

Top 10 Survival Tips for Writing Essays in Mr. Fannon's Class

- 1) **Make/Prove points-**The biggest problem with most students is that they forget that writing essays is all about making points, and then proving those points with concrete details. For Example:
 - a. Hamlet's inability to act leads to one very important aspect of his downfall: he does not get to succeed his father as the king of Denmark.
 - This is the point that you want to prove. The next sentence will probably be a quote in order to support your claim that Hamlet's inability to act led to this part of his downfall... Then you would comment or make a connection to the unifying element of the paper. Then you will move on to your next point... See the Fannon writing format for more specific details about this process.
- 2) **Don't Summarize!!!-**Another major problem with students is that they tend to summarize the material too much. This takes away from the whole making/proving points format. Some indicators that you may be summarizing:
 - a. If you find yourself typing things like: As the play continues, goes on, progresses... At this point in the play... So then... Meanwhile... Next He/She/They...
 - b. You are not contributing anything to a discussion of the material.
- 3) **'A,B,C' ideas don't mean anything if you have 'F' mechanics-** Many students have some pretty intelligent things to say, the problem with many is that they lack the mechanics to put together a **cohesive** discussion of the material. What you end up with is an exercise in rambling.
 - a. See Mr. Fannon's writing format to eliminate this type of wasted energy.
- 4) **Relate/Cohesion-** When a teacher gives you an essay prompt that is specific, they are asking you to be very specific in your discussion of the material. This means that every thought that you put on to paper needs to **relate** to the main idea/unifying element of the paper. This will give your essay **cohesion**.

- 5) **Leave Out the ‘I’**- In a ‘typical’ paper at the high school and college level, there is no room for the pronoun ‘I’ anywhere in your paper. Stay away from terms like:
- a. I believe... I think that... In my opinion... etc.
This is redundant and uncalled for. It is your paper. Unless you are plagiarizing, it is assumed that the ideas stated in your paper are your own.
 - b. Instead of saying “In my opinion Hamlet’s downfall is created by his inability to act.” Just make a statement like, “Hamlet’s downfall is created by his inability to act.” You do not have to use the I. It is redundant. I know that it is your opinion because this is your paper I am reading. There is no need to use the I in this case.
- 6) **Don’t Make Silly Mistakes**- Show a teacher that you actually proofread a paper. Some common mistakes that really bother a teacher are:
- a. Failing to capitalize the names of characters, plays, stories, poems, etc...
 - b. Failing to punctuate properly where names of literary works are concerned, i.e. *Movies, Plays, Novels* are *italicized*. “Poem Titles, Short Stories,” appear in “quotes.” Etc...
 - c. This shows a teacher that you really don’t care about your grade.
- 7) **Know the Material**- I realize that this is a very novel idea, but you must know the material. Show the teacher that you put some thought and effort into researching and reading the material. What ends up happening is that you sound really stupid and you will get a bad grade if you don’t.
- 8) **Textual Evidence/Concrete Details**-No matter what you call it, you must have it. I will not even read a paper for more than about a page if a student fails to include concrete details in his or her discussion. There are only two acceptable types of concrete details accepted in my class:
- a. “Quotes”- The author, or some other smart person’s words.
This is the best and most recommended method of support.
 - b. Specific examples- Picking a specific example from the text to share in support of your assumptions. Not really recommended especially since in most cases you can pull a quote from the

portion of the text that shares the example you were going to use any ways.

- This is number 3 on the 3 most important things that your paper needs list.

9) Topic Sentences- #2 on the short list. Each paragraph must have a topic sentence. This is the glue, or **cohesive**, that holds your paragraph together. Every topic sentence will address the main point/unifying element of the paper. Everything in your paragraph will support or relate to the point that your topic sentence is trying to make.

a. See example paragraph #1

10) Thesis Statement- #1 on the short list. This is, without a doubt, the most important part of your paper. It has to be perfect or nothing else matters. Your thesis can go one of two ways:

- b. Closed- “Hamlet’s inability to act creates his downfall by leading to the loss of people he loves, the loss of his rightful place as king of Denmark, and ultimately his death.”
- This tells me that you will have 3 body paragraphs, what order they will be in, and how each paragraph will deal with how Hamlet’s inability to act leads to his downfall.
- c. Open- “Hamlet’s tragic flaw is his inability to act and this leads to his downfall.”
- This tells me that you will discuss Hamlet’s tragic flaw and how it led to his downfall. The great thing about this type of thesis is that it is not convoluted and gives you more freedom in how your essay unfolds. Find out what type of thesis a teacher prefers.
 - **In this class I prefer an OPEN thesis**

Fannon Writing Process

Nothing here is original. Good writing has not changed over the years. Making points and supporting your points with evidence, and then having something to say has been good writing since humankind started putting pen to paper. Every teacher is different. We all have our vision of what good writing looks like. This is my vision. I am telling you exactly what I want from you and the order you should proceed in when writing. All teachers use different language for the different parts of an essay. Some call the first sentence or two of an introduction a hook; some call it an attention getter. Here is what I call each part. I am very tough when it comes to writing. You should leave my class with more tools to become a very good writer. These tools will work for my class. They might also work for other classes, but the best thing to do is ask a teacher exactly what they want. If you follow my packet, you will do well in my class. If you do not, well...

This is a basic blueprint that you should use when putting together your discussion. This is as simple as fill in the blanks, or paint by numbers. I call it writing “stereo instructions.” Each part is followed by an abbreviation. I use this abbreviation when grading your paper. If the abbreviation is written in the margin on your paper it means either that you did not have this element in your paper, or there was a problem with your ‘attempt’ at inserting this element into your paper.

Introduction-

- 1) **Attention Getter (ATT)** - This is one of the most important elements in your introduction, just behind the thesis. The attention getter is just that, it is supposed to grab my attention. This can be done any number of ways depending on what type of paper you are writing. Here are a couple of ways:
 - a. **Quote-** Either choose a quote from the work, or works, that you are discussing in your paper that might address the topic. Even more impressive is to choose a quote from some other noteworthy figure that addresses the topic you might be writing about. For example, if you were writing a paper about the downfall of a character due to a tragic flaw, you might just start with a quote about how people are flawed.
 - b. **Startling statement-** This really depends on the type of paper. It is usually a number like, 5 billion people smoke in this city. It is supposed to jump out at you. If you were back to writing that paper about the role of religion in someone’s life maybe, you might write something like... “In the holy war that has been going on in Ireland the last 100 years between the Catholics and the Protestants, over 3 million people have lost their lives.”
 - c. **Scenario Opening-** This is what I like to call it. This is the “Imagine you’re walking down the street and some strange man pulls you into an alley and rapes you. Two months later, you find out that you are pregnant. Should you have the right to have an abortion?” Then your paper would be about how you support a woman’s right to choose.

2) Background Information (BKG) - This is the part of the introduction where you introduce the topic of your paper. It should only be information about the topic of your paper. You should never use this to give us the life story of the writer that may have written the literary work that you might be writing about. You should also give the context of the paper. Talk about time and place. For example, if you are writing about the downfall of Hamlet, you would probably discuss who William Shakespeare was, why he wrote this play, when he wrote it... For an example of what this should look like, and what it should not, see the sample introductions.

a. The three parts of background information are:

- i. **Start Broad-** be sure to discuss your topic on a broad scale. If you are writing a paper about the tragic flaw of a literary character, spend time discussing how people are flawed in society for a few sentences.
- ii. **Give Contextual Information-** Context is time and place. Here is where you might spend a sentence or two introducing the writers you will be writing about, or the historical background of the topic for a few sentences.
- iii. **Introduce your topic-** this is where you get more specific to the topic for your paper. Spend some time clearly stating the focus of your paper.

3) Thesis Statement (THESIS) - This is the most important part of your paper. It should be a **statement** of fact that you intend to prove in your paper. If you are writing a paper, in which you are going to argue for a woman's right to choose, your thesis might look like this... "While pro-life advocates have some good arguments, ultimately a woman should have the right to choose." As a reader, I know your position and what your paper will be about. This is not a good thesis for the same topic... "So who has the best argument, people who believe in pro-life, or people who believe in pro-choice?" As I stated before, there are two types: closed and open. You want to move towards using open thesis statements. Most papers you write moving forward in school will be too long for a closed thesis. Here are a few rules for thesis statements:

- a. It should be the last sentence of your introduction.**
- b. It consists of two parts:**
 - 1. Unifying Element**
 - 2. Subtopics**
- c. It will not be in metaphorical or question form.**
- d. It should be at least one sentence- not a fragment.**

Body Paragraphs-

A body paragraph can consist of anywhere from 4-10 parts depending on how you want to approach the topic. There is a structure here. I should see your evidence very early in

your paragraph. It does not necessarily have to come in the second sentence, but you should not engage me in a conversation about the material without showing me your evidence. My basic body paragraph will look something like this:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| 1) Topic Sentence | You could add another chunk |
| 2) Concrete Detail | Point |
| 3) Connection/Commentary | Concrete Detail |
| 4) Point/Counterargument | Connection/Commentary |
| 5) Concrete Detail | In between #'s 6-7 which would give you |
| 6) Connection/Commentary | 10 parts. Or you could eliminate a chunk |
| 7) Transition Sentence | which would give you only 4 parts. |

Here is a brief explanation of each part.

- 1) Topic Sentence (TS)** - This is the “thesis statement” of each body paragraph. If your thesis for your paper is...

“Hamlet’s tragic flaw is his inability to act and this leads to his downfall.””

Your topic sentence for your first body paragraph may look something like this...

“Hamlet’s inability to act creates his downfall by leading to the loss of people he loves.”

This topic sentence includes the unifying element (the claim that Hamlet’s downfall was created by his inability to act), and a sub-topic (The loss of people that Hamlet loves). Even if your thesis statement is very clear like the one above, it is not sufficient to write something like... “So first Hamlet loses people he loves.”

- 2) Concrete Detail (CD)** - There are several types of concrete details; however, you should usually use one type exclusively.

- a. Quote
- b. Specific Example

You can use a specific example, but why would you use this when you could pick a quote from the part of the work where you were going to pull your example from. For example, Rather than say, “One aspect of Hamlet’s downfall is losing people he loves” just pull a quote from the play that **illustrates** the same point...

In the play, Hamlet tells Ophelia, “Get thee to a nunnery, farewell. Or if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool, for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go, and quickly too. Farewell. (Hamlet 3.1 148-152)

It is always more effective to use the writer’s words as opposed to your own; thus, a quote is always more effective than a specific example. You must have concrete

details to support the points that you are trying to make. They should be chosen very carefully and relate precisely to the point that you want to prove. As always, it should relate to the unifying element of your paper, and the topic sentence.

3) Connection/Commentary (COM)- This is the part of the paragraph where you get to not only put in your ‘two cents’, but you also get to connect your quote to the subject that you are writing about. Let us use the topic sentence above to illustrate our point...

TS- Hamlet’s inability to act creates his downfall by leading to the loss of people he loves.

CD- In the play, Hamlet tells Ophelia, “Get thee to a nunnery, farewell. Or if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool, for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go, and quickly too. Farewell. (Hamlet 3.1 148-152)

Com- In this part of the play Hamlet is having a conversation with Ophelia. He feels betrayed by her because he knows that she is not reciprocating his love at her father’s request. He knows that she is having this conversation with him in order to spy for Claudius. Instead of confronting her about this he continues his pattern of not acting on information that he knows to be true. This inability to act will be one aspect of his downfall in this play. This tragic flaw, Hamlet’s inability to act, will cause him to lose the woman he loves. Instead of having an honest conversation with Ophelia, he instead attacks her. In fact, he tells her that she should never marry, or she should marry a fool who will not mind being abused by her. This attack causes Ophelia to view Hamlet as mad. It drives her away. If he only spoke to her honestly, rationally, he might have been able to salvage his relationship. Unfortunately, he will lose Ophelia because he does not act the way he should. He continues to be inactive when he should act with conviction.

In order for you to have good commentary, you should do three things:

- 1) First, you need to spend a sentence or two explaining your quote.
- 2) Second, you need to spend a sentence or two connecting the quote that you chose to support your topic sentence to the unifying element of the paper. Be sure to do this or you will just be summarizing.
- 3) Finally, you should spend a sentence or two bringing it all together and adding your own two cents to the discussion. This is your opinion. Please do not use ‘I’ when you do this. Look at the last sentence or two of the example above. This is the writer’s opinion. The writer states that Hamlet should have acted...Notice how the statement works fine without using the I.

4) Point (PT) - Ok, this is where you will state another point that was a part of your topic sentence... For example, using the same topic sentence above, the next sentence following the above commentary might look like this

...he will lose Ophelia because he does not act the way he should. He continues to be inactive when he should act with conviction. **Hamlet's inability to act also leads to the loss of his mother.**

-Then you would find another quote to support this statement and that would be #5.

-Then you would have another connection/commentary and that would be # 6.

You might also cover the counterargument in the second half of each paragraph. In this case, your (PT) would be a sentence transitioning into the counterargument.

This all depends on the requirement of the essay you are writing.

- 7) Transition (TRANS)** - A transition sentence is a sentence that lets the reader know that you are moving on from one discussion to the next. It signifies the end of your body paragraph. A transition for the same body paragraph that we have been dealing with might look like this...
- a. **The loss of people Hamlet loves is not the only aspect of his downfall created by his inability to act.**
 - b. You just let me know that you are finished talking about loss of people Hamlet loved, and now you are moving on to another area of his downfall created by his flaw. Notice how this follows the progression that you showed in your thesis statement and it gives cohesion to your paper.

The chunk system allows for a lot of freedom while giving you a very organized format to hold everything together. Moving on to something that most students have the biggest problem with CONCLUSIONS!

Conclusions-

There are 4 things that you should do in a good conclusion:

- 1) Revisit Your Thesis (RVT)**
 - a. You do not need to copy and paste your thesis here, but you want to revisit it.
 - b. For the essay prompt, that we have been writing the beginning of your conclusion might sound like this...
 - i. Hamlet's ultimate downfall was caused by his incessant hand wringing and inability to act.**
 - c. You remind the reader of the thesis from the beginning of the essay without repeating it word for word.

2) Sum up your main points (SUM)

- a. This should be a general summary of your points. You do not have to list all of your main points; just give the reader the “jist” of your points.

3) Relate to the Bigger Picture (REL) - Basically, you want to make a last-ditch attempt to connect what you have been writing about for the last 3 or 4 pages to the reader. The idea is that if they have not identified with what you have been writing about so far, they will now. You might also want to summarize your main points.

If you were writing the Hamlet essay we have been covering in this packet, you would move to a general discussion of complacency and how it impacts people all over the world. This will allow the reader to see the forest as well as the trees. The forest is the discussion of complacency in general. The tree is how the inability to act impacted Hamlet. For example,

Hamlet’s inability to act paralyzes him when he clearly should be acting. This is typical of so many people in the world. It is so easy to sit and watch life unfold all around us. People are hesitant to step outside of the safe little bubbles they build around themselves as protection. People are afraid to take chances because they do not want to make mistakes and experience loss. It is too hard to deal with. What they don’t realize is that they are losing so much more by attempting to live safely, instead of living with conviction and intent...

I took my very specific discussion of how Hamlet’s inability to act impacts him negatively, and related it to the big picture of how living a complacent life can have such a negative impact on people in general all over the world. I may even bring in some specific comparisons from history. This is taking a very specific topic and making it relatable to the world we live in. This is the most important part of any conclusion.

4) Strong Closing Statement (CS) - This is really important because it is supposed to leave me thinking. As a reader, it is supposed to cement what you have been writing about. It is what you want to be lingering in my mind when I put your paper down. Using the same conclusion above your strong closing statement might look like this...

- **History has shown us that people who act, even at their own peril, change the world, they are truly alive. People who sit on their hands and do nothing are not living at all.**

Sounds pretty cheesy right? It should sound somewhat cheesy. It should be really obvious and dramatic. This is what will linger with the reader.

Good Introduction

“Crippled things are always more beautiful. It's the flaw that brings out beauty.” (Black) Often times in our society we only notice how people are flawed. We fixate on the imperfections in people. This might be because, inherently, humans are all flawed. No one is perfect and people are constantly striving to erase these imperfections. They go to the gym to sculpt their bodies, or they go to a plastic surgeon to “fix” their nose because it is too big, or small, or wide. Fixating on flaws can be the undoing of many people. Writers have forever presented the world with stories that reflect how flawed human beings really are. They have presented these characters with flaws that can ultimately create the downfall of the character. The most significant writer in the history of the English language is William Shakespeare. Shakespeare wrote three types of plays: Histories, Comedies, and Tragedies. There are flawed characters in each type of play; however, these flaws are most detrimental in the Tragedies. In fact, in the Tragedies, the main character's downfall is ultimately created by his tragic flaw. This is never more prevalent than in Shakespeare's greatest play *Hamlet*. Shakespeare wrote this play a few years after the death of his own son and he is clearly presenting a character who is struggling with loss and an inability to act that leads to many other losses in his story. This tragic flaw in Hamlet the man cripples him in so many instances, but also leads to a reflective nature that generates some of the greatest speeches in the history of literature. Ultimately, these plays are labeled as Tragedies for a reason: there is loss. There are downfalls. Hamlet's tragic flaw is his inability to act and this leads to the many aspects of his downfall.

Bad Introduction

What does it mean to be flawed? A lot of people in the world are really flawed. But can characters in plays and novels be flawed? Yes, they can. There are lots of characters in plays and novels that are flawed and sometimes those flaws can make life really hard for those characters. William Shakespeare was a great writer who lived over 400 years ago. Some people think he is the greatest writer ever, I don't really agree with this but his play *Hamlet* is a pretty good story about a guy who has his flaw and bad things happen to him because of this flaw. In the play Hamlet finds out that his father has died so he comes home from school to attend his funeral. When he gets there, he finds out that his mother has married his uncle and his uncle is now the new King of Denmark. This really makes Hamlet mad and he wants to get revenge. The problem with Hamlet is that he finds out how his dad really dies in the play but he doesn't do anything about it. He basically does nothing except act crazy the whole play and this leads to bad stuff happening all around him. Hamlet's inability to act creates his downfall by leading to the loss of people he loves, the loss of his rightful place as king of Denmark, and ultimately his death.

Good Body Paragraph

Hamlet's inability to act creates his downfall by leading to the loss of people he loves. In the play, Hamlet tells Ophelia, "Get thee to a nunnery, farewell. Or if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool, for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go, and quickly too. Farewell" (3.1 148-152). In this part of the play Hamlet is having a conversation with Ophelia. He feels betrayed by her because he knows that she is not reciprocating his love at her father's request. He knows that she is having this conversation with him in order to spy for Claudius. Instead of confronting her about this he continues his pattern of not acting on information that he knows to be true. This inability to act will be one aspect of his downfall in this play. This tragic flaw, Hamlet's inability to act, will cause him to lose the woman he loves. Instead of having an honest conversation with Ophelia, he instead attacks her. In fact, he tells her that she should never marry, or she should marry a fool who will not mind being abused by her. This attack causes Ophelia to view Hamlet as mad. It drives her away. If he only spoke to her honestly, rationally, he might have been able to salvage his relationship. Unfortunately, he will lose Ophelia because he does not act the way he should. He continues to be inactive when he should act with conviction. Hamlet's inability to act also leads to the loss of his mother. Towards the end of Act 3 Hamlet confronts his mother and asks her "This was your husband. Look you now what follows. Here is your husband, like a mildewed ear Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes? Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed and batten on this moor? Ha! Have you eyes?" (3.4 74-77) Hamlet is clearly upset with his mother at this point in the play. He can't believe that she was once married to a great man and now she has lowered herself to marry Claudius. It would seem like Hamlet is acting at this point in the play. He is confronting his mother. He accuses her of not loving his father. However, this confrontation may have never happened if Hamlet had acted on information that he had very early in the play. He knows how his father died and yet her is here accusing his mother of something instead of doing something about how his father died. This confrontation drives a wedge between Hamlet and Gertrude and is just another aspect of his downfall created by his inability to act. If he would only do something with the information he has, this loss would not have occurred. The loss of people Hamlet loves is not the only aspect of his downfall created by his inability to act.

Bad Body Paragraph

First of all Hamlet loses his girlfriend Ophelia because he does not want to act, and he also loses his mom. In one part of the play he tells Ophelia "Get thee to a nunnery" because he is so mad at her. Hamlet knows that Ophelia is spying on him for her dad and he is really mad about it. He goes on to tell her that she should "never marry" or "marry a fool" if she ever gets married. This is a good example of his inability to act because he is just yelling at Ophelia instead of taking out his anger on the person he should really be angry with. It will eventually lead to his downfall because Ophelia will not love him after this. Also he loses his mom in Act 3 when he basically calls her a slut for marrying his uncle. His mom basically thinks that he is crazy and she tells Claudius what Hamlet said and this gets Hamlet in trouble and leads to another part of his downfall when he is told to move to London.

Good Conclusion

Hamlet's ultimate downfall was caused by his incessant hand wringing and inability to act. During the play Hamlet loses so many things that are important to him. He loses the love of his life, his mother, and the opportunity to follow in his father's footsteps to lead Denmark as its' king. He also loses the opportunity to defend his people against other countries who would seek to conquer Denmark. Ultimately the most devastating aspect of his downfall created by his inability to act, is his own demise. Hamlet spends much of the play looking for answers that he already has. He does not trust his gut and instead seeks validation throughout the play. Hamlet's inability to act paralyzes him when he clearly should be acting. This is typical of so many people in the world. It is so easy to sit and watch life unfold all around us. People are hesitant to step outside of the safe little bubbles they build around themselves as protection. People are afraid to take chances because they do not want to make mistakes and experience loss. It is too hard to deal with. What they don't realize is that they are losing so much more by attempting to live safely, instead of living with conviction and intent. History has shown us that people who act, even at their own peril, change the world, they are truly alive. People who sit on their hands and do nothing are not living at all.

Bad Conclusion

In conclusion, Hamlet is a very tragic character because he does not act when he really should be acting on all the stuff he already knows. He already knows how his father really dies and he doesn't do anything about it. He knows that Ophelia is spying on him for her dad and he doesn't do anything about that either. He can do so much more to make this play not end up tragic but he never does it. He just sits around and never does anything. I would have totally just acted on what I already knew and I would have been able to become king instead of doing nothing and basically losing everything in the end of the play. People should do more acting in this world so that they can be happy and never end up like the main character in William Shakespeare's play *Hamlet*.

Mr. Fannon's Rubric

6- Student work:(95-100%) **(0-2 writing process errors)**

- Consistently pursues a strong, central purpose, engages the reader, And shows exceptional insight into the subject.
 - Includes main ideas that relate to the unifying element of the essay. Each idea is supported by concrete details, with insightful commentary/connections to follow each point.
 - Follows the writing process discussed in class exactly.
 - Shows distinctive style through skillful and expressive use of vocabulary, phrasing, sentence structure, and paragraphing.
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5- Student work:(85-94%) **(3-4 writing process errors)**

- Consistently pursues a central purpose, holds interest of reader, shows insight into the subject.
 - Includes main ideas that relate to the unifying element of the essay. Ideas are almost always supported by concrete details, with good commentary/connections to follow almost every point.
 - Follows the writing process discussed in class with very few errors.
 - Shows emerging style through effective use of vocabulary, sentence structure, and paragraphing
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4-Student work:(75-84%) **(5-6 writing process errors)**

- Shows a consistent purpose, communicates to the reader and connects the writer's knowledge to the subject
 - Includes main ideas that may or may not relate to the unifying element of the essay. Ideas are sometimes supported by concrete details, with commentary/connections to follow some points.
 - Follows the writing process discussed in class with some errors.
 - Shows suitable vocabulary, sentence structure, and paragraphing.
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3-Student work:(65-74%) **(7-8 writing process errors)**

- Shows a purpose, but may be inconsistent in communicating to the reader or connecting the writer's knowledge to the subject.
 - Includes main ideas that may be unorganized or partially developed. Ideas may or may not relate to the unifying element. Concrete details and commentary/connection do not always follow points being discussed. Writing process is loosely followed with many errors.
 - In many cases is not organized, and often does not show suitable use of vocabulary, sentence structure, and paragraphing.
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2-Student work:(60-64%) **(9-10 writing process errors)**

- Attempts to connect the writer's knowledge to the subject and may not show a purpose.
 - Is brief, unorganized, and underdeveloped. Ideas do not relate to the unifying element. Concrete details and commentary/connection rarely follow points being made. Writing process almost never followed.
 - May include frequent errors in the use of vocabulary, sentence structure, and paragraphing.
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1-Student work:(Below 60%) **(11 or more writing process errors)**

- Is too brief and disorganized to communicate to the reader on any level.
 - May not connect the writer's knowledge to the subject. The writing process discussed in class has basically been thrown out the window.
 - Typically includes many errors in the use of vocabulary, sentence structure, and paragraphing.
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Grade Mark Key for Mr. Fannon's Essays

Introduction

- **ATTN-** If you have this mark next to the first part of your introduction then it means that you did not have an adequate attention getter/hook. Refer to my packet for the appropriate ways to start an essay.
- **BKG-**
 - **BKG 1-** This means that you did not start broad and narrow your focus. You probably started with a quote but then you did nothing with the quote. Remember that you need to start with a broad discussion of the topic before you narrow your focus to a specific discussion of the material.
 - **BKG 2-** You did not give me the contextual information that the essay requires. You need to place your discussion in a place in time. For example: "Shakespeare wrote this play in the years after his son passed away, leading Hamlet to be a character..."
 - **BKG 3-** You did not do a good enough job introducing me to the topic of your essay. For example: "Hamlet is clearly a character who is flawed and this flaw is his inability to act..."
- **THESIS-** Remember that your thesis needs to be a statement/claim that you will prove. You must include the unifying element/topic of the essay and the subtopics. It can be an open or closed (ABC thesis) but you should be leaning towards open thesis statements.

Body Paragraphs

- **TS**
 - **TS 1-** Your topic sentence does not have the unifying element of the paper in the sentence.
 - **TS 2-** Your topic sentence does not have a subtopic in the sentence,
 - **TS-** If you have this then you don't have either the unifying element or the sub topic. This mark means basically that your topic sentence is way off. You never make a claim that your paragraph will prove.
- **CD**
 - **CD 1-** You do not have a quote/specific example to support the point you are trying to prove from your topic sentence.
 - **CD2-** You may have a quote or specific example that attempts to support the claim in your topic sentence; however, the evidence you have chosen is not relevant to the point you are trying to make.

- **COM**
 - o **COM 1-** This mark means that you did not adequately explain your evidence. You may not have explained the quote you used to support your claim
 - o **COM 2-** This mark means that you did not spend a sentence or two re-connecting with the unifying element of the paper. For example: “Hamlet’s inability to act is his tragic flaw and it led to this element of his downfall...” The unifying element is Hamlet’s flaw and how it leads to his downfall.
 - o **COM 3-** If you received this mark on your paper then you did not adequately tie everything together with your own opinion/voice.
- **PT-** Your topic sentence suggests that you will have a second chunk in your paragraph, but you don’t have a transitional sentence that leads into the second part of your discussion. This may be another element of Hamlet’s downfall. It could also be the transition to the counterargument depending on the essay prompt.
- **TRANS-** You do not have a transition sentence at the end of your body paragraph. You need to let me know that you are moving from the discussion in this paragraph to the next. (You do not need a transition sentence at the end of the paragraph leading into your conclusion)

Conclusion

- **RVT-** You did not revisit your thesis statement. Remember that you don’t need to copy and paste your thesis here, but you do need to revisit it. For example: If your thesis statement is “Hamlet’s tragic flaw is his inability to act and this leads to the many aspects of his downfall.” Your revisit might look like this: “Hamlet’s ultimate downfall was caused by his incessant hand wringing and inability to act.”
- **SUM-** You didn’t summarize your main points. You don’t need to give great detail here but the reader should be reminded of where your discussion has been.
- **REL-** You received this mark because you failed to relate what you were writing about to the big picture. See the forest as well as the trees. For Example: you might take your discussion of Hamlet’s tragic flaw, and relate it to the world in general and how people are flawed and how this may impact them.
- **CS-** Your essay did not have a strong closing statement. Remember this should sound dramatic. It is the last impression you leave with your reader.