

Analysis

Academic Vocabulary List



Terms	Definitions
academic vocabulary	Academic vocabulary means the words and phrases that are specific to a subject, task, or topic of study.
analysis/analytical writing	An analysis essay goes beyond an explanation or summary of the source(s); it presents a claim about the author's strategies or narrative techniques and defends the claim with evidence and reasoning.
audience	Your audience is anyone who might read your essay. You should assume that the reader has limited knowledge of the topic, so explain all ideas completely and clearly.
author's purpose	An author's purpose is his or her goal for writing the piece; it may be to persuade readers to agree with a particular side of an issue, to inform them about a topic, or to make them think or feel a certain way.
author's strategies/ techniques/devices	An author uses strategies (sometimes called techniques or devices) to accomplish the purpose for writing a text. Strategies may include the use of figurative language, specific word choices, and the tone or mood created in the text.
background/prior knowledge	Background knowledge is the information that is needed to understand a topic or situation.
bias	When writers show their bias, they describe something positively because they like it, or negatively because they dislike it, instead of describing it fairly and letting the readers decide.
body	The body of an essay is the middle section that contains one or more paragraphs; it provides support for the claim with appropriate evidence and reasoning.
claim	A claim is a position or statement on a topic, an opinion with which others might disagree.
clarity	Clarity means that your ideas are written clearly and are easily understood by others.
cohesion	Cohesion means that you have presented your ideas in a way that shows how they relate. When your writing is cohesive, it is clear how each idea connects to your analysis.
conclusion	The conclusion is the last paragraph of an essay; it restates the claim and leaves the reader your final thoughts about the topic.
credible/credibility	A source's credibility is what makes it believable, or the reasons why the reader should trust this source as telling the truth.
development	Developing your ideas means that you explain them completely, offering evidence and reasoning to support each point.
evidence	Evidence is a statement of truth that confirms your ideas, like a statistic, fact, quotation from a source, or other supporting example.

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figurative language	Figurative language is when a writer uses words or expressions that are not meant to be understood literally.
formal	Formal writing means that you speak to the reader in an academic way, using the third-person point of view, vocabulary specific to the topic, and a serious tone.
hook	A hook is an interesting statement about the topic made at the start of an essay in order to grab the reader's attention.
imagery/sensory language	Imagery and sensory language are the use of descriptions that appeal to the reader's senses in order to create vivid experiences through the text.
informal	Informal writing is the way you speak to your friends; it is casual and conversational, and not appropriate for academic writing.
introduction	The introduction is the first paragraph of an essay; it provides background information about the topic and focuses the reader's attention on the claim that the rest of the essay will support.
literal language	Literal language is when the words a writer uses mean exactly what they say.
main idea	The main idea means the main point or most important thought about something.
metaphor	A metaphor is a figure of speech that makes a direct comparison between two typically unlike things, without the use of linking phrases.
mood	The mood of a story is the atmosphere or feeling the author creates, through descriptions of the setting and characters and the pacing of events.
narrator	The narrator is the character who is telling the story; the narrator's knowledge of events can be limited or all-knowing.
objective	Writing that is objective is free from bias or emotions; it presents the facts about a topic, or a perspective on an issue, with valid evidence and fair reasoning.
organization	Organization is the way you present ideas in your essay; a predictable structure helps your reader focus on important information and anticipate what is to follow.
paragraph	A paragraph is a section of text in an essay that includes sentences related to the same topic or idea. In academic writing, the structure of a paragraph should consist of a topic sentence and relevant details to support it.
personification	Personification is a type of figurative language in which a writer gives human characteristics to nonhuman things.

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perspective	Perspective is the way someone views a topic, information, events, or other characters.
point of view	Point of view is the perspective from which a text is written. Analysis essays should be written from the third person perspective, using pronouns like he, she, and they, to describe the writers' ideas. Essays typically should not be written from the first person perspective, using pronouns like I, me, and my.
position	Your position on an issue is your view or opinion on it, or the side with which you agree.
primary source	A primary source is a first-hand account of a historical event that was captured at that time; this may include official documents like treaties or proclamations, maps, recordings, or journal entries.
purpose (task)	The purpose or task means what you are being asked to do, or what the prompt asks you to write about, specifically.
quote/quotation	A quotation is a piece of text found in a source (a fact, statistic, comment, etc.) that you surround with quotation marks and include in your essay because it supports your ideas.
reason/reasoning	Reasoning is an explanation you provide to the readers that convinces them that your ideas make sense.
relevant	Relevant means something is appropriate, connected to, or related to the current topic.
rhetorical devices	Rhetorical devices are strategies an author uses to persuade the reader. Common rhetorical devices include ethos (an appeal to credibility), pathos (an appeal to your emotions), and logos (an appeal to logic).
secondary source	A secondary source is an indirect account of a historical event or an analysis of a primary source, like newspaper articles, research, or scholarly journals.
sentence structure	Sentence structure is the way you present your ideas in a sentence; sentences can be short and simple or long and compound or complex.
simile	A simile is a figure of speech that makes a comparison between two typically unlike things, using the linking phrases "like" or "as."
source	The source is the place from where you received information, like a text, video, graphic, etc.
style	In writing, style is the way you use words to affect the reader; this may include word choice, sentence structure, or figurative language to create imagery, mood, or meaning in the text.

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support	When you support your ideas, you provide proof of why they are true, through direct evidence (facts, quotes, or statistics) and reasoning (explanations).
symbol	A symbol can be an object or action that represents something deeper than what it appears to be.
text organization	Text organization refers to the way information in a text is presented to the reader; common structures include chronological order, compare/contrast, cause/effect, and problem/solution.
theme/lesson/message	The theme of a story is often the main lesson or message the author wants to express. Theme can also mean the idea or subject (like love, betrayal, or perseverance) that the author wants you to consider.
tone	Tone is the perspective, attitude, or emotion the writer has about the topic, revealed through his or her choices in language.
topic sentence	A topic sentence tells the reader what the main idea of the paragraph is.
transition	A transition is a word or phrase that helps the reader see the connection between your ideas and how they relate to one another.
unbiased	When your writing is unbiased, you describe things in a fair and factual way. The writing is free from personal opinions and persuasive language; the topic is discussed objectively and the readers are equipped to make up their own minds.
vocabulary	Vocabulary means the words you use to express your ideas; using specific vocabulary helps the reader to better understand your ideas.
voice	Your voice as a writer is the way you express yourself; your tone and style contribute to your voice.
word choice	Word choice means the vocabulary you use to express your ideas.