



nth Degree Tutoring

The “Analyze an Issue” Essay

A much shorter, very broad / abstract principle is presented (See p. 16). You must construct your own argument relating to it. This is an exercise in constructing your own argument – convincing or persuading others. You can draw from history, news, or even your own life experience, if it provides relevant evidence.

Rubric: See p. 37 for reference.

Not graded	Graded
Taking the “right” stance	Articulating a “clear and insightful position”
Factual knowledge or accuracy	Compelling reasons and / or persuasive examples
Academic language 1 st / 2 nd / 3 rd person	Superior facility with the conventions of standard written English

Common student problems / point penalties

- Being too vague or abstract; not giving the reader any reason to take your side
- Repetition (empty word count / failing to truly develop)
- Unconnected thoughts or not stating the obvious
- Going off on tangents

Approach

1. Start your essay by thinking, “What have I seen before that this prompt reminds me of?” Write down 1 – 3 ideas that come to mind.
2. Develop each idea in 1 or more paragraphs.
3. How do your ideas relate to each other? Make transitions (“As a particular example ...”, “On the other hand ...”, “An important exception arises when ...”)
4. You may write your introduction AND your conclusion last. Use the introduction to summarize your outcome into a coherent thesis.
5. The best use of the conclusion is to “finish with a flourish”. Make the grader laugh, cry, think (or at least make a little noise).

The weakest language = Opinion / speculation (“unsupported claims”) (Essentially just rewording the question).

“I think it is more probable that our bodies will **deteriorate** long before our minds.”

“The ever increasing amount of **technology** that we incorporate into our daily lives makes people **think** and learn every day, possibly more than ever before.”

Second best = Abstract examples (Using nouns / verbs not found in the prompt)

“One aspect where the ability of humans may initially be seen as an example of deteriorating minds is the use of **internet** and **cell phones**. In the past humans had to seek out information in many different environments. Now humans can sit in a chair and type anything into a **computer** and get an answer.”

Strongest language = Specific examples (using proper nouns not found in the prompt)

“**WebMD** permits patients to self-research symptoms for a more informed doctor visit.”