

# Writing an Analytical Paragraph using Quotes

Below is a paragraph template of how to incorporate and analyse texts using direct quotes. Example paragraph parts are in italics.

**State It** • Clearly state the topic of the paragraph in 1-2 sentences, for example:

*Our world is overly obsessed with the fictitious ideal of perfection.*

**Introduce It** • Clearly introduce textual evidence (quotes, passages) that will be used, for example:

*Nalo Hopkinson's short story, A Habit of Waste, comments on this over-obsession by depicting a near-future world where individuals can download perfection and wear it like a new pair of underwear.*

**Prove It** • Provide textual evidence to prove the topic of your paragraph.

fill in with textual evidence from the story

**Explain It** • Examine/analyze/explain how the evidence relates/proves the topic, for example:

*Although writing about a near-future dystopic society, Hopkinson is clearly criticizing the current trends in media and lifestyle fixations. The infomercials that target our desire for the perfect physique or face, the tabloid magazines that educate us about which celebrity looks perfect in a swimsuit, or the store window displays that seem to change fashion “necessity” almost over-night, all create a sense that perfection is within our grasp. If you have the money. Or the credit. Hopkinson is not comfortable with this promise of a fast-food make-over because it is not creating a confident culture, rather, it is magnifying fears and insecurities of the citizenry. Hopkinson is arguing that, ironically, the promise of perfection is creating greater imperfection.*

**Conclude It** • Conclude the paragraph by connecting the last thought to the first thought, for example:

*Perfection is simply “perfiction”.*

## SAMPLE PARAGRAPH

*Our world is overly obsessed with the fictitious ideal of perfection. Nalo Hopkinson's short story, A Habit of Waste, comments on this over-obsession by depicting a near-future world where individuals can download perfection and wear it like a new pair of underwear.*

*“... as though God had glued left-over parts together. On my pay, I'd had to save for five years before I could afford the switch. When I ordered the catalogue from MediPerfiction, I pored over it for a month, drooling at the different options: arrow-slim "Cindies" had long, long legs - ("supermodel quality"). "Indiras" came with creamy brown skin, falls of straight, dark hair and curvaceous bodies - ("exotic grace"). I finally chose one of the "Dianas" with their lithe muscles and small, firm breasts - ("boyish beauty"). They downloaded me into her as soon as I could get the time off work.”*

*Although writing about a near-future dystopic society (They downloaded me), Hopkinson is clearly criticizing the current trends in media and lifestyle fixations. The infomercials that target our desire for the perfect physique or face (ordered the catalogue from MediPerfiction), the tabloid magazines that educate us about which celebrity looks perfect in a swimsuit, or the store window displays that seem to change fashion “necessity” almost over-night, all create a sense that perfection is within our grasp. If you have the money. Or the credit. Hopkinson is not comfortable with this promise of a fast-food make-over because it is not creating a confident culture, rather, it is magnifying fears and insecurities of the citizenry. Hopkinson is arguing that, ironically, the promise of perfection is creating greater imperfection. Perfection is simply “perfiction”.*

## PREPARING FOR AN ANALYTIC ESSAY

1. Think critically about what you know - from personal experience -and what you've learned - from texts and discussions - about the topic and argument (point of analysis).
2. Make quick notes that detail all that you already know and have learned.
3. Collect proofs. Identify quotes (direct textual evidence) and passages that reflect the topic or argument. This may be a time-consuming task, but it is essential and extremely worthwhile.
4. The collection of quotes and passages may be large, but this allows you to pick and choose when you need to "PROVE IT".
5. Use your collection of quotes.

## CONSTRUCTION OF THE ANALYTIC BODY PARAGRAPH

*When you think body paragraph, think 'mini essay'.*

**STATE IT.:** **topic sentence** introduces the topic/argument of the paragraph and guides the direction of the paragraph's content. The topic sentence reflects 'proof' of the thesis. *What do you want to prove?*

**INTRODUCE IT:** Always written in 'your own words'. Introduces evidence or support that will be used to prove thesis and reflect topic of the paragraph. *What are some general ideas about the topic? What evidence/proof will be introduced?*

**PROVE IT.** Hard evidence from text, either in the form of a direct quotation from the text (word-for-word) or in the form of an example (in your own words, but still acknowledged). This component adds strength to your thesis.

**EXPLAIN IT.** Explain how &/or why your proof helps to support your thesis. This is an essential component as it shows how the evidence supports the theory/argument THE WAY YOU INTERPRET IT. Without it, the evidence may be interpreted differently. *What does the quote/proof mean? How does proof prove topic/argument?*

**CONCLUDING IT:** **concluding sentence** wraps up the ideas expressed in the paragraph. *What is a new and interesting way to reword the topic sentence?*

## PRACTICE ANALYTIC WRITING

1. Choose a quote from one of the texts analyzed and discussed in the course. Basically, use the quote to INSPIRE an analytic argument.

A Habit of Waste	Criminous Minds	Slmone
"as though God had glued left-over parts together "	<p>"<i>criminous literature</i> – a feeble attempt at gentility, like a Persian rug in a brothel."</p> <p>"Canadians had to wait until 1980 for the first modern, local crime novel, one that exemplified how, as the culture evolved, Canadians were defining themselves by what they were not."</p>	<p>"Our ability to manufacture fraud now exceeds our ability to detect it."</p> <p>"I am the death of real."</p>

2. Use the organizer, below, to construct a clear and organized analytic paragraph. Use the organizer as rough draft.

paragraph part	focus question	original writing
<p><b>STATE IT:</b> introduces the topic/argument of the paragraph and guides the direction of the paragraph's content. The topic sentence reflects 'proof' of the thesis.</p>	<p><i>What do you want to prove?</i></p>	<p>&lt;insert a powerful SIMPLE SENTENCE&gt;</p>
<p><b>INTRODUCE IT.</b> Always written in 'your own words'. Introduces evidence or support that will be used to prove thesis and reflect topic of the paragraph.</p>	<p><i>What are some general ideas about the topic? What evidence/proof will be introduced?</i></p>	<p>&lt;insert ONE or TWO SIMPLE SENTENCES&gt;</p>

paragraph part	focus question	original writing
<p><b>PROVE IT.</b> Hard evidence from text, either in the form of a direct quotation from the text (word-for-word) or in the form of an example (in your own words, but still acknowledged). This component adds strength to your thesis.</p>		
<p><b>EXPLAIN IT.</b> Explain how &amp;/or why your proof helps to support your thesis. This is an essential component as it shows how the evidence supports the theory/argument <b>THE WAY YOU INTERPRET IT.</b> Without it, the evidence may be interpreted differently.</p>	<p><i>What does the quote/proof mean? How does proof prove topic/argument?</i></p>	<p>&lt;insert a powerful SIMPLE sentence&gt;          &lt;insert a COMPOUND sentence&gt;          &lt;insert a BALANCED or ANTITHESIS sentence&gt;</p>
<p><b>CONCLUDING SENTENCE:</b> wraps up the ideas expressed in the paragraph.</p>	<p><i>What is a new and interesting way to reword the topic sentence?</i></p>	<p>&lt;insert an ANAPHORA sentence&gt;</p>

3. Revise and edit. Use the sentence patterns to strengthen the overall structure of the paragraph .
4. Word process. Use Courier or Courier New size 12 font. Double space.