

PEEL Paragraph Guide

The Seduction of Certainty

What is PEEL?

PEEL stands for **Point**, **Evidence**, **Explanation**, and **Link**. It's a structure for building analytical arguments that are clear and convincing.

When you analyse Mishima using Eco's framework, you're making arguments: "Mishima demonstrates Eco's feature of X because..." PEEL helps you build those arguments so they actually convince.

P: Point

The Point is your main argument in one clear sentence. It tells the reader what you're going to prove.

For this assignment: Your Point names an Eco feature and makes a claim about how it appears in Mishima.

Tips for a strong Point:

1. Be specific. Not "Mishima shows fascism" but "Mishima demonstrates Eco's cult of action for action's sake."
2. One feature per paragraph. Don't try to cover three things at once.
3. Make a claim, not just an observation. "Mishima valued action" is an observation. "Mishima's glorification of action over thought reveals Eco's cult of action" is a claim.

E: Evidence

Evidence supports your Point with specific proof: quotes, examples, facts.

For this assignment: Your Evidence comes from Mishima's own writing. Quote him directly.

Tips for strong Evidence:

1. Use Mishima's words, not summaries. "Mishima wrote about bodies" is weak. Quoting his actual language is strong.
2. Choose quotes that do real analytical lifting. The best quotes are ones that need explanation, not ones that are obvious.
3. Introduce quotes smoothly. "Mishima writes..." or "In Sun and Steel, Mishima claims..."

Ex: Explanation

The Explanation is where your thinking happens. It connects Evidence to Point and answers: "So what?"

Explanation has two jobs:

- **Job 1:** Show HOW the evidence proves your point.
- **Job 2:** Explain WHY this matters for understanding fascism.

For this assignment: Explain what Mishima's words reveal about how fascism functions.

Tips for strong Explanation:

1. Don't just restate the quote. Add depth. What does the language reveal?
2. Ask yourself: "Why does this quote prove my Point? What's the connection?"
3. Connect to fascism's logic. Don't just analyse Mishima; show what he reveals about how fascism works.

L: Link

The Link ties your paragraph together and transitions to what comes next.

For this assignment: Your Link might connect to another Eco feature, to the paradox, or to fascism's broader logic.

Tips for strong Links:

1. Move forward, don't just repeat. A Link sets up your next point; it doesn't restate the current one.
2. Show how features connect. "This cult of action connects to Eco's contempt for intellectual life..."
3. Use transitions: "This connects to...", "Building on this...", "This same logic appears in..."

EXAMPLE PARAGRAPH

Weak Example

Trump shows fascism. He says bad things about immigrants a lot. He also talks about making America great again. Eco says fascists don't like difference and want tradition. Trump is like that too. This shows he is a fascist.

What's wrong:

- Point is vague ("shows fascism" how?)
- Evidence is summary, not quotes ("says bad things" isn't specific)
- Explanation is missing (no "so what?")
- Link just restates the obvious ("This shows he is a fascist")

Strong Example

Trump's immigration rhetoric demonstrates Eco's "fear of difference," where the nation is threatened by outsiders who contaminate its essential character. In a 2023 campaign speech, Trump declared that immigrants are "poisoning the blood of our country." This language frames the nation as a body and immigrants as a disease: not people making choices, but toxins infecting something pure. The metaphor does specific political work. If immigration is poisoning, then stopping it isn't just policy preference but medical emergency. You don't debate with a poison; you eliminate it. This reveals how fear of difference functions in fascist thought: it transforms political questions into existential threats, making compromise seem like suicide. The blood metaphor also connects to Eco's observation that fascism is obsessed with plot: if the blood is being poisoned, someone must be doing the poisoning deliberately.

What's strong:

- **Point:** Names specific Eco feature + makes a claim about what it means
- **Evidence:** Direct quote, introduced with context
- **Explanation:** Analyses the metaphor, explains why it matters, connects to fascism's logic
- **Link:** Connects to another Eco feature (obsession with plot), moves argument forward

Quick Reference: PEEL for Eco Analysis

Point	Name the Eco feature + make a claim about your subject
Evidence	Quote directly from primary sources
Explanation	How does the quote prove your Point? Why does this matter for understanding fascism?
Link	Connect to another feature, a paradox, or fascism's broader logic

Self-Check Before Submitting

4. Is my Point clear and specific? Does it name an Eco feature?
5. Does my Evidence quote Mishima directly?
6. Does my Explanation connect Evidence to Point AND explain why it matters?
7. Does my Link move forward (not just repeat)?