

Writing About Popular Culture



Remember, you are an expert

- ◉ We are surrounded with popular culture and entertainment culture constantly, but we may take our expertise for granted.
- ◉ Remind yourself that you know much more than you think you do.
 - Did you recognize the images on the first slide? Can you put them into a cultural context Do you associate the logo with the people who buy the products? What are they like? Do you associate the logo with products themselves? What are they like? What is the influence of branding on our purchasing behaviors? How do corporations use this to make a profit?

Reading the essays in the textbook is important!

- ⦿ What is the author's primary argument?
What is the thesis?
- ⦿ What key terms are fundamental to the argument? Circle them and look up definitions.
- ⦿ What evidence does the author provide to support the argument?

More reading questions...

- What style and tone does the author adopt?
- What underlying assumptions shape the author's position?
- What do you think is the intended audience? Why?
- What is the genre of the piece? What are its goals?

Analyze Visuals Carefully

- Turn to page 32-33
 - This is the list of questions you should ask about any visual image you are analyzing
- Let's give it a try together...

MacBook Pro
A touch of genius.



Thesis Statement

- ***The thesis statement identifies what your paper's major argument is and establishes what it is you will be analyzing.***
 - Often, the thesis statement is located at the end of your paper's introductory paragraph.
- Your thesis statement need not be highly controversial, but you want to organize your paper around an argument or set of conclusions that goes beyond the patently obvious.

Developing Strong Arguments

- This is an *Analytic* Essay
 - Set aside your personal tastes
 - Instead, analyze how the thing works, what cultural beliefs and viewpoints underlie it, what its significance is
 - The paper should not necessarily be positive or negative or about your likes and dislikes

Basic Essay Organization

I. Introduction

A. Hook to grab readers' attention

B. Introduce/describe subject or conversation

C. Thesis

II. Body Paragraphs

1. Topic Sentence

2. Support

a. Examples

b. Sources/quotes

c. Explanation

3. Connect paragraph to your overall argument

III. Conclusion

A. Reiteration/reinforcement of thesis

B. Summary of argument

C. Consideration of larger implications

Turn to page 35

- Sample student essay, “Barbie: Queen of Dolls and Consumerism”
 - Hook?
 - Thesis?
 - Topic Sentences?
 - Types of support?
 - Conclusion?