

## **Essay Glossary of Terms**

(Terms are listed in the order in which they appear in an essay.)

### **Introduction**

- **ICD (Interest Creating Device):** This is the hook or attention grabber that opens your essay. It will be the first sentence(s) in your introduction. It should be interesting and demonstrate flair. (For strategies, see ICD strategies handout posted under intro workshop on website.)
- **Context/Background:** Section where you provide any information that will help your readers gain a better understanding of your essay topic. Mention text titles and authors, relevant issues, key terms and definitions, and any other background information that will set the stage for your essay and plug readers in to your topic.
- **Subclaims:** This is where you initially introduce your topic sentences/subclaims that support your thesis. (Reminder: your topic sentences/subclaims are the points that begin each body paragraph. In this section, you may state them as they will appear in your body paragraphs.)
- **Thesis:** This is the main argument or point of your essay. What are you setting out to prove or discuss? (Should be limited to one sentence for our class purposes.)

### **Body Paragraphs**

- **Topic Sentence/Subclaim:** Topic sentences/subclaims are the main supporting points of your thesis. They will begin each body paragraph and set the focus for the paragraph. (Side note: we tend to use the term “topic sentence” for informational essays and “subclaims” for argumentative essays. In both cases, they support your thesis and set the focus for your body paragraphs.)

Example:

- Thesis: Southern California is a great place to live.
  - Topic Sentence/Subclaim: California has excellent weather year round.
  - Topic Sentence/Subclaim: California offers many different career and educational opportunities.
  - Topic Sentence/Subclaim: California is a hub for entertainment.

- **Quote Context:** Provided before the quote. Used to prepare the reader to better understand the quote. May answer some of the following questions: Who? What? When? Where? How? Why?

Example:

- In continuing their conversation, Rainsford inquires into what the general does if another man refuses to be hunted. Zaroff responds, “I give him his option of course” (27).<sup>1</sup>

- **Quote Integration:** Each quote must never be plopped or dropped on a page. It must always exist within a framework of your own words. It must be integrated or incorporated into a larger sentence. (For integration methods, see quote integration workshop on website.)

Example

- Golding shows that it might have been unintentional violence when Ralph “uneasily” states, “That was a good game [...] Just a game” (Golding 115).

- **Quote (Evidence):** You will use quotes to demonstrate your point; they are used as evidence to prove your subclaims and thesis true. Often will be seen in the form of quotes, but they can also be paraphrases or other details that help prove your main points.
- **Parenthetical Citation:** The citation used after a quote to provide its source. MLA dictates different citation formats based on source. For all novels and books, parenthetical citations will include author's last name and page number. The period is always placed at the end, outside the closing parenthesis.

Example

- Secondly, the band of boys frightfully look for the beast throughout the island: "They set off again, the hunters bunched a little; by fear of the mentioned beast" (Golding 112).

- **Analysis/Explanation:** Don't assume that simply providing a quote will suffice in proving your point. You must always explain and expand on your quotes. Why does the quote matter? What does it reveal? How does it prove your point? Examine, evaluate, dissect, interpret, read between the lines, connect with something else.

Example

- When Lady Macbeth kills herself, Macbeth states, "Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage and then is heard no more" (V.V.19-28). The metaphors Shakespeare uses, comparing life to a "walking shadow" and man to "a poor player" emphasize the fleeting nature of life. Shadows are gone as soon as they appear, and actors only assume their character: the people they represent have no true meaning. Here, Macbeth realizes that his fleeting existence, from the moment he decided to kill King Duncan to the moment when his beloved wife killed herself, has been destroyed by his reckless ambition. If Macbeth had been content with his previous title, which was prestigious enough, a wealth of tragedy would have been avoided.<sup>2</sup>

## Conclusion

- **Recap:** Very briefly reiterate your thesis and leading ideas.
- **Extending Ideas:** Look at the big picture (or the smaller picture). What does all this mean? How can you connect your findings to larger issues? Why does this all matter? Ask yourself, "So what?" Provide a "so what."
- **Memorable Statement:** Your last sentence should finish your essay with punch and power. It should solicit an imaginary applause from your reader. How will you complete your essay and leave your readers with a memorable closing line?