

2 ways to organize your style analysis

Keep in mind that your style analysis should cover the content of the entire essay and that each paragraph should build on the one before it.

First way: Use the idea of problem, solution, why

Para 1: In Mannes' essay, "How Do You Know It's Good" she uses parallel structure to emphasize the fact that the words "good" and "bad" have come to lack all meaning for both the audience and the critics.

- "It pleases those resentful of disciplines, it flatters the empty-minded by calling them open-minded, it comforts the confused." (4)

- "What is new must be good; what is old is probably bad." (5)

Para 2: Mannes uses question clusters to guide the reader in applying the standards that she proposes the audience apply in order to reinstate the idea of quality.

- association "What does an artist say that is timeless?.." (6)

- purpose "What is this painter trying to say when he slashes a broad band of black across a white canvas...? Is it a statement of violence?..." (6)

Para 3: Mannes uses both positive connotation to emphasize to the reader the benefits of developing standards and using them to judge art in order to improve its quality.

- When speaking of the arts, Mannes says, "A climate of appreciation is essential to its flowering" (5)

- "Yet standards there are, timeless as the universe itself...elusive but immutable realm of truth" (7)

Benefits to this style – straightforward to organize – each paragraph builds on the next – by its nature covers the content of the whole essay

Drawbacks – more simplistic critical thinking/analysis – can feel cookie cutter

Second way: Discover a common use for many rhetorical devices in terms of tone or theme and develop a mini-thesis

Thesis: In Mannes' essay "How Do You Know Its Good" she intentionally uses parallelism, pronoun variety and question clusters to engage the audience and challenge them to think critically about art and force them to not just blindly adopt her ideas but to develop their own standards with which to judge arts.

Para 1: In Mannes uses parallel structure to emphasize the necessity of judging art in order to improve its quality by using statements that provide two opposites which must be judged. She leaves the audience no grey area – they must decide.

-“good or bad, talented or untalented, successes or failures.” (4)

-“between freedom and sloppiness, between serious experimentation and ego therapy, between slickness and skill.” (5)

Para 2: As well as forcing the audience to judge through parallel structure, Mannes uses question clusters to guide the reader in using critical thinking to develop and apply standards to judge the quality of art.

-general “What are these standards?...” (6)

-purpose “What is this painter trying to say when he slashes a broad band of black across a white canvas...? Is it a statement of violence?...” (6)

Para 3: In her conclusion, Mannes uses direct address to challenge the reader to take action and use their own critical thinking faculties to improve the quality art.

-“And this is a decision which only you, on the basis of instinct, experience and association, can make for yourself.” (7)

- “Keep [your standards] with you in the forests of bewilderment. And never be afraid to speak up” (7)

Benefits to this style – more sophisticated critical thinking – focus on one specific element of tone/style (more tightly knit)

Drawbacks to this style – need a strong main point which can be hard to come up with – harder to ensure that it covers content

Transitions – Some suggestions

Concluding sentence of first body paragraph

Atwood's sarcasm aimed directly at the escapism of Canadian audiences and the cowardice of critics when confronted with art with "a social message" emphasizes the problem that she wants to correct and points to her solution – Canadians need to use their position of luxury, their freedom of speech, to speak out against injustice, not hide from it.

Topic sentence for second body paragraph

After expressing her disapproval of escapism, Atwood uses historical and literary allusions to warn her reader that human rights abuses, both in Canada and abroad, can and will happen if artists do not speak out.

After stating the problem with escapism, Atwood emphasizes **why** change is important by using allusions, both historical and literary, to warn her audience of the consequences of not speaking out. Atwood first alludes to past human rights abuses that have happened here in Canada including the Japanese internment camps in World War II and the ongoing treatment of Native peoples: " ". By referring to past examples, Atwood warns that Canada is not exempt from social injustice. It has happened in Canada and if Canadians continue to use art to escape reality, it can happen again. **Her next allusion to Orwell's 1984 further emphasizes her warning by citing an extreme example of a totalitarian regime** that oppresses not only people but where people no longer have the ability to speak out at all. : " " This is a reference to his famous novel in which Orwell depicts a ruthless government which strictly controls its citizens through propaganda and torture. In order to prevent rebellion the government also strictly controls language by creating the language of Newspeak which has a very limited number of words, leaving citizens unable even to express concepts like "freedom". This extreme example is meant to shock the Canadian reader out of his/her complacent avoidance of reality and motivate him/her to speak out against social injustice.

In her essay "Amnesty International: An Address" Margaret Atwood argues that as opposed to using literature as an escape, Canadians must embrace art with political content and encourage authors to use our relative freedom of speech to reveal social injustice wherever it occurs or because of our ignorance Canadians are in danger of being exploited by any power hungry agency. Atwood uses sarcasm to criticize and mock both the Canadian public and art critics who only acknowledge superficial art. She uses parallel structure to encourage Canadians to use their voice to speak out against abuses of power. Finally, she uses allusions to warn her audience that if Canadians do not speak out, we will become victims of injustice ourselves.

Atwood uses sarcasm to mock the escapist attitude that is prevalent among Canadian readers and critics. She first levels her sarcasm at the readers by saying that Canadians prefer art to be "a Disneyland of the soul, containing Romanceland, Spyland, Pornoland, and all the other escapelands which are so much more agreeable than the complex truth." (101) By creating fictional lands and emphasizing their superficial comfort, Atwood makes Canadians seem like children who are unable and unwilling to face reality. She shocks her readers into realizing that they are part of the problem and that ignoring reality is a dangerous Atwood then turns her critical gaze on the critics who "sneer at anything they consider" heavy social commentary" or – a worse word – a "message"" (102). By emphasizing the word "message" as if it is a terrible word. She is showing that critics are avoiding works that deal with political realities and at the same time mocking their superficial attitude towards art. Atwood's sarcasm aimed directly at the escapism of Canadian audiences and the cowardice of critics when confronted with art with "a social message" emphasizes the problem that she wants to correct and points to her solution – Canadians need to use their position of luxury, their freedom of speech, to speak out against injustice, not hide from it.

Atwood uses parallel structure to encourage audiences and writers to use their freedom of speech to fight abuses of power worldwide.

Topic sentence for third body paragraph

Atwood emphasizes **why** change is important by using allusions, both historical and literary, to warn her audience of the consequences of not speaking out. Atwood first alludes to past human rights abuses that have happened here in Canada including the Japanese internment camps in World War II and the ongoing treatment of Native peoples: " ". By referring to past examples, Atwood warns that Canada is not exempt from social injustice. It has happened in Canada and if Canadians continue to use art to escape reality, it can happen again. **Her next allusion to Orwell's 1984 further emphasizes her warning by citing an extreme example of a totalitarian regime** that oppresses not only people but where people no longer have the ability to speak out at all. : " " This is a reference to his famous novel in which Orwell depicts a ruthless government which strictly controls its citizens through propaganda and torture. In order to prevent rebellion the government also strictly controls language by creating the language of Newspeak which has a very limited number of words, leaving citizens unable even to express concepts like "freedom". This extreme example is meant to shock the Canadian reader out of his/her complacent avoidance of reality and motivate him/her to speak out against social injustice.

Style Analysis Brainstorm

1. Go through King's essay individually or in groups and find all the different examples of rhetorical devices that you can. (*I suggest pencil crayons and colour coding i.e. red=humour, green = parallel structure, pink = similes and metaphors, ...*)
2. Divide the essay into either problem/solution/why or into 4-5 sections based on content. Summarize the main point of each section and decide which rhetorical devices are used most commonly in that section to support that main point.
3. Determine the thesis of the essay and write it out.