

Taking Notes on Readings: Guidelines for Analyzing Essays

"An argued essay takes a position and supports it with evidence".

For every essay we read:

1. What position (thesis) does the author take? [----*who?*----- is arguing that ----*what?*----- ----*why?*-----.]
2. What are the most persuasive reasons/evidence the author gives? ...from which pages in the text?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
3. Why do I agree/disagree with the author?
4. What is my own position on this issue? Why do I support this opinion?
5. What is the opposing position?

For every essay we write:

1. What is my focused issue/problem?
2. What is my position/attitude/opinion/thesis concerning this issue?
3. What are my reasons to support this thesis?
 - 1st: First,
 - a. author's evidence and page number
 - b. my interpretation/commentary
 - 2nd: Additionally,
 - a. author's evidence and page number
 - b. my interpretation/commentary
 - 3rd: Finally, [*or* Most important,]
 - a. author's evidence and page number
 - b. my interpretation/commentary
4. What are some reasons an opponent would disagree with me?
 - 1st: Others might say that However,
 - a. author's evidence and page number
 - b. my interpretation/commentary
 - 2nd: Opponents could counter with However,
 - a. author's evidence and page number
 - b. my interpretation/commentary
5. Why is my position persuasive?
6. What metaphor can I use to compare this issue or my position to something tangible?