



Hingham High School 's Survival Guide to Writing

Grade 12

Don't Lose This It's Important!
Put it Someplace Safe!

You may still be using it even after high school!

Editing for Errors

VT=Verb Tense

P=Punctuation Error

SP= Spelling error

SVA=Subject Verb Agreement-the subject in the sentence does not agree with the verb

PAA=Pronoun Antecedent Agreement-the pronoun used does not agree with the antecedent it refers to

PV=Passive Voice-use active voice in the sentence by making the agent of the action the subject of the sentence

// SS= Parallel Structure/Sentence Structure-sentence is not structured in a balanced way

COH/AWK= Coherence/Awkward (sometimes I will write "huh?" if I cannot understand your point)

Adj/Adv=Adjective are not adverbs-you are confusing the two

RO=Run On sentence

CS=Comma Splice (which is a form of a Run on Sentence)

FRAG!=sentence fragment

D or WC=Diction (wrong word choice)

Syn=Syntax-the order of the words in the sentence is incorrect

Back to School Refresher

Class Notes

Term	Definition	Function	Problems Created
Background/Anecdotal opening(hook)	A sentence that "hooks" the reader's attention and broadly opens the paper	Reader interest	Boring or unoriginal opener
CI	Complete identification-the title and author of the work	To clarify for the reader who and what is being discussed	Creates confusion
MI	Main Idea-what the paper is about	Give direction and a line of development to the paper	Lacks focus-gets off topic easily
Thesis Statement	A clarifying statement that states the theory or belief that writer will prove	Clearly tells reader what the paper will be about	Creates confusion
DI	Developing Idea-a smaller part of the MI	It helps the writer tackle the MI in a smaller, more organized, more detailed way	Paper becomes too broad or too unorganized
DP	Developing paragraph	A paragraph that is devoted to proving a specific DI	Paper becomes too broad or too unorganized
TS	Topic Sentence- A statement that clearly states the topic of a specific paragraph	Gives the writer focus and the reader clarity of the paragraph's content	Creates disorganization or confusion
LI in a DP	A lead-in in a developing paragraph-this eases the reader into a detail and gives background on it.	Creates flow and offers important information	Interrupts flow, creates choppy and confusion
DD	Developmental Detail-a offering of evidence or proof of the MI/DI	Evidence of your topic helps to prove your MI	Paper lacks content- You don't prove your MI
DQ	Direct Quotation- words taken directly from another text	Offers specific evidence from a specific text that proved your MI	Papers lacks content -you don't prove your MI

A/I	Analysis and Interpretation- connects the specific DD/DQ to your specific MI.	Helps to prove the argument of your paper	Generates a superficial summary or overview of topic
CS	Closing sentence- restates the MI and DIS of the paper	Lets the reader know your paper is coming to a close- summarizes and recaps the MI	Paper ends abruptly without warning- paper feels unfinished and unpolished
RFS	Reach for Significance-when the writer connect the MI to something beyond the work itself	Offers the writer's own insight and opinion-highlights the critical thinking and ability of the writer	Paper is boring and lacks style. Papers ends with dud

Common Analysis Pitfalls in Thesis Paragraph Writing

(in order of Best-Worst)

The Hypothetical-Rather than analyze how and why the DD connects to the MI, the writer argues what could have happened if something else occurred in the plot rather than analyzing what did happen. This paragraph at least offers an interpretive argument, but it is still not directly connecting the DDs given, which is odd.

The Repeat Offender-The writer repeats the example after the DD. Sometimes writers say “In other words...”. Analysis is about interpreting the example as it connects to the MI. It is not about paraphrasing the example. Thus, this paragraph never offers any insight about the MI’s relevance.

The Vague Page: General, superficial analysis that could fit after any DD. It offers no specific insight to the DD. As a result, this paragraph becomes just generalized information rather than an insightful argument.

The Plot Summary-Usually a long reiteration of the book's plot or a book report. The writer often tells the reader what happens next in the plot after each DD rather than analyzing a DD’s specific relevance to the MI. This paragraph never proves the MI at all.

The Analysis Skipper-jumps from the DD to the LI of the next example. Since it just skips right over the analysis, all this paragraph does is give examples-it proves nothing.

The Scatterbrain-Offers wrong, confused, misdirected information to create a desperate, muddled mess. This paragraph does not prove an argument either because the writer did not understand the question or he/she lacks knowledge of the text.

Pitfall #--

The memoir The Glass Castle by Jeanette Walls is about a woman who endures many hardships in her life. In the beginning of the book, Jeannette burns herself while trying to cook hot dogs. At the time she is only three, but because her parents are so selfish and neglectful, she must cook for herself if she wants to eat. As a result, Jeannette is badly burned. After her stay in the hospital, her dad tells her they will “skedaddle,” or leave the hospital without paying, and Jeanette’s childhood of neglect and suffering begins. Throughout the rest of the story, Jeannette continually fends for herself, since her parents are more concerned with their own needs-her dad’s biggest concern is alcohol while her mother wants to be a famous artist. Several times Jeannette and her siblings must scavenge for food through trash or raid a farm just to eat. While the children do become independent, the constant neglect wears on them. Jeannette is molested by a neighbor and Brian by his own grandmother. Eventually, after living in poverty in Welch, Jeannette and her sister Lori save enough money to escape to New York. Although the dad steals it to buy alcohol, the girls eventually save enough to send Lori, who finds a job and an apartment in New York. Eventually, the children each work hard to save enough to all escape to New York, and they begin to pull away from their parents. Unfortunately, Rex and Rosemary follow the kids there, but because the children have learned to fend for themselves for so long, they manage to keep their parents from ruining their adult lives. The fire image in the quotation is a perfect metaphor for Jeanette’s life, since fire can be both destructive and helpful, just like her parents’ neglect. Jeanette’s harsh childhood left her with both physical and mental scars, but it also trained her to become an independent and tough adult.

Pitfall # _____

The quotation "I lived in a world that could at any moment erupt into fire," perfectly describes Jeannette Wall's life as she describe it in her memoir The Glass Castle. The instability and constant chaos of her life supports the theme that surviving hardship makes people stronger. As a child, Jeannette was used to neglect. Since her parents often did not take the time to feed their children, Jeannette, even at the age of three, had to cook for herself. This led to her catching on fire and severely burning herself. Obviously, being burned at a young age is a terrible experience to endure. Later, as a teen, Jeannette was tormented by Dinita Hewitt. Dinita would beat Jeanette up every day and constantly harass her because she was poor. Such bullying was a horrible experience for Jeannette that she suffered through every day. Even though she loved school, going to school became miserable because of the bullying she endured. Many of the hardships she experienced came from her own parents. As a young adult, Jeannette saved money for months so that she and her sister could move to New York. However, her own father stole their money so he could buy liquor. This devastated Jeannette and Lori, since they had saved for so long only to have their dad ruin everything. It seemed like life was always erupting into fire around Jeannette-chaos surrounded her everywhere-from her parents, to her friends, to her neighbors. Eventually these experiences made her a stronger person so that she could turn the chaotic fire of her childhood into a fiery spirit as an adult.

Pitfall # _____

In her memoir The Glass Castle, Jeannette Walls says “I lived in a world that could at any moment erupt into fire. It was the sort of knowledge that kept you on your toes.” The motif of fire reveals what becomes the book’s theme: you are a result of your experiences. Jeannette experiences many events throughout her life that shape her as an adult. At the age of three, Jeannette badly burns herself while cooking hotdogs. Because her parents rarely cared for their children, Jeanette was badly burned. This painful experience literally scarred Jeannette for life. Later, as young girl, Jeannette is almost raped by Billy, a neighbor. Although her brother Brian and sister Lori try to help defend her by shooting at Billy with Rex’s gun, the parents seem more concerned with getting in trouble with the authorities than they do about the welfare of their kids. This violent sexual experience has a lasting effect on Jeannette. Later, after moving to Welch and living in absolute poverty for years, Jeannette and Lori finally save enough money to run away to New York. Unfortunately, however, their drunken father steals all their money, and the girls’ dream of escaping together is dodged. This loss is devastating to Jeanette. Many times Jeannette is both literally and figurate burned with the hardships in her life. The experiences, however, shape her into a strong person who can endure anything life throws her way.

Pitfall # _____

Jeannette Wall's memoir The Glass Castle proves that she lived "in a world that could at any moment erupt into fire. It was the sort of knowledge that kept you on your toes."

Jeannette was constantly being burned in her life by many events. While living in Phoenix as a child, Jeannette is burned while trying to cook hot dogs on her own. Her parents don't even care that she is burned and instead tell her that the scars will make her tougher. As a young girl, Jeannette's father Brian makes her earn extra money by working at a mysterious place called the "green lantern." Her own father is willing to prostitute his daughter just so he can have extra money for his booze. Finally, after being molested by her grandmother, Jeannette and Maureen escape to New York where they can finally be rid of their parents, but even after they escape the parents follow them there and try to wreck everything. Her father even sets her brother's apartment on fire, which ties back into the theme of fire. Fire is a perfect theme for her life since it is so uncontrollable and destructive, just like her parents' neglect nearly destroyed her life.

Pitfall # _____

Jeannette Walls' memoir The Glass Castle uses the quotation "I lived in a world that could at any moment erupt into fire" to reinforce the theme that in order to survive life's obstacles, you must be ready for anything. As young as three, Jeannette learns that life can be difficult. After cooking hotdogs by herself at the stove, Jeanette was severely burned, literally causing her life and body to erupt in fire. Later, while attending school in Welch, Jeannette was bullied by a neighborhood girl. Jeannette is beaten with sticks every day, making her days at school like an uncontrollable fire. Finally, after escaping to New York and becoming successful, Jeannette learns that even years after childhood her life can erupt into fire. She witnessed her mother, now homeless, scavenging through the trash for food. Embarrassed, Jeanette doesn't know how to handle this latest fire, since her life is going so well and she does not want her parents to ruin her success. The many devastating experiences in Jeanette's life do cause her both physical and mental scars, but she learns as an adult to be ready for anything. This is probably why, despite her hardships, she became such a successful writer.

Pitfall #--

Jeannette Walls' memoir The Glass Castle supports the theme that life is balance between chaos and calm. Once her family became homeless following a motel fire, the young Jeannette realized that "I lived in a world that could at any moment erupt into fire." She understood the precarious nature of life since her childhood was a series of turbulent events. In Walls' earliest memory, she burns herself cooking. Within seconds she changed from an unharmed three year old to a baldly burned child who endured weeks in a hospital. Without such a physically scarring experience, Walls would never understand that sometimes seemingly harmless situations can result in lasting, painful scars. Throughout Walls's childhood, the family moves many times. While some homes seem like happy memories for her, like Battle Mountain and Phoenix, other homes, like Welch, prove positively painful. In each dwelling, her family faces many hardships, but rather than overcome these obstacles, like her father's alcoholism, her abusive grandmother, or the school bully, the family often leaves in the middle of the night to find a new destination. Had Walls not constantly been uprooted as a child, she may have felt more secure and confident in her own successes as an adult. Finally, after Walls moves away from her family and becomes a successful journalist, she still feels like her world can be turned upside down at any time. When she sees her homeless mother rooting through garbage on the streets of New York, Walls becomes unglued. She immediately returns to her home and questions all her life choices. Even though she knew her mother chose to be homeless, the possibility of seeing her mother unexpectedly on the street made her feel that she herself was unstable. Had walls developed a normal, healthy relationship with her mother, she may have been able to accept her own life choices, and therefore not feel so ashamed about where she came from. Walls' success story is bittersweet, for she does because a successful writer, but her readers wonder if she ever truly feels comfortable in her personal story. Her life experiences with fire act as a metaphor for her life. Her challenges were difficult to endure and some of left painful scars, but they also forced her to be the "mountain goat" climber towards success.

Common Pitfalls with Lead Ins (what NOT to do!)

- (1) Giving away the direct quotation
- (2) Offering no context ahead (speaker, plot, etc)
- (3) Offering too much plot summary
- (4) Confused, muddled, or incorrect information
- (5) Skipping it altogether and just plopping in a quotation

A proper lead in sentence should:

- (1) Give the speaker of the quote if it is dialogue
- (2) Explain who is involved in the quote
- (3) Offer some context or plot background as to what is happening and when or where it occurs
- (4) Reveal the emotional content of the quotation

NOTE: With practice, eventually you can learn to incorporate your lead-in into the direct quotation.

Below, please copy one direct quotation you feel was a good example of evidence in your paper. Copy the entire quote, including documentation.

DQ: _____

Look at your lead in. Did you fall into one of the pitfalls of lead ins? (Giving away the quotation, Offering no context clues, Offering too much plot summary, Giving confused, muddled, or incorrect information, or Skipping it altogether).

Yes, I succumbed to pitfall # _____

No, I did not commit one of these errors, but I still had poor lead-ins because _____

Below revise your lead-ins, focusing on everything we just learned in this workshop.

Writing Workshop : Transitions from DQ to Analysis & Interpretation Avoiding "This quote shows...."

Choosing and introducing direct quotations are very important; however, you need to pay attention to how you transition from DQs to your Analysis & Interpretation. The ultimate goal here is to avoid the DREADED, "This quote shows... " (or "This quote elucidates... ", or "This quote exemplifies... ", or any fancy variation thereof).

Here is a good lead-in that integrates well into the DQ, but then notice the transition from the DQ into A/I is flat.

While investigating Wellington's murder, Christopher forces himself to talk to Mrs. Alexander, a stranger, in order to uncover information about his neighbors. He admits to the reader "I was nervous. I did not know Mrs. Alexander...I decided to walk into the park with Mrs. Alexander, even though it scared me" (59). Christopher is scared when he talks to Mrs. Alexander, but he talks to her anyway.

THIS ANALYSIS IS NOT SMOOTH. IT JUST REPEATS THE DQ WITHOUT ANY CRITICAL THINKING. IT LEAVES OUT THE DQ'S "GOLDEN NUGGET."

Now here is the same lead-in & DQ with a smoother transition into the A/I:

While investigating Wellington's murder, Christopher forces himself to talk to Mrs. Alexander, a stranger, in order to uncover information about his neighbors. He admits to the reader "I was nervous, I did not know Mrs. Alexander...I decided to walk into the park with Mrs. Alexander, even though it scared me" (59). Christopher's decision to face his fear not only leads him to uncover important information about his mother's affair with Mr. Shears, but it encourages him to communicate maturely and independently.

NOTICE THIS ANALYSIS STILL TARGETS THE MI, YET IT it's MORE REVEALING AND ARTICULATE THAN THE ABOVE.

A helpful guide to a SMOOTH TRANSITION is the following format:

<u>Possessive</u>	+	<u>Noun</u>	+	<u>Strong Verb</u>
Who/What is subject of DQ?		What is the central idea of DQ?		Consider the emotional/literary significance
Christopher's		decision		impacts
Christopher's		fear		intensifies
The father's		mistake		destroys

Strong Verbs to use instead of "SHOWS"

Instills pressures manipulates proves illuminates illustrates
highlights symbolizes underscores inspires embodies
ignites urges reinforces elucidates exemplifies initiates

(This list could truly be endless depending on the reason you chose your DQs.)

Common Pitfalls with Analysis (what NOT to do!)

- (1) Telling the reader what happens next in the plot
- (2) Repeating the direct quotation
- (3) Offering a vague "blanket" analysis that could be used with any quotation
- (4) Confused, muddled, misinterpretation, or incorrect information
- (5) Skipping it altogether and moving to the next developing idea

A proper analysis sentence should:

- (1) Explain HOW and WHY the direct quotation proves the main idea
- (2) Offer critical thinking that goes beyond obvious connections A quotation may be: symbolic, ironic, foreshadowing, a metaphor for something, revealing characterization, building on a theme...

<u>Possessive</u>	<u>Noun</u>	<u>Strong Verb</u>	Remember the suggested format as a
Who/What is subject of DQ?	What is the central idea of DQ?	The emotional/ literary significance	
Christopher's	decision	leads/encourages	guide
Christopher's	fear	intensifies	
The father's	mistake	Destroy	

Below, please copy one developmental detail or quotation you feel was a good example of evidence in your paper. Copy the entire example or quote, including documentation.

DD: _____

Look at your analysis. Did you fall into one of the pitfalls of A/I? (Telling the reader what happens next in the plot, Repeating the direct quotation, Offering a vague "blanket" analysis that could be used with any DQ, Confused, muddled, misinterpretation, or incorrect information, Skipping it altogether and moving to the next developing idea).

Yes, I succumbed to pitfall #_____

No, I did not commit one of these errors, but I still had poor analysis because _____

1. Look at your detail/quotation, write down the key words that underscore your DI and MI:

2. Did you target these words in your own analysis? Explain: _____

Below revise your analysis, focusing on everything we just learned in this workshop.

Types of Plagiarism

Anyone who has written or graded a paper knows that plagiarism is not always a black-and-white issue. The boundary between plagiarism and research is often unclear. Learning to recognize the various forms of plagiarism, especially the more ambiguous ones, is an important step in the fight to prevent it.

I. SOURCES NOT CITED

1) "The Ghost Writer"

The writer turns in another's work, word-for-word, as his or her own.

2) "The Photocopy"

The writer copies significant portions of text straight from a single source, without alteration.

3) "The Potluck Paper"

The writer tries to disguise plagiarism by copying from several different sources, tweaking the sentences to make them fit together while retaining most of the original phrasing.

4) "The Poor Disguise"

Although the writer has retained the essential content of the source, he or she has altered the paper's appearance slightly by changing key words and phrases.

5) "The Labor of Laziness"

The writer takes the time to paraphrase most of the paper from other sources and make it all fit together, instead of spending the same effort on original work.

6) "The Self-Stealer"

The writer "borrows" generously from his or her previous work, violating policies concerning the expectation of originality adopted by most academic institutions.

II. SOURCES CITED (but still plagiarized!)

1) "The Forgotten Footnote"

The writer mentions an author's name for a source, but neglects to include specific information on the location of the material referenced. This often masks other forms of plagiarism by obscuring source locations.

2) "The Misinformer"

The writer provides inaccurate information regarding the sources, making it impossible to find them.

3) "The ToomPerfect Paraphrase"

The writer properly cites a source, but neglects to put in quotation marks text that has been copied word-for-word, or close to it. Although attributing the basic ideas to the source, the writer is falsely claiming original presentation and interpretation of the information.

4) "The Resourceful Citer"

The writer properly cites all sources, paraphrasing and using quotations appropriately. The catch? The paper contains almost no original work! It is sometimes difficult to spot this form of plagiarism because it looks like any other well-researched document.

5) "The Perfect Crime",

Well, we all know it doesn't exist. In this case, the writer properly quotes and cites sources in some places, but goes on to paraphrase other arguments from those sources without citation. This way, the writer tries to pass off the paraphrased material as his or her own analysis of the cited material.

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Blacklisted Words and Phrases

I will blacklist the words below in formal essay (not personal writing). I will allow only 3 blacklisted words per page of formal writing. Any more than three blacklisted words per page will result in a lowered rubric score in the diction/mechanics column. For the revision of your research paper, any more than 3 blacklisted words on a paper will result in an "unchanged error" mark on your paper.

1. Get (got, gotten)
2. Shows / Shows that
3. So / So that
4. First person pronouns (I, me, my, mine, us, we, ours, our) *Unless I make an exception for personal writing.
5. You, your *Unless make an exception for personal writing.
6. Any form of "to be" and "to have" (is, am, are, were, was, be ,being, been, has, have, has been, had been, have been...)
7. great, greatly
8. blatantly
9. basically
10. quote (unless you are using it as a verb)
11. First, firstly, second, secondly, third, thirdly...
12. ends up
13. all in all
14. in other words
15. slang of any kind (wicked* awesome, dude, sweet, ill),
16. swears of any kind
17. totally
18. like
19. major
20. "is when," "is how," "is when,"
21. came, come, coming...
22. thing (s)

I may add to this.

Thesis Paragraph Outline

NOTE: In the event that you cannot use your book or notes while writing, specific examples from the book should be used in place of quotes.

Topic sentence (MI and CI) _____

Lead in to first DI or DD (gives plot background, this is the who, what, when, where of the DD—who is speaking if it's a DQ, what is going on, when and where in the story it happens) _____

DD#1 _____

Analysis/Interpretation of DD#1 (this explains why and how the above example proves the MI) Lead in to first DI or DD (gives plot background, this is the who, what, when, where of the DD—who is speaking if it's a DQ, what is going on, when and where in the story it happens) _____

DD#2 _____

Analysis/Interpretation of DD#2 (this explains why and how the above example proves the MI) _____

Lead in to first DI or DD (gives plot background, this is the who, what, when, where of the DD—who is speaking if it's a DQ, what is going on, when and where in the story it happens) _____

DD#3 _____

Analysis/Interpretation of DD#3 (this explains why and how the above example proves the MI) _____

Closing Sentence _____

Thesis Essay Outline (4 paragraphs)

Introduction

Optional anecdotal opening or background information_____

Topic Sentence (includes Main Idea (MI) and Complete Identification (CI))_____

Developing Idea #1 (DI#1)_____

Developing Idea #2 (DI#2)_____

Closing sentence (gives some suggestion as what RFS will be)_____

Developing Paragraph #1

Topic sentence (MI and DI#1)_____

Lead in to first DD (gives some plot background, the who, what, when, where of the DD—who is speaking if it's a DQ, what is going on, when and where in the story it happens)_____

DD#1 _____

Analysis/Interpretation of DD#1 (this explains why and how the above example proves the MI)_____

Lead in to second DD (gives some plot background, the who, what, when, where of the DD—who is speaking if it's a DQ, what is going on, when and where in the story it happens)_____

DD#2 _____

Analysis/Interpretation of DD#2 (this explains why and how the above example proves the MI)_____

Lead in to third DD (gives some plot background, the who, what, when, where of the DD—who is speaking if it's a DQ, what is going on, when and where in the story it happens)_____

DD#3 _____

Analysis/Interpretation of DD#3 (this explains why and how the above example proves the MI)_____

Closing sentence_____

Developing Paragraph #2

Topic sentence (MI and DI#1)_____

Lead in to first DD (gives some plot background, the who, what, when, where of the DD—who is speaking if it's a DQ, what is going on, when and where in the story it happens)_____

DD#1 _____

Analysis/Interpretation of DD#1 (this explains why and how the above example proves the MI)_____

Lead in to second DD (gives some plot background, the who, what, when, where of the DD—who is speaking if it's a DQ, what is going on, when and where in the story it happens)_____

DD#2 _____

Analysis/Interpretation of DD#2 (this explains why and how the above example proves the MI)_____

Lead in to third DD (gives some plot background, the who, what, when, where of the DD—who is speaking if it's a DQ, what is going on, when and where in the story it happens)_____

DD#3 _____

Analysis/Interpretation of DD#3 (this explains why and how the above example proves the MI)_____

Closing sentence_____

Conclusion

Topic Sentence (reiterate CI and MI)_____

Expand on the two DIs explored _____

Reach for Significance_____