

## Outline of the Critique Paper:

Here are the requirements and suggestions for the major parts of the critique essay.

- I. Introduction
  - A. Include a summary of the argument being critiqued. This summary should be four or five sentences long.
  - B. Somewhere in the introduction include a thesis statement that indicates your overall evaluation of the argument. Was it successful? Was it unsuccessful? Or, did it perhaps succeed in some areas while failing in others. The thesis will usually, like many types of thesis statements, indicate what aspects of the argument you will discuss in your critique.
- II. Body
  - A. The body of the critique discusses WHY you think what you think about the argument under scrutiny.
  - B. To determine the quality of any given argument, you can look at four general areas. When writing the critique, I would suggest focusing on two of these areas, three at the absolute most. Usually a few of these areas stand out as making or breaking an argument. Only focus on those areas that stick out to you; if you try to discuss too much information, your critique will end up very shallow.
    1. Logic and Reasoning
    2. Evidence
    3. Organization
    4. Writing Style
  - C. When discussing these areas in your body paragraphs, make sure to include specific examples from the text to support your assertions (these can come in the form of summaries, paraphrases, or direct quotations, hence my “lectures” last week on such things).
  - D. Also, in the body paragraphs remember to fully explain to the reader how your examples negatively or positively affect the argument. For instance, if I write that Daniel Gardner makes a hasty generalization (a violation of logic) about terrorism in chapter eleven and then quote where this generalization occurs, I cannot just leave it at that. I need to explain that by generalizing the attitudes about terrorism, Gardner makes the fear of terrorism seem more common than it actually is.
- III. Conclusion: You have a few different options for the conclusion
  - A. Discuss your personal response to the argument. Remember, this is not what you should be discussing in the body of the critique.
  - B. Or, reiterate your overall evaluation of the argument and then make a recommendation to your reader.
  - C. Or, suggest some ways the argument could be improved.