

Critique Template

Introduction

- Has the writer a thesis statement?
- Does the writer provide an adequate overview of the field?
- Are unfamiliar words defined? (perhaps in medial modifier form—see below)

Body

- Does each paragraph have an obvious topic?
- Are the various points arranged in a logical order?
- Does one point lead naturally into another (are sophisticated transitions provided?)
- Is any material quoted that should be paraphrased?
- Are quotes explained or commented on, or just presented as self-evident?
- Are there points that need further development or elaboration?
- Are there points that are self-evident (or not terribly significant)?

Conclusion

- Does the writer pull together the various points into an information-packed, paragraph?
- Does the conclusion relate to the thesis?

Style

Diction (word choice)

- Circle and count the number of "to be" verbs (is, am, was, were, are)
- Could any sentences containing "to be" verbs be rewritten using the initial, medial, or final modifier scheme below?
- Is word choice appropriate or too casual?
- Box in words you would change. Write the suggestion above.
- Are more specific or general words used?
- Are there unnecessary words? Omit them.

Syntax (sentence structure)

- Are the sentence beginnings varied? Circle the first word(s) of each sentence. Does the same word occur several times ("The")?
- Does each sentence begin with the same part of speech?
- Are the sentences varied in length?

Editing

- Use computer "Tools" (spell and grammar check)
- Punctuation (note that comma splice errors are common)
- Usage (singular noun, plural pronoun--antecedent disagreement)

Modifiers (see syntax section)

Initial modifiers

Cautiously tiptoeing across the floor, Susan practiced what she would say to Mr. Gruenschnott.

Providing a stable economy for all of Europe, Great Britain now leads the way in innovative financial mergers.

Medial modifiers

Mr. Jones, a cantankerous old butcher, chased the kids out of his shop.

William Perry's moral development theory, consisting of four distinct stages, lacks sufficient