

P1 Checklist

Passage Selection

- Has the writer selected a passage or pattern that lends itself to different interpretations?
- If the writer has selected a single passage, has he/she quoted the passage in a way (or place) that enables the reader to follow his/her interpretation?
- If the writer has selected a pattern throughout several passages, has he/she fully described that pattern and shown sufficient evidence that it exists? Is there sufficient but not excessive context around each individual occurrence?
- Does the writer provide sufficient description of the text's larger project, and explain the position of the passage(s) in relation to that project?

Close Reading

- Does the writer engage with the specific language and/or form of the passage(s)?
- Does he/she pay close attention to things like words, images, rhetorical devices, argument progression, etc?
- Do the close readings connect the language of the essay to the meaning of the essay?
- Do the writer's close readings build towards specific claims rather than examining various, unconnected aspects of the passage?
- Do the close readings complicate and develop the claims?

Argument

- Does the writer have a single overarching claim (thesis)?
- Is the claim analytical rather than evaluative? That is, does the claim develop a new idea *about* the text, rather than proving or disproving it?
- Is the claim original? That is, does the writer read the text in a way that surprises you?
- By the end of the paper, has the claim been reiterated enough for you to fully understand it?
- Has the writer taken important counter-arguments into account?

Structure

- Does the current progression of the essay make sense to you?
- Does the writer state his/her main claim (thesis) in the beginning of the essay? If so, do the body paragraphs clearly signal that they are building towards that claim?
- Does the writer instead state his/her main claim (thesis) at the end of essay? If so, do the body paragraphs guide the reader logically to that claim?
- Does each paragraph have a specific purpose? Is that purpose signaled early on in the paragraph?

- Are paragraphs organized analytically? That is, are they organized around claims?
- Are transitions between paragraphs clear?
- Are transitions between sentences clear?

Evidence

- Does the writer provide ample evidence (textual support) to prove him/her claim?
- Does the writer use quotations sufficiently (neither too heavily, nor too scarcely)?
- Does the writer engage with every quotation?

Motive

- Does the writer identify a motive for his/her essay in the introduction? That is, does he/she make it clear why the reader should keep reading the essay?
- Is the motive both believable and persuasive?

Implications

- Does the writer move beyond his/her main claim (thesis) in the conclusion to discuss the larger implications of that claim?
- Are those implications believable? Are they interesting, exciting, or surprising? Do they leave you with a new appreciation of the writer's argument?