

Quick tips for success!

Know how the Rhetoric is designed—the name reflects the structure: **What, Why, and How?**

WHAT? Definition: What is a clear explanation of this concept?

WHY? Purpose and Rationale: Why is it important or beneficial? Why should it be used?

HOW? Application: How can I see it applied in examples? How can I best apply it?

Some other useful strategies at a glance...

Reading strategies:

>**Annotate your texts:** Active readers mark texts as they read making notes and highlighting key quotes and concepts. Marking texts helps put the information into long-term memory and improves comprehension.

>**Preview your texts:** Effective readers spend time previewing the material before they begin reading it. Before reading, skim through the text taking note of titles, subheadings, author background, chapter questions, etc.

>**Identify important elements:** As you read, mark where you locate the **main argument** (thesis). You can find it by asking: *What is the main idea the author wants me to learn or wants to convince me of in this text?* Also, mark the major ideas aka **key supporting points** that prove or illustrate the thesis. Ask yourself: *What reasons did the author use to convince me of his/her thesis?* Also take note of the **evidence** provided: *What specific evidence (examples, data, etc) did the author use to illustrate the major ideas and did s/he add analysis or explanation to further convince me?* You can also use these questions to **help you in building your own essays**.

Writing strategies:

>**Push through Writer's Block:** Don't start out trying to write the "perfect" essay—start with some **freewriting** meaning that you write continuously for 10-15 mins without worrying about correctness—let your ideas, reactions and creative exploration of your topic flow. You can also **brainstorm** in words and phrases an exploration of a text or topic. Another method is to **ask questions** (What? Why? How?) and then answer them.

>**Thesis:** A unified essay, your goal, is when everything in the essay centers on proving one clear, arguable thesis. A useful formula that will help you create a strong thesis is **TOPIC + OPINION + SO WHAT?**

>**PIE Paragraphs:** You can't go wrong when you include all the elements of PIE: lead the paragraph with one arguable supporting **(P)oint** that proves your thesis; follow with **(I)nformation** or evidence (quotes, data, etc) to prove that point; don't forget your **(E)xplanation** providing your own convincing reasoning and analysis.

>**Transitions:** Provide logical connections between your paragraphs so your readers can stay focused on your thesis and be convinced. Example: "One way that (thesis) is evident is (supporting point 1)." Then the next paragraph could begin: "Not only is (supporting point 1) evident in (thesis) but so is (supporting point 2)."

