

Evaluate an Exploratory Paper

The following are the standards which apply both to the Exploratory Paper and to the Position Paper (Essay II). (The Position Paper [Essay II] has additional requirements.) Help your groupmates identify the most important ways in which they can improve their drafts.

Introduction

You explain the issue (what your academic sources disagree about) and provide enough background for your reader to understand and take interest.

Claim (your position on the issue)

- You have articulated the different positions so as to be parallel to your claim/thesis: that is, your claim is of the same kind as the other positions: they are all claims of fact, all claims of definition, all claims of cause, all claims of value, or all claims of policy.
- Your claim is clear, focused (specific enough to be well covered in your argument), appropriately complex (the result of analysis, not merely easily-found factual material), and arguable (someone might plausibly disagree, whether because of a different perspective or lack of information).
- Your claim says something about the significance or meaning (theme and message) of the literary work.

Structure & Argument

- You accurately describe at least three different positions on a single issue. You provide supporting arguments used by those who hold each position.
- You provide at least one subclaim (reason to agree with your main claim) in addition to supporting arguments made by a source with which you agree.
- You make clear how your subclaim supports your main claim.

Support / Evidence

- Your description of each position on the issue, and its supporting arguments, relies on summarized ideas and/or quotes from your sources. Your sources are appropriate academic sources that reliably portray these positions.
- You provide adequate support for each of your own arguments (reasons to agree with your claim). Support includes specific details and quotations from the literary work (with citations). Any support from outside the literary work (which is optional) must be accompanied by citation of appropriate, reliable sources, such as academic sources and primary sources, unless it is common knowledge or is clearly described as your personal experience.

Length, Format & Style

Paper is the correct length. Use of language is concise, efficient, and precise. Quoting, paraphrasing, and MLA style are executed correctly. Paper is mechanically neat and tidy (grammar, punctuation, spelling, formatting).