

Tips for Writing the Synthesis Essay

AP Language & Composition

Tomorrow's Schedule

- **15 mins** – Reading/Annotation time
You may NOT start writing your essay yet.
- After 15 minutes have elapsed, pick up loose leaf paper and begin writing your essay.
- **40 mins:** Announce when 5 minutes remain.
- You will complete a self assessment and then score TWO other papers in the time remaining in class.

Consider Your Viewpoint FIRST

- Before reading the sources, take a moment to jot down your ideas about the topic. If you have a firm position, write it down.
- Move beyond “Yes/No” or “Pro/Con” thinking and consider broader ideas that the topic brings to mind.

Concession Stems

- While it is true that...
- I grant that...I still maintain that
- Although...
- Of course
- Certainly
- To be sure

Sources

- Read every source with an open mind
- Variety of interpretations and points of view
- Keep in mind the following purposes...

Read to Understand Sources

- Upon first reading a source, quickly underline or circle striking ideas, topic sentences and other key words and phrases.
- What does this source add to the conversation?
- What would this author say in response to your position?

Read to Understand Position

- Put an where author presents evidence in favor of your claim
- Where evidence opposes it, put an **X**

Read for Evidence

- The position you choose should be the one about which you have the most compelling things to say

Interpret the Visual Source

- Determine its relationship to other sources
- What relevant information does it contribute to the discussion of the issue?

What do you have time for?

- Proofread. (2-4 minutes)
- Revisit verbs.
- Identify your thesis statement and strengthen it.
- Identify the most important sentence in your conclusion and strengthen it.
- Check your syntax.
- Strengthen your introduction overall.
- Strengthen your conclusion overall.
- Check your evidence from start to finish.

The No-No List

- **gets the point across**
- **catch the reader's attention**
- **a lot**
- **stuff**
- **thing**
- **very, many, really**
- **great**
- **big, huge**
- **lots**
- **well or so (as sentence starters)**