

COMPOSING TEXTUAL ANALYSES

An analysis is an investigation of something. A textual analysis (or text analysis) is an investigation of the surface features of a text.

Unlike a rhetorical analysis (which looks much more specifically at context, rhetorical techniques, and other features), a text analysis simply looks at features of the text which are readily apparent in the content of the text, such as the introduction, the body material, and the conclusion.

The text analysis looks specifically at traits of the text such as paragraph structures, organization of the text, and points of support.

A typical Textual Analysis may investigate (any of the following or all of the following):

- +Purpose/Intent of the text
- +Thesis or Main Idea or Purpose of the text
- +Introductory Strategies used by the text
 - Opening questions
 - Creating a visual image
 - Using an astonishing fact/statistic
 - Defining Something
 - Discussing History
 - Comparing one thing to another
 - Short Narrative (Analogy or Personal)
 - A powerful quote
 - Character Introduction
 - Setting Description
 - Problem Description
- +Closing Strategies used by the text
 - Recapitulation (repeating the Introduction or contents of the text)
 - Discussion (of Significance of Findings)
 - Solution or Recommendation
 - A Call to Action
 - A Call for Further Research
 - Story Resolution (e.g., Marriage, Death of the Antagonist/Protagonist, etc.)
 - No Resolution
 - Closing Questions
- +Paragraph/Whole Document Type/Genre (whether it is):
 - An Essay,
 - An Article,
 - A Scientific Exposition,
 - Etc.
- +Paragraph/Whole Document Tone
 - Informal
 - Formal
- +Paragraph/Whole Document Tone
 - Argumentative,
 - Informative,

- Descriptive (subjective or objective),
- Narrative,
- Reflective,
- Etc.
- +Paragraph/Whole Document Orientation
 - Chronological
 - General to Specific
 - Specific to General
 - Question and Answer
 - Climatic
 - Spatial
 - Block (as in Business, Technical, Professional)
- +Paragraph/Whole Document Organization
 - Problem-Solution
 - Cause-Effect-Based
 - Narrative (story-like or perspective-oriented)
 - Description-Based
 - Comparison/Contrast
 - Process-Based
 - Definition-Based
 - Classification/Division-Based
 - Analogy-Based
- +Paragraph/Whole Document Tense
 - Past
 - Present
 - Future
- +Paragraph/Whole Document Mood
 - Happy
 - Sad
 - Serious
 - Depressing
 - Anxious
- +Paragraph/Whole Document Voice
 - First-Person
 - Second-Person
 - Mixed
- +Points of Support/Content
 - Quotes
 - Summaries
 - Paraphrases
 - Data
 - Statistics
 - Testimony/Testimonials
 - Other types of Support

Textual Analyses use quotes from the text to present "textual evidence" of your findings. For example, if you state, the author has an "argumentative tone" then be prepared to present excerpts of the audience in order to define the thesis and points of support. Likewise, if you mention that the document is primarily in the first person, then be sure to present how. Does the author use "I"? Include some excerpts from the text.