Business

The Article Analysis

A Brief Overview of the Article Analysis

The purpose of writing an article analysis is to demonstrate that you have read, understood, and can apply scholarship in the business field, and to demonstrate your critical thinking abilities. Typically, an article analysis does three things:

- · Summarizes an article's main points.
- Analyzes the evidence offered to support the writer's main point, taking care to point out where there are flaws in the argument.
- Reflects upon the significance of the article, its connection to other reading/concepts in the course, and/or its importance in your field.

Your primary audience is your professor; as such, you should keep in mind an academic audience interested in the topic about which you are writing. All business writing should be done with an eye toward professionalism. After all, outside of the university (and sometimes for academic courses), the audience for your writing will be a colleague or client. Your writing should not be overly formal, but rather should communicate with the reader in a respectful and efficient manner.

You may choose to divide your paper into three sections labeled with headers, or you could choose to write the piece in a more traditional "essay" format without headers. Your professor may have a specific preference, so read the assignment sheet carefully.

A Process for Writing An Article Analysis

A good article analysis can be written only if you've read the article carefully and thoroughly—and preferably, multiple times. The following tips assume you will read the article three times; even if you don't do that, try to answer the questions below. Difficulty answering these questions indicates you may need to reread the article, read more carefully or slowly, or discuss the article with your classmates or professor.

- 1) Read the article one time all the way through. Get a general sense of what the article is about, and how the pieces of the article fit together. Do this initial reading in a quiet place where you have plenty of time to complete the article in one sitting. Stop reading only to look up terminology you don't understand. If you read a passage that you don't quite understand, re-read it 2-3 times; if you still do not understand the passage, mark it with a pen or pencil and move on. Try not hold a pen or pencil as you read; the point is to gain an overview of the entire article rather than to jot down detailed notes about the article.
- 2) On your second reading of the article, answer these questions in the margins. They are meant to help you understand what the writer did in conducting research as well as discover the writer's main points:

The purpose of writing an article analysis is to demonstrate that you have read, understood, and can apply scholarship in the business field, and to demonstrate your critical thinking abilities.

A good article analysis can only be written if you've read the article carefully and thoroughly—and preferably, multiple times.

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 United States License. To view a copy of this license, visit http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/us/ or send a letter to Creative Commons, 171 Second Street, Suite 300, San Francisco, California, 94105, USA.

For a research article:

- · What is the hypothesis?
- What previous research findings does this article build upon?
- · What is the sample?
- · What is the method?
- What was learned by conducting the research (the findings)?

For an article that makes an argument or addresses current events:

- What is the thesis (or central claim, or main point, or main argument)?
 The thesis is typically found near the end of the article's introduction.
- Can you summarize the article's main point in your own words?
- · What are the premises for the argument?
- What evidence (data, research findings, historical or economic trends, theories, opinions, stories, anecdotal evidence) does the article's author offer to support that central claim? Make a list of the specific evidence used throughout the article. Is that evidence sound?
- 3) On your third reading of the article, answer these questions in the margins. They are meant to help you respond to, critique, and reflect upon the article:
 - What do you think is most important or effective regarding the article's research/arguments?
 - What limitations do you see in the research or argument? That is, what counter-claims or arguments can you make in response to the article?
 - What did you learn from reading this article? Make a list; these might be huge new understandings of the issue or small tidbits of information you found helpful.
 - In what ways does this article connect to the other articles you've been assigned to read, your own research on the topic, and/or class discussions and lectures this semester?

Only after you have read the article three times and answered the kinds of prompts listed above does it make sense to begin writing a draft.

As you can see from the reading process outlined above, each time you read the article, you are generating ideas to incorporate into the three areas of your article analysis. You can use the summary you wrote after your first reading of the article in the first portion of your essay. You can use the marginalia you generated about the writer's research and arguments in the middle portion of your essay—the analysis section. And you can use the marginalia that include your reactions to the writing in the final section of your essay.

A Process for Evaluating Your Draft

Once you have written a draft of your article analysis, you should ask yourself the following questions:

- Did you accurately, fairly, and objectively characterize the article's arguments and research in your summary?
- Did you avoid quoting from the author's own summary or thesis statement when summarizing the study in your paper? The urge to do so might indicate you haven't yet grasped the author's main point(s), so rereading the article—and/or discussing it with classmates or your

It is recommended that you read an article at least three times before you begin writing a draft. Each time your read the article, focus on a new set of questions and take notes to generate content for your analysis.

Business: Article Analysis 2

- professor-might be in order before you write much further.
- Is your summary of the article the right length? Your professor might tell you how long the summary should be; if not, a good guideline is that it should be no longer than one-fourth of your entire essay. After all, the point of this assignment is to analyze the article, not summarize it!
- Does your analysis account for at least half of the entire essay? If not, you probably need to re-read the article and your marginalia to generate more ideas for your draft.
- Does your analysis explain how the writer supported his or her main points with specific research, data, historical events, economic trends, theory, etc? Typically, an article analysis describes these things in the order that the information appears in the article under analysis.
- Does your analysis point out any weaknesses in the writer's argument(s), data collection strategies, or findings?
- Does your analysis describe specifically what the article contributes to the topic you're studying?
- If required by your professor, did you describe your own view of the topic in light of having read this article? If required by your professor, did you show how this article compares and contrasts to other pieces you've read this semester or to class discussions and lectures?
- Throughout the entire essay, were you professional? That is, did you disagree respectfully with the writer (when necessary)? Have you demonstrated that you've read and thought about the article carefully?

Prompts for Writing Consultations

- Begin by talking about the article under analysis. What is the article's main point? What seems to be the new information offered by the article on this topic?
- Talk about the writer's process of reading the article. What was difficult to understand? Are there terms, data, or passages that the writer hasn't quite grasped?
- Analyze the writer's summary of the article. Is it brief, objective, and clear? Does it avoid quoting from the article itself—that is, has the writer been able to articulate the information in his or her own words?
- Discuss the analysis. Is most of the essay dedicated to analyzing how the parts of the article fit together and how the article fits into a larger discussion on the topic? Are the author's premises and evidence identified and analyzed?
- Discuss the writer's response to the article. Does it remain professional in tone? Does it follow logically from the summary and analysis? Does it fit with the professor's requirements for the assignment?
- Is the writing well-edited? The most common errors to look for include problems with commas and semi-colons, awkward word choice and phrasing, the use of second person ("you"), and subjectpronoun agreement.