



National Institute of Competitive Exams

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“Critical Analysis”

○ What is critical analysis?

Critical analysis is the detailed examination and evaluation of another person's ideas or work. It is subjective writing as it expresses your interpretation and analysis of the work by breaking down and studying its parts. You may write a critical analysis to critique a piece of literature, a film or TV program, a business process or another person's academic report, for example. Critical analysis, which draws upon your critical thinking skills, is usually presented as a written essay or paper, but may also be presented as an oral report. Good critical analysis evaluates the ideas or work in a balanced way that highlights its positive and negative qualities.

○ How to write a critical analysis

You should have a good understanding of the work you are analyzing before writing your critical analysis. For example, before writing a critical analysis of a film, you may watch it several times. After viewing it once for pleasure, you should view it more critically to determine the filmmaker's key ideas and thesis and how successfully they presented them. It is a good idea to make notes on the film while you are watching to refer to during the writing process. Additional research may help you understand the film and any unfamiliar language in it. After you feel confident you understand the work you are analyzing, you are ready to complete the following steps to write your critical analysis:

1. Create an outline

Create a bullet-point outline noting the main points you will make. Think critically about the work you are analyzing and its most important parts when creating your outline. You will refer to your outline throughout the writing process to stay focused. Consider any structure and length requirements for your critical analysis when writing your outline. Most critical analyses have a concise introduction, two to four body paragraphs and a conclusion. You may make notes about more or fewer paragraphs, depending on how long your critical analysis will be.

2. Write an introduction

Write a section that introduces your audience to the work you are analyzing and your opinions about it. It should define the original creator's aim or thesis statement and main ideas, and finish with your thesis statement. Three or four sentences is a good length for most critical analysis introductions, but it may be several paragraphs for more complex critical analyses. Focus on making your introduction engaging to attract your audience's attention and encourage them to continue listening or reading your critical analysis.

3. Write your body

Write body paragraphs that address the main points outlined in your introduction. Two to four body paragraphs are common, but you may have more or fewer paragraphs depending on any writing guidelines you have received. Each body paragraph should focus on a single idea. State the idea in the first sentence, then support the idea with examples from the work you are analyzing. You may incorporate quotes from the source that support your claims. Remember to add consistently formatted citations to any quotes you include.

4. Conclude your critical analysis

Write a conclusion that restates your perspective. It should build on the statements in your body paragraphs to bring your critical analysis to a natural stopping point. It will have similar content to your introduction but it should be expressed differently. Two to four sentences are sufficient for most conclusions, but the conclusions of some complex critical analyses may have multiple paragraphs.

5. Proofread and refine your work

Read through your critical analysis to ensure it sounds as professional as it should. Correct any spelling and grammatical errors and awkward phrasing when you see it. Reading your critical analysis out loud can help you identify more areas for improvement. Doing this step a few hours or even a few days after you write your critical analysis, if you have time, can also be more effective. Proofread and refine your work as many times as you need to until you are satisfied with your critical analysis. If, you need extra input, you may also ask a trusted colleague, friend or professional editor to proofread your work. Their objective perspective can identify more errors and help make your critical analysis even better.

- **Tips for writing critical analyses**

Using proven writing strategies can make your critical analyses even better. Incorporate the following tips into your writing practices to improve your critical analyses:

- **Cross - reference your outline.** Referring to your outline through the writing process helps you stay focused and cover all the points you intended.
- **Use transitional words and phrases.** Transitional words and phrases, such as "therefore" and "in addition" help your sentences and paragraphs flow and create connections between your ideas.
- **Be concise.** Writing succinctly makes your writing clear and more persuasive.
- **Write logically.** Your critical analyses should be organized in a way that makes sense with ideas that naturally flow.
- **Write in the third - person voice.** Unless you are advised otherwise, writing your critical analysis in the third-person voice gives your work a sense of authority. The reader believes your work is fact rather than simply your opinion.