

Formal Paper 2: Critical Review

1. Read the Texts Critically. Reading with a critical eye is an absolute necessity for a good review. Being critical does not mean being negative — rather it means that you are actively looking for both strengths and weaknesses in the article. As you read, ask questions of the writer and make notes.
2. Write the Critical Review. Your critical review should have four basic elements:
 - a. *Introduction*
 1. What are the titles and authors of the texts?
 2. What are the specific topics of the articles?
 3. What is your overall focus of the paper (thesis)?
 - b. *Summary of Content*. This should be no more than a brief portion of your paper.
 1. What are the main arguments of the authors?
 2. What is the central question each author wishes to answer?
 - c. *Critical Analysis*. This should comprise the main portion of your review. You should discuss both strengths and weaknesses since an article is neither entirely good nor entirely bad.
 1. What arguments of the author are effective? ineffective? Why? GIVE EVIDENCE
 2. Are there any arguments that both authors make? (For example in “A Scientist” and “Why worry about the animals?”, both authors state that animals should not be abused, although both authors have different views on what that means.)
 3. Are you persuaded by the authors’ arguments?
 4. Consider the intended audience of the article in your analysis, but don’t necessarily explicitly reference this point in the paper.
 - d. *Conclusion*

Paper Topics

Compare two different perspectives on a particular technologically related ethical/social issue.

- 1) Choose one of the topics (see readings below):
 - Nuclear Energy
 - Stem Cell Research
 - GM Food

Nuclear Energy

Holton, W. Conrad. “Power Surge: Renewed Interest in Nuclear Energy.” *Environmental Health Perspectives* 113, no. 11 (November 2005): A742-A749.

Charman, Karen. "Brave Nuclear World?" *World Watch* 19, no. 4 (July/August 2006): 12-20.

Stem Cell Research

Mieth, Dietmar. "Going to the roots of the stem cell debate." *EMBO Reports* 1, no. 1 (July 15, 2000): 4-6.

Cohen, Eric. "Science, Democracy, and Stem Cells." *Philosophy Today* 48, no. 5 (2004): 23-29.

GM Food

Cayford, Jerry. "Breeding Sanity into the GM Food Debate." *Issues in Science and Technology* 20, no. 2 (Winter 2004): 49-56.

Goklany, Indur M. "The Future of Food." *Forum for Applied Research and Public Policy* 16, no. 2 (Summer 2001): 59-65.

- 2) Write a 5-7 page paper in which you critically analyze the arguments of both sides of the issue.

Your thesis will state a broad relationship you see between the sources.

Think of the paper as a synthesis between the arguments in the two articles. You can lean more in one direction than another.

Final Notes:

- o Use APA citation style.
- o List your sources on the final page (also in APA style).
- o Consider your audience for the paper to be educated and interested readers, but not experts on the particular topic.