

HUMANITIES 101 EVALUATION CRITERIA

1. Controlling Idea/Thesis

- a. **Should be a good idea** (you don't have to agree with me, but if you don't, then you must be sure you've read the text very carefully so that I can't easily poke holes in your thesis just by pointing out stuff you've overlooked.)
- b. **Should be *clear and well focused*** (I shouldn't have to guess what your point is, and you shouldn't make more broad assertions than you can prove).
- c. **Based on *sound reasoning*** (don't accidentally contradict yourself, and don't ignore evidence that contradicts your ideas).
- d. **Based on *accurate assumptions*** (don't get your facts wrong).

2. Evidence/Details

- a. **Should be as *specific and as varied as possible*** (focus on small passages and mention those little things that support your point – things a reader might not notice the first time around – such as Odysseus getting “stuck” on an island where tall trees are growing and where he has ship-making tools).
- b. **Should be *well organized*** (don't get ahead of yourself--say one thing at a time; usually, it's best to go chronologically, and if you forget anything, don't just add it on: go back and put it in where it belongs).

3. Sentences/Mechanics & Usage

- a. **Sentences should be *clear, readable, and not overly wordy*** (don't write a lot of short, choppy sentences that repeat information--ie, “Jane has a cat. The cat is yellow. The cat's name is Puff.” And don't leave me trying to figure out remarks like, “The feeling of respect comes from the actualization of one's self being or worth”).
- b. **Mechanics & usage *should not annoy the reader*** (avoid mistakes in word choice, grammar, spelling, and punctuation: consult any available English handbook).
- c. **Follow *MLA format*** (any English handbook should contain guidelines for how to do this; when citing Homer, go by book and line number – i.e., (IX, 135). If you use material from both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, include the title – i.e. (*Iliad*, IX, 135). If you need help, check out the [MLA Help pages](#) on my web site, or simply ask me).