

Evaluating Your Text

When critically reading a text, *topic and purpose*, *ideas*, *structuring*, and *expressing* are the most common aspects to consider. Below is a list of useful tips for you to evaluate your own text, or someone else's. This can (and perhaps should) be used before handing something in, or it can be used as a tool for peer reviewing an article or essay. Naturally, this list can be further added to.

Topic and purpose:

- What is the central topic or problem? Can you pinpoint where this is expressed?
- What is the purpose of the text? Is the topic and purpose relevant for the intended audience?
- Are the topic or problem and purpose narrow enough to be handled within the length of the paper or time of writing?
- Does the paper consistently follow the purpose intended?

Ideas:

- Is there good balance between ideas and evidence?
- Is there good balance evidence and interpretation?
- Does the text display awareness of alternative theories, different approaches, and perspectives?
- Does the text show understanding of the referenced literature and theories presented, and are they critically presented, or simply repeated? Does the text argue for *and* against evidence and ideas given?
- Does the text contain generalizations, assumptions or clichés?
- Is the argumentation sound, and does it lead the reader in a logical way to the conclusions given?

Structuring:

- Are the sections and headings of the paper logical and necessary?
- Do the different sections (introduction, theory, discussion etc.) correspond to their intended purpose?
- Does each paragraph address a specific idea and contribute to the development of the text and thought process?
- Does the paper show coherence (does the text run smoothly from paragraph to paragraph and section to section) or is it difficult to follow?

Expressing

- Is the writing style (structure, vocabulary, sentence length) easy to follow, direct, and enjoyable? Is there variation in the text (e.g. sentence length)?
- Is the tone objective or subjective?
- Are technical and scientific terms explained or clarified appropriately?
- Are there errors in grammar, punctuation or spelling?
- Are citations and references correctly given? (both in the text and the reference section)