

AP Essay Planning Guide
Hogue/2001

Steps:

1. Answer this question: What does this prompt want me to do?
 - a. What parts of the passage/text will help me to do it?
 - b. What literary elements do I need to consider?
2. Answer this question: **So what?**
 - a. What is the insight you gain from this text? What truths can you reveal about this passage to your reader?
3. Fill out the guide that follows.
4. Write the first draft from the notes on the guide. Fill in the missing links. Make the essay read fluently. Organize the information carefully. Just because a paragraph is planned as #1 below, it does not have to remain the first paragraph in the essay. Think about a logical strategy.
5. Review your thesis and make sure it is worded precisely. Does it say what you want it to say?
6. Review the six trait rubric and "grade" your essay.
7. Check to make sure you have used the literary present tense.
8. Make necessary revisions.
9. Hand in your best work, typed according to format specifications.

Introduction

A good introduction invites reading. It will give the author and the title of the work (even if you only have a passage) and lead the reader into a clear, concise thesis statement that will accurately reflect the given prompt. The introduction will also begin to address your "answer" to the "so what?" question.

Author: _____

Work: _____

Paraphrase the prompt.

Literary Elements to consider:

Working Thesis:

Body (develop 3-4 supporting paragraphs that remain focused on your thesis)

Paragraph #1

Topic Sentence (your claim):

Support: (from the text):

Explanatory sentence(s): (your "how" and/or "why")

Transitions that would help make logical connections:

Paragraph #2

Topic Sentence (your claim):

Support: (from the text):

Explanatory sentence(s): (your "how" and/or "why")

Transitions that would help make logical connections:

Paragraph #3

Topic Sentence (your claim):

Support: (from the text):

Explanatory sentence(s): (your "how" and/or "why")

Transitions that would help make logical connections:

Paragraph #4

Topic Sentence (your claim):

Support: (from the text):

Explanatory sentence(s): (your "how" and/or "why")

Transitions that would help make logical connections:

Conclusion

The purpose of the conclusion is to bring the essay to a satisfactory ending. You don't want to introduce new ideas in the conclusion, but you can extend the thinking into the realm of personal

reflection (your thinking about the “so what?” question). You can summarize the main points of the essay, also, but sometimes summary conclusions sound stilted and voiceless.

A good conclusion needs a good transition sentence.
