Writing workshop notes

Critical Review article – evaluation of a single article – evaluates the argument and evidence presented.

Outline for the paper.

Intro Para 1: Subject – the article you read and the author’s thesis/argument

Last sentence (1-2 sentences) – your thesis – what you want to say about this article.

Example 1 “I find Alderman’s argument convincing because …” Rather than using I, see example thesis statement below and on the follow page.

Alderman convincingly demonstrates that MLK Street tend to be located in neighborhoods with higher percentages of low income and African American residents. He does this by spatially examining the Census data in neighborhoods and cities in conjunction with the location of streets named for MLK.

First paragraph could also end with … “The paper concludes with some suggestions for improving the research in the areas of X and X.”

Para 2: More background if needed – example of cultural geog, discusses X methods used.

Para 3: Evidence from article - agree with – why?

May have multiple paragraphs organized around themes.

Para 4: Evidence from article – disagree with –why?

May have multiple paragraphs organized around themes.

Para 5: Areas for improvement

Para 6: conclusion –restates your position

Reading: p 84-89

Argumentative thesis

Tips for strengthening thesis – see box page 89

Step 1: Re-read your paper. Outline your paper by writing in the margins – which paragraph contains each component of the outline above. Write them in the margins.

Step 2: Read the pages on the thesis.

Blue highlighting indicates sentence that I thought could be your thesis. If there are multiple ones, think about which one states what you want to say about the article. Try to combine them into one strong thesis statement.

Work on writing and strengthening your thesis statement by answering Why? How? And Under what circumstances? The article is convincing because …

Step 3: Exchange papers with someone. Re-read the paper ignoring my comments. Read solely for grammar, looking specifically at yellow highlighting as examples of writing, grammar and punctuation.

Use the writing handbooks for then/than effect/affect their/there possessives. See sheet on common grammar issues.

Good thesis statements:

Although the authors found evidence that points to women coping with the outdoors due to recreating at the urban parks, their data contains flaws. The authors’ argument does not seem convincing because of the disparity of race that their data contains, education differences in the women who were surveyed and interviewed, and the sample size not including locals.

By spatially associating the South Central farmers to the Shadow Hills homeowners, the author is able to provide ample examples of social stratification in the two communities and how the concept of race plays a big role in the social and locational structures of people in communities and organizations, successfully supporting her thesis on relational racialization.

Collins adequately argues and support his assertion that food practices are utilized by migrants to create a sense of familiarity in their new homes.

by demonstrating ...

Example of grammar issues

"Which makes it a busy spot around lunchtime." - sentence fragment.

"It's busy enough to people watch, and also busy enough to not know anyone; which makes it socially acceptable to sit alone and read the paper if you wish." -incorrect use of the semicolon; it should be a comma , because the part after the ; is a sentence fragment, not a complete sentence.

People are hanging out in groups more now then in the past – then should be than, than is used for comparison; then relates to time, what came after.