

AIMS Writing Study Guide

IDEAS	ORGANIZATION	Voice	Word Choice	<i>Sentence Fluency</i>	Conventions
<p><u>Explain your topic sentence:</u> If you explain what you mean to prove in your body paragraph, you will leave no doubt in the readers' minds that you have given solid proof, and therefore will score highly in Ideas</p>	<p><u>BE SURE</u> you have a clear</p> <p>Beginning: your Intro paragraph WITH NO SPECIFIC INFORMATION! Leave that for your body</p> <p>Middle: your body paragraph(s) When you show the reader you know what you're talking about</p> <p>End: your concluding paragraph WITH NO NEW INFORMATION! If it was worth saying, you'd have used it as one of your body topics</p>	<p>Remember: No matter what the prompt says- <u>you are writing to an adult!</u> Use the vocabulary in your essay that you would use when speaking <i>respectfully</i> to an adult... that means no slang, and especially NO TEXT "SPEAK"</p>	<p>Write your <u>rough draft</u> without thinking much about this trait, and then go back to make better choices. <u>In your final-</u> Use words that you know, but aren't necessarily the first ones to pop into your head. For example, <i>good</i> becomes <i>fantastic</i>, and <i>bad</i> becomes <i>unbearable</i></p>	<p>The best way to catch any errors in this trait is to <u>read your essay!</u> Don't assume you're writing what you're thinking, but read the words you've written after at least 15 minutes have passed since you've written it.</p> <p>The second best way to improve this trait is to be mindful of how many times you've used any word.</p>	<p><u>This one is easy...</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a dictionary for spelling • Put a comma before a conjunction (and, but, or) • Don't start a sentence with a conjunction • Keep the same verb tense (mostly past or present for you guys) throughout the whole paper
<p><u>Stick to the topic!</u> DO NOT go off on a tangent and tell a story that has nothing to do with the essay prompt.</p>	<p>All of your information should make sense, and relate to your essay's topic- or the thesis statement you're trying to prove. Don't try to put in extra information, because you think it'll make you sound smart- it'll actually clutter the essay!</p>		<p>. That way you don't run the risk of using a word that doesn't mean the right thing from the thesaurus.</p>	<p>If you've got the same word six times in a paragraph, you need to combine your sentences and omit some of the words.</p>	

AIMS Reading Study Guide

<i>Literary Analysis</i>	<i>Poetry</i>	Persuasive	Reading Comprehension	Functional
<p>Protagonist- the character who is having the problem or conflict</p> <p>Antagonist- the character preventing the protagonist from resolving the conflict</p> <p>Conflict- the problem we follow through the plot: Man Vs _____ (the “man” is the protagonist, and the “_____” is the antagonist)</p> <p>Mood- The “color” you often feel while reading a selection. Dr. Seuss is usually bright yellow or green; Stephen King is gray or red...</p> <p>Tone- The emotion the author tries to create: funny, sad , sarcastic, serious...</p> <p>Theme- the lesson of a story- usually the theme is repeated several times in different ways. Think of how many times Romeo ignored the “unstoppable love”</p>	<p>allusion- a reference to a well-known work of literature, famous person, or historical event with which the reader is assumed to be familiar (i.e. the <i>Bible</i> or <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>)</p> <p>figurative language- the use of words to create vivid pictures and ideas in the mind of the reader; not meant to be literally true (e.g., similes, metaphors, personification)</p> <p>imagery- descriptive language used to help the author better explain to the reader how something effected the 5 senses: sight, sound, touch, taste, smell.</p> <p>metaphor- when two unlike things are compared by stating that one is the other. (You may need to infer the meaning: <i>My car was so hot, I could have baked a loaf of bread in it!</i>)</p> <p>personification- when something non-human is given human characteristics or powers</p>	<p>Bandwagon- to get people to follow the crowd using the logical fallacy (or wrong idea) that since “everyone else likes it,” it must be good</p> <p>Cause and effect-figuring out reasons for actions or events (cause) and the results of certain causes (effect)</p> <p>Central argument- the main point or purpose of a piece of writing, usually in a thesis statement or topic sentence</p> <p>Compare- to use examples to show how things are</p> <p>Contrast- a strategy for thinking or writing that explains, defines or evaluates something by showing how they resemble and differ from each other</p> <p>Transfer- a persuasive technique that attempts to transfer positive feelings associated with images not necessarily related to the issue (<i>Chew gum and cool off in the summer</i>)</p>	<p>Inference your best guess after looking at all of the information and possibilities</p> <p>Fact- something provable, without denial- (<i>there will be a Democratic presidential candidate</i>)</p> <p>Opinion- something that can be denied and argued, (<i>Hip Hop is the bes style of music</i>) *** <u>An opinion can, and often is, stated as a fact. You must think about it and decide if it is a proven idea or an assumed truth</u>***</p> <p>Main idea/Thesis/ Central Argument The concept, thought, idea, or impression that is of greatest importance or influence. This is what the author is writing for, the whole point of the text.</p>	<p>This is the kind of writing that performs a job or function. It could be a chart, a graph, web instructions, want ad or even a letter.</p> <p>You do not read these as often, and you don’t read them the same way you would read a story or essay. Typically you’ll only look at a piece of functional writing if you have a reason to or a purpose in mind.</p> <p>Usually you want to <u>read the question first, so that you can skim the text</u> to find what you need to know. This is as true for the AIMS test, as it is for functional writing in general.</p> <p>The hardest part of functional reading is figuring out what the question is asking.</p>

<p><u><i>Literary Analysis</i></u></p> <p>Point of View- this is how involved in the story the narrator is.</p> <p><u>1st person</u> means the narrator is a character, and uses “I”</p> <p><u>3rd person</u> means the narrator is observing, and uses “he or she,” but not “I”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> if the narrator knows what the characters are thinking and feeling, they are considered <u>omniscient</u> <p>Plot- the order of events in which the story happens:</p> <p><u>Intro-</u> the <i>who</i> and the <i>where</i> are introduced</p> <p><u>Rising Action-</u> the <i>what</i> or <i>conflict</i> is introduced</p> <p><u>Climax-</u> NOT the middle of the story, but when it looks like the protagonist might lose</p> <p><u>Falling action</u> usually when the <i>why</i> is explained</p> <p><u>Resolution-</u> the ending of the story when all questions are resolved</p> <p>Setting- the when and where; this impacts the story because the location and time can completely change the meaning of a situation. What’s the difference if a dad finds a boy in his daughter’s bedroom in 1955 as opposed to 2005? How about at 2:00 A.M. and 2:00 P.M.?</p>	<p><u><i>Poetry</i></u></p> <p>symbol- when the author uses one thing not related to another to represent some thing abstract thought, idea or feeling. (<i>A skull and crossbones symbolizes danger.</i>)</p> <p>style- how the writer writes, usually the way he or she crafts the words he/she uses. An author’s style will be similar through all of his or her writing and is what makes him or her unique as a writer. It’s like the trait <i>Voice</i>.</p> <p>***TIPS***</p> <p>POETRY IS MEANT TO BE HEARD. READ ALOUD!</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read the poem your first time with no expectations, just to become familiar with language and the general theme. 2. Read the questions, and then go back and read the poem line by line to look for the specifics that the questions are asking- (i.e. rhyme, metaphors...) 3. Read the poem a 3rd time, to put all of your collected information together- <u>this is where you will most likely find theme</u> 	<p><u>Persuasive</u></p> <p>evidence- statements or information that help in making a conclusion or judgment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * logical evidence - based on earlier-known or well-known information * empirical evidence- information or facts gained by <i>scientific observation</i> or <i>experiment</i> * anecdotal evidence - information gained from <i>casual observation</i>, usually presented in a story <p>Fallacious reasoning- reasoning that is deceptive or used to mislead and confuse</p> <p>false causality- the error of concluding that an event is <i>caused</i> by another event simply because it follows it (<i>the Suns lost to the Lakers, because Shaq joined the team</i>)</p> <p>repetition- repeating a word, phrase, sentence, or the like for impact and effect</p> <p>testimonial-when a personal success story is used to influence others (<i>I lost 40 lbs with Jenny</i>)</p>	<p><u>Reading Comprehension</u></p> <p>***TIPS***</p> <p>DO NOT ASSUME! Read all of the questions before you eliminate or select one. Many times there will be two that are wrong, and two that could be right. You need to read them all before you make that decision.</p> <p>Make sure you know what information you are being asked for. The wording in some of the questions takes a couple of readings before they are totally understandable.</p> <p>Once you are certain you fully understand the question and the answers, you can actually cross out the incorrect answers to help visually before actually making a decision about the correct answer.</p> <p>Watch out for words like <i>always</i> and <i>never</i>; they’re dangerous and <i>very rarely</i> will anything English be <i>always</i> or <i>never</i>.</p>	<p><u>Functional</u></p> <p>***TIPS***</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read the question until you are sure you know and understand what it is asking. 2. You may need to dissect the question, or break down the words, to figure out the question. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is it asking you to <u>find something specific</u> in the text, or is it asking you to use <u>context clues</u> for a vocabulary question? Are you being asked to <u>know where to find information</u>, like in a business letter or a textbook, or are you being asked to make an inference? <p>If you KNOW what the question is, you will probably feel better choosing an answer.</p>
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