

# Short Paper #2—Structure

## Introduction

OPENING SENTENCE: give the reader a general idea of the paper's subject matter. Avoid being too general.

FOCUSING SENTENCE(S): provide relevant background information on the subject (the work of art). Answer the questions of who, what, why, where, and when.

THESIS: present your claim\* about a work of art and list your arguments,\*\* each explaining the reasoning behind your claim.

## Body

### *Descriptive paragraph (pre-iconographic stage)*

Describe the work of art using the terminology you learned from the Getlein chapters (available on Bb). Start with the stylistic characteristics of the artwork, then continue with describing the composition, color scheme, and other applicable visual elements. Write this paragraph as if your reader cannot see the artwork; use your words to help the reader create a mental image of it.

### *Persuasive paragraph (argument #1)*

TOPIC SENTENCE: introduce the iconographic element that will be developed in this paragraph.

EVIDENTIAL SENTENCES: describe and **identify** the iconographic element you are discussing in this paragraph; follow by quoting or paraphrasing relevant information from your research that helped you identify the element and cite your source.

ANALYTICAL SENTENCE(S): **interpret** the evidence presented above and explain how the element under discussion conveys the concept stated in the claim. Explain your reasoning.

CONCLUDING SENTENCE: summarize the analysis.

### *Persuasive paragraph (argument #2)*

Select another iconographic element and develop a persuasive paragraph following the structure presented above.

### *Persuasive paragraph (argument #3)*

Develop an argument around the third iconographic element following the structure presented above.

## Conclusion

THESIS (REPHRASED): restate your thesis

RECAP: recapitulate the concluding sentences

\* a **CLAIM** is your statement that reveals the main idea of an essay. In other words, the claim is what you think the artwork means. A good claim is specific and must be debatable. It is usually phrased around an **idea, theory**, or a **specific emotion**. Your claim must be well informed and based on **research** and logical assessment of your sources.

\*\* Each body paragraph corresponds to one **ARGUMENT** developed by researching and analyzing an **iconographic element (detail)** from the artwork.

**Iconography** is a method that focuses on content (the meaning of the subject matter) rather than on its form. It interprets the function and purpose of the artwork (such as the meanings of motifs, signs, and symbols used in the work). Erwin Panofsky championed the method and devised three stages of its application:

- **describing** the work of art using formal elements
- **identifying** the described elements using sources (usually texts)
- **interpreting** the symbolism of identified elements