

When writing an interpretive essay, you are really just taking a closer look at a work and using reasons to back up how you feel about it. There's no "right or wrong" answer - it's about being able to explain your thoughts about the piece and why you think that.

|  |
| --- |
| Books, Songs, Movies, or Art I Could Interpret… |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |

GOALS:

1. **Choose** a book, song, movie, or piece of art…
2. Be able to **describe** (and summarize) your choice (or a part of the text) in your own words.
3. Come up with a **thesis** to sum up piece and how you feel about it in a sentence or two.
4. Outline your **supporting reasons** (at least 3) for your opinion.
5. **Write** the rest of your essay (usually 5 paragraphs) and include details and examples.
6. **Revise** & **edit**!

For example…

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Work to be Analyzed: | Thesis: | Reasons: |
| Holes by Louis Sachar | Having won the hearts of many across the globe, Louis Sachar’s Holes may be counted as one of the best books of all time. | I like Holes because…   * The setting is in a place unfamiliar to most people. It’s unique. * The author jumps back and forth from the past to the present and ties most of the main characters together (flashbacks). * The main character threads humor throughout the story. |
| Roar by Katy Perry | “Roar” by Katy Perry is an inspiration because it challenges listeners in a practical way to stand up for their beliefs. | I like “Roar” because…   * The artist uses personal examples that are easily relatable. (I get what she means!)   + Use EXAMPLES! * The lyrics challenge listeners to stand up and voice their beliefs.   + “I stood for nothing so I fell for everything…” * Parts of the song make it seem that the artist is trying to get the attention of others. For example, “you held me down, but I got up – HEY!” It makes her message seem that much more important. |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Work to be Analyzed: | Thesis: | Reasons: |
|  |  |  |

After coming up with your topic choice, thesis, and supporting reasons (and examples), you can start outlining your essay.

Title of Essay: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* Introduction
  + Thesis: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* (\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_) Reason 1
  + Examples
  + Details
  + Quotations
* (\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)Reason 2
  + Examples
  + Details
  + Quotations
* (\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)Reason 3
  + Examples
  + Details
  + Quotations
* Conclusion
  + Thesis: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Tips:

* Your thesis should be stated in a different way in both the introduction and conclusion. Figure out how to communicate the same idea with a different sentence.
* Try to get your outline as detailed as possible so when you’re ready to write, it’s just a matter of putting everything together.
* Ask a neighbor to look over your outline before you start writing. Make sure your ideas are well-thought-out!

Interpretive Writing Rubric

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **4** | **3** | **2** | **1** |
| ***Goal/Thesis*** | Strongly and clearly states a personal opinion. Clearly identifies the issue. | Clearly states a personal opinion. Some references to the issue. | Personal opinion is not clearly stated. Little or no references to the issue. | Personal opinion is not easily understood. Has no reference to the issue. |
| ***Reasons and Support*** | Three or more excellent points are made with strong support. It is evident that the writer put much thought and research into this assignment. | Three or more points are made with support, but the arguments are somewhat weak in places. The writer doesn’t persuade completely. | Two points made; shows some preparation, but weak arguments. | Preparation is weak; arguments are weak or missing; and less than three points are made. |
| ***Conclusion*** | Summarizes the personal opinion in a strong concluding statement. | Summarizes personal opinion in a concluding statement. | Concluding statement is a weak summary of personal opinion. | Concluding statement makes no references to personal opinion. |
| ***Word Choice/Tone*** | Choice of words that are clear, descriptive, and accurate. Maintains consistent persuasive tone throughout essay. | Words are clear and descriptive. Demonstrates a persuasive tone in parts of the essay. | Choice of some words that are clear and descriptive. Lacks consistent persuasive tone. | Language and tone of essay is unclear and lacks description. |
| ***Mechanics and Grammar*** | Contains few – if any – punctuation, spelling, and grammatical errors. | Contains several errors in punctuation, spelling, or grammar that do not interfere with meaning. | Contains many punctuation, spelling, and/or grammatical errors that interfere with meaning. | Contains many punctuation, spelling, and/or grammatical errors that make the piece illegible (unreadable). |
| ***Format*** | Essay is typed in Times New Roman, size 12-14. Double-spaced. | Essay lacks one of the formatting requirements. | Essay is missing more than one of the formatting requirements. | Essay is missing all or almost all of the formatting requirements. |

Comments:

\*Adapted from Read Write Think (2005). NCTE/IRA. Found at: http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson\_images/lesson875/PersuasiveLetterRubric.pdf/