

Evaluative Synthesis: suggestions for organization and structure

The following diagram offers a suggested structure for the evaluative synthesis covering 1 subtopic

| | |
|---|---|
| Introduction | The introduction should transition the reader from his or her outer world into the world of the paper. See <u>Methods for Introducing a Paper</u> . In academic papers under 10 pages, craft an introduction that is one paragraph in length. Your thesis statement can appear in the introduction (usually this is a safe bet for academic papers) and often appears at the end. If the thesis will not fit gracefully into the introduction (this may happen if the introduction is an anecdote), then include the thesis and main statement of the topic and controversy in the beginning of the next paragraph in the paper. |
| Summary | If the paper covers a topic with which the reader is unfamiliar, then offer a summary to inform the reader. Summaries can relate an event around which a controversy centers or can tell necessary background information or historical information that the reader will need in order to consider the opinions and arguments presented in the rest of the paper. Don't let the summary grow too large and begin to dominate the paper--- offer enough information to give the reader a clear understanding, but restrict this section to a paragraph in length. If you don't know whether you need a summary or not, ask. |
| Synthesis of subtopic 1 outlines three viewpoints on one subtopic | Begin this section by paraphrasing the subtopic that several of your sources address. If you are writing for 101 and have been asked to read only three sources, you will need to develop a subtopic that all of your sources address. Thoroughly paraphrase and use <u>integrated quotations</u> to relate the differing viewpoints on the subtopic as addressed by your sources. Indicate to your reader the relationships between these viewpoints. (Remember that using <u>transitional devices</u> is quite helpful in revealing these relationships) In addition, reveal to your reader the evidence and reasoning behind each viewpoint. Often, a synthesis relates the varying viewpoints in a neutral manner, leaving opinion for the next evaluation section and allowing a reader to get a handle on the varying viewpoints and the reasoning behind each one. |
| Evaluation of subtopic 1 evaluates the same viewpoints on the subtopic and offers your opinion | In the evaluation, begin to critically evaluate the views presented over the subtopic in the previous synthesis section. Refer back to the synthesis section and to further evidence available to determine which view offered is the most convincing and why. Be sure to address opposing points of view either through counter-argument or by giving the opposition this point but emphasizing that other elements are more crucial or significant. |
| Conclusion | Here's where you wrap it up. In the conclusion, indicate your overall view of the controversy as it has developed out of the investigation of the subtopics. You may want to relate the significance of the topic that you have investigated (often more appropriate for research papers) or encourage your readers through a call to action (works well for death penalty and other 101 topics). If the paper is a long one (research), you may want to bring it full circle to issues raised in the introduction. |