Short Paper #3—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 subjects (the works of art). Answer the questions of who, what, why, where, and when in relation to both artworks.

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

Body

Section 1

¶ 1 provide a visual description of the artwork #1
¶ 2 provide a visual description of the artwork #2

Section 2

Persuasive ¶ 3

TOPIC SENTENCE: introduce the visual/iconographic element from artwork #1 that will be developed in this paragraph.

EVIDENTIAL SENTENCES: describe and identify the 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 ¶ 4

TOPIC SENTENCE: introduce the same visual/iconographic element as above, but this time in relation to artwork #2.

EVIDENTIAL SENTENCES: describe and identify the element; 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. compare it to the result of your analysis from the previous paragraph.

CONCLUDING SENTENCE: summarize the analysis.

Section 3

Persuasive ¶ 6

Persuasive ¶ 7

select another visual/iconographic element and develop a persuasive section following the structure presented above.

Conclusion

THESIS (REPHRASED): restate your thesis
RECAP: recapitulate the concluding sentences of each section

Comparative analysis

Kerry Walk from Writing Center at Harvard University pointed out that a compare and contrast essay is not just a mechanical exercise in which you first state all the features that A and B have in common, and then state all the ways in which A and B are different. She continued that the compare and contrast essay should make a point or serve a purpose. This is the context within which you place the two artworks you plan to compare and contrast; “it is the umbrella under which you have grouped them.”¹ In class, we referred to such a point as a claim. It should be clearly stated in your thesis.

* A claim is your educated opinion on the topic. 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.

** Arguments are developed by researching and analyzing visual/iconographic elements (details) from the artworks. Paragraphs with similar topics are grouped into sections.