



Academic Research and Writing
Critique Paper
Dr. Sue Short

Standard instructions: The paper must be word processed (or typed), have a standard 12 point font and one inch margins, and be stapled together. The length of the paper is your decision; about 5 pages will probably be typical

Draft is due: 3.6.07

Workshop: 3.6.07

Final Paper Due: 3.13.07

The Critique Paper will be based on a **scholarly article** that explains and analyzes some aspect of a visual artist's style, message, or technique. You may use the same article you wrote about for the Summary/Description paper, or may choose a different article. If your first article lacked analytical content, you would be well advised to choose an article that provides a better base for the critique.

You will formulate a **reasoned critique** of the article, based on your current knowledge and experience relating to the topic. We will discuss many potential points for critique in class; some that you might incorporate would be:

- Evaluation of the author's qualifications, through education and experience, to make authoritative claims on the topic,
- Indications that the author's bias or prejudice interferes with his or her objectivity in addressing the issues and the way the author handles these factors,
- The adequacy of the evidence presented to support the author's claims,
- The clarity and logic of the author's reasoning,
- Any internal contradictions in reasoning that appear in the article, and
- The clarity in the manner in which the article is written for an educated audience, and the coherence of expression.
- The reasonableness of the author's conclusions based on the evidence and reasoning of the article. Do the author's points make sense?

You must generate a thesis statement of your own, but a blunt "yes" or "no" conclusion on the issues is not required, and is too simplistic for the kind of response that is envisioned here. The Critique paper should identify the **strengths** and **weaknesses** in the reasoning of the author and reflect your identification of the central points. Assume that your audience is college-educated, but not necessarily expert in the subject matter. Assume that your readers have not previously read the material to which you are responding. Avoid a "table of contents" approach, in which you merely recite what is included in the article. You need to dig beneath the surface and respond to the ideas and content, not merely report what the article covers.

As you write and revise the Critique papers, pay special attention to the following issues:

Thesis:

The paper must be structured around a central thesis statement. A thesis is a statement of the topic and a comment about the topic. The Critique will not necessarily either fully support or fully refute the argument or position taken in the article, but must have a thesis that comments on the article in some manner.

Summary:

To introduce the critique, you will need to provide a coherent summary of the main points of the article. The summary identifies the points that will be critical in your critique and organizes the ideas for the reader.

Critique:

Raise a number of valid critique issues as you discuss the article.

Analysis:

Analyze the reasoning and supporting evidence that the author provides for the main points in his/her article. Is the reasoning valid? Is the supporting evidence relevant and sufficient

Organization:

Organize the presentation clearly so that the reader knows when you are summarizing the author's position and when you are stating your own analysis of the issues. Paragraph structure and careful use of topic sentences in each paragraph are important tools in keeping the discussion clear and on track.