analysis essays can be understood as **examinations of different cultural and artistic phenomena. The object of analysis is being placed under a microscope, and the job of the writer is to report what her or she sees. The conclusion of an analysis essay should point to the findings of the analysis, and suggest what those findings indicate about the topic being studied.**

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Also see

Thesis Statement

A thesis statement is an essential part of many academic works. **It is most often a one-sentence statement that appears in the introductory paragraph** of an academic paper, such as an essay or a dissertation. **Thesis statements explain the theme for a paper by succinctly stating the purpose and conclusion of the paper.**

There are several different ways to write a thesis statement. **The type of essay that a student writes will generally determine the structure of the thesis statement.** In most cases, a simple "if, then" statement will be an appropriate thesis statement. In an "if, then" statement, a student will state that if one thing happens, then a certain result will follow. "If, then" statements are basic cause and effect statements, which help to provide structure and purpose for an essay.

Some essays, however, require more complex thesis statements. For example, if a student is writing a **comparison essay**, an "if, then" statement might not be appropriate. In such a situation **where a student needs to compare multiple documents or ideas, the student may wish to create a complex thesis statement that briefly explains the purpose and conclusion of the comparison essay.** If a thesis statement cannot be written in one sentence, it may be appropriate to break the thesis statement into two sentences, but only in some cases.

Thesis statements are always included in the beginning of an essay. Some professors prefer that they are the first sentence of the introductory paragraph. Other professors prefer that a thesis statement is the last sentence of an introductory paragraph. Therefore, students should always review writing guidelines that a professor hands out prior to creating the structure for the essay.

Each body paragraph of an essay should support the thesis statement. **It often takes multiple ideas or pieces of information in order to prove a thesis statement to be true.** Each new idea or piece of information should be included in a separate paragraph. **The final paragraph of the essay should provide a conclusion to the essays by summarizing the ideas or pieces of information and drawing conclusions. The conclusion will always tie back to the thesis statement.**

A thesis statement is similar to a purpose statement. However, a formal purpose statement is a specific section of a scientific method or a research paper. A thesis is generally used with essays that explore ideas or provide information. A thesis does provide the purpose for a paper, but a thesis statement is not synonymous with a purpose statement, as a purpose statement refers to a scientific document.