

## Writing an Analysis Essay

Writing an analysis essay allows the writer to improve on an essential skill – the ability to break down the parts of an essay and see how they function as a whole.

To write an effective analysis you should begin by reading the work and asking yourself a few questions about the essay you are writing:

- Why am I analyzing this text? (To demonstrate my understanding of it, to make a point, etc.)
- What are the criterion for the analysis?
- Who is my audience? (Instructor, student, etc.)
- What are the requirements? (length, quoting vs. paraphrasing, etc.)

Reread the text and use highlighting, notes, or annotations that you can refer back to while writing your essay. Ask yourself another set of basic questions, this time about the text you are analyzing:

- What is the main idea or point the writer is trying to convey?
- What audience is the work intended for?
- Is this part of a larger conversation?
- What interested me about this text? Why?
- What did I find less effective? Why?
- Does the writer successfully get his/her point across?
- How does the writer fail or succeed?
  - For instance, if the essay you are analyzing claims that the legal drinking age should be lowered because it is lower in other nations, you may wish to analyze whether or not the writer was able to adequately support that claim.

Tips:

- ✓ Consider the author's use of language, imagery, characterization, stereotyping, setting, mood, themes, etc.
- ✓ If the essay is written about another work, referring to the primary source (the work being written about) could prove necessary.
- ✓ If the text presents an argument, examine the effectiveness of the logic.
- ✓ Consider both what the text tells the reader and what questions remain unanswered.

Once you have answered those questions, you can generate your thesis statement, which sets up the analysis.

*Handout Prepared by QEP Writing Studio Tutor Abigail Morris – 2013*

### **Ask a QEP Writing Studio Tutor about this topic for more information!**

Stop by and see us in 143 Johnson Hall! We offer 30 minute appointments and walk-in hours to GE 102 and GE 103 students Monday – Friday: 9:00-4:00. Or contact us at QEPWritingStudio@mail.ecsu.edu or (252) 335-4326.

We look forward to working with you!