

ACE

Answer, Cite, Explain

ACE is a formal and analytical writing style that allows you to prove your thoughts using evidence. This is a writing style that can be used in every class, and in every argument. In school, you should use ACE when writing short-response answers or in the body paragraphs of an essay. ACE contains the following:

Answer:

- A claim that states your position on the issue.
- The author and title of the text should be present the first time you mention the text.

Cite:

- The data you use can be a quote, statistic, or other evidence taken from a source that supports your claim.
- Choose the data that will **best** support your claim; not just any piece of data.
- Any **direct quotations** from the text should be quoted and cited properly.

Explain:

- The explanation interprets the data and shows how the data supports your claim.
- This is a good opportunity to consider and respond to possible counter-arguments.

ACE Example

Imagine your teacher asked you to write a five-paragraph essay (an introduction, three body paragraphs, and a conclusion) on the following prompt: "Does Collins avoid making the good characters all good and the bad characters all bad in *The Hunger Games*?" In a multi-paragraph essay, your thesis statement, which would come at the end of the first paragraph, would let the reader know the focus of the essay. For example, you might write, "One thing Suzanne Collins does well in *The Hunger Games* is avoiding the use of unrealistic characters who are all good or all bad." You decide then that you will write one paragraph on Haymitch, one on Peeta, and one on Katniss to prove this point. Here's how the paragraph on Katniss might look:

Another character who shows Collins' skill at avoiding making the good characters all good and the bad characters all bad is Katniss, who despite being the story's heroine, is seen to have some shortcomings. For one thing, Katniss is often impulsive. One place this is seen is when Katniss is at her private session with the Gamemakers and she narrates, "Without thinking, I pull an arrow from my quiver and send it straight at the Gamemakers' table" (182). Because she is feeling that they aren't really paying much attention to her, Katniss shoots the arrow near them to get their attention. She clearly doesn't take the time to think about what the consequences of this rash act might be. Another one of Katniss' shortcomings is that she is often a poor judge of character. For instance, she is suspicious of Peeta for much of the Games, not realizing that he is actually trying to protect her. At one point she thinks, "Not only is Peeta with the Careers, he's helping them find me" (163). This is clearly the wrong conclusion for her to reach. Just a short while later, after Peeta tells Katniss to run, she admits, "Peeta Mellark just saved my life." If Katniss were not so impulsive and a better judge of character, she would be a more perfectly "good" character.

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