



Literacy at Hartford Public High School

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Analytical Questions from Classroom Instruction that Works by Robert Marzano, et al.

Some questions require students to analyze and even critique the information presented to them. To facilitate this type of questioning, it is useful to have a list of skills and their definitions:

1. **Analyzing Errors:** identifying and articulating errors in the logic of information.
2. **Constructing Support:** constructing a system of support or proof for an assertion.
3. **Analyzing Perspectives:** identifying and articulating personal perspectives about issues.

Each type of analysis listed above can be cued by one or more specific questions like the following:

Analyzing Errors:

- What are the errors in reasoning in this information?
- How is this information misleading?
- How could it be corrected or improved?

Constructing Support:

- What is an argument that would support the following claim?
- What are some of the limitations of this argument or the assumptions underlying it?

Analyzing Perspectives:

- Why would someone consider this to be good (or bad, or neutral)?
- What is the reasoning behind his or her perspective?
- What is an alternative perspective, and what is the reasoning behind it?

Reading an Essay of Analysis from *Aim Higher: English Skills*

An analysis essay is one in which a writer breaks down a subject into its parts and then shows how these parts are related to one another and to the whole. An in-depth essay in a Sunday newspaper magazine about how a movie was made, describing the work done by the producer, the director, the actors, the special effects people, the make-up people, and so on, might be an example of an analysis essay if it concentrated on the contributions of each in the final film. It might be a narrative essay if it simply told the story of the making of the movie from the beginning to the end. Often, chapters in textbooks are simply extended analysis essays. For example, a chapter on the digestive system—the mouth, the esophagus, the stomach, the liver, and so on—and how they work together. When reading an analysis essay, ask yourself the following questions:

1. What is the whole subject being discussed?
2. What are the parts of the subject?
3. How are the parts related to one another?
4. What function does each part serve?
5. How are the parts related to the whole?

Judging an Essay of Analysis: Scale

5. Highly analytical in style and approach, with critical understanding and interpretation
4. Analytical in style and approach, with some critical interpretation
3. Analytical in style and approach at times, although descriptive for the greater part
2. Some grasp of the relevant ideas and issues is evident, although limited
1. Limited grasp of the relevant ideas and issues