

RESPONSE ESSAY CHEAT SHEET

Professor Story's Class

Paragraph 1: Introduction

Hook: a question or statement to catch the reader's interest. It must relate to your thesis in some way.

Author info: tell me what the article is about and who the author is and the title (very briefly!). Example: In the article "The Web Means the End of Forgetting" by Jeffrey Rosen, he discusses the dangers of using the web carelessly.

Thesis: This is where you connect with TWO of the author's big ideas. Use "I agree" if possible. Example: I agree with Rosen that we are hurting our chances of getting the job of our dreams by posting things our future employers might see. We need to start to take control of our identities and our future and stop mindlessly using the internet.

Paragraph 2: Summary Paragraph

Summarize the 4 big ideas in the reading using a mix of paraphrasing and quotes. Leave your opinions/ideas out of this paragraph and focus on the author. Make sure you make clear the fact that these are the author's ideas and not yours. Use expressions like Rosen says, or discusses, believes, states, argues, etc.

Paragraph 3: Response 1

Topic Sentence: In your own words create a topic sentence that is one reason that supports your thesis. It must also connect to the reading. Be specific. Don't say vague things like 'Posting on the internet is bad' unless you tell me WHY it's bad. Also bad is a vague word. Try to be as specific as possible. Say 'posting pictures of your drunk evening at Score's is irresponsible because you don't know if your future employer will see them.'

Quotes/Paraphrase: Include at least one quote (not too long) or paraphrase from the reading.

Transitions: Respond to the quote in some way and transition to a personal example.

Examples: Examples can be from your own experience.... "I once wrote a comment on a political blog where I called the author a 'moron'" or they can ask your reader to imagine a scenario. "Imagine not getting your dream job all because of that silly high school photo of you doing vodka shots." Examples can also occasionally be from books or movies you've seen or other sources. Examples should be convincing and

really “paint a picture” for the reader. A few choice details will make it feel real. Saying ‘When I was freshman at NYU...’ is better than saying “When I was at college....”

Concluding Sentence: Finally add a concluding sentence. Tell me why it’s important for EVERYONE to be responsible on the internet – not just you. If you’re not sure what to say in your concluding sentence look to your topic sentence for clues and hit your reader over the head hard with your point. Example: “Clearly, people should be careful about what they post on the internet since it can affect our lives in ways we can’t imagine.”

Paragraph 4: Response 2

Topic sentence: A second reason that supports your thesis.

Follow the same structure as in response one but try and to not make it identical. If you had a long example in the first response, have a shorter one here. If you included very few quotes or paraphrases in the first response, add another one here. Show some variety.

Paragraph 5: Conclusion

Sum up your main points. Do not say “In conclusion” or “To sum up”. Go out strong and make your final words have a bang. For example: “It’s time we started to learn to use the internet responsibly if we don’t want to live a life of regrets.” Do NOT introduce a new idea in your conclusion. For example, do not say suddenly say “Posting irresponsibly on the internet can cause problems at school” if you didn’t discuss that in your essay.

Other tips:

Focus on ideas that are in the reading. If the article is focused on recess and it’s connection to behavior, focus on grades, don’t then write a whole paragraph about how recess is great for making friends. You must connect with the author and if he doesn’t care about making friends then you shouldn’t place too much emphasis on it either. You can mention it in passing if it fits, but do not make an entire paragraph about recess and making friends.

Don’t say “I think” or “In my opinion”. If you say “I believe” then don’t do it more than once (I would recommend not at all).

Vary your vocabulary! Vary your sentence structure!

Examples are your proof. It is extremely important that you are able to paint a picture using clear, vivid examples to prove your point to the reader.

Use counter arguments!

It's Time to Let Teenagers Drink Again by Camille Paglia

Professor Story's Level 8 Reading & Writing Class

What is the drinking age in your country? Do you think the drinking age in this country should be lower or does the age limit curb drunk driving in young people and other negative consequences?

Vocabulary: Repeal (verb), Absurd (adj), Violation (noun), Prohibition (noun), Temperance (noun), Fanaticism (noun), Intrude (verb), Booze (slang), DWI (noun), Implicate (verb), Acquittal (noun), Deprive of (verb), Flirt (verb/noun), Fraternities or Frats (noun), Hangover (noun/verb), Saps (verb), Contamination (noun), Agile (adj)

What connection does Paglia make between Prohibition and Mothers Against Drunk Driving?

Paglia says the "government is not our nanny." Do you agree? Does the government have a responsibility to take care of its citizens and protect them or does it sometimes go too far and infringe on our personal liberties?

Paglia seems to suggest that its parents' responsibility to teach their children how to drink? Do you agree?

Do you agree with her assessment that alcohol is less problematic than marijuana?

In a sentence or two, how would you describe Paglia's view of the problem/solution.

Camille Paglia

It's Time to Let Teenagers Drink Again

The age-21 rule pushes kids toward pills and other antisocial behaviors

THE NATIONAL MINIMUM DRINKING Age Act, passed by Congress 30 years ago this July, is a gross violation of civil liberties and must be repealed. It is absurd and unjust that young Americans can vote, marry, enter contracts and serve in the military at 18 but cannot buy an alcoholic drink in a bar or restaurant. The age-21 rule sets the U.S. apart from all other advanced Western nations and lumps it with small or repressive countries like Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Indonesia, Qatar, Oman and the United Arab Emirates.

Congress was stampeded into this puritanical law by Mothers Against Drunk Driving, which, with all good intentions, wrongly intruded into an area of personal choice exactly as did the hymn-singing 19th century temperance crusaders, typified by Carrie Nation smashing beer barrels with her hatchet. Temperance fanaticism eventually triumphed and gave us 14 years of Prohibition. That in turn spawned the crime syndicates for booze smuggling, laying the groundwork for today's global drug trade. Thanks a lot, Carrie!

NOW THAT MARIJUANA REGULATIONS HAVE been liberalized in Colorado, it's time to strike down this dictatorial national law. Government is not our nanny. The decrease in drunk-driving deaths in recent decades is at least partly attributable to more uniform seat-belt use and a strengthening of DWI penalties. Today, furthermore, there are many other causes of traffic accidents, such as the careless use of cell phones or prescription drugs like Ambien—implicated in the recent trial and acquittal of Kerry Kennedy for driving while impaired.

Learning how to drink responsibly is a basic lesson in growing up—as it is in wine-drinking France or in Germany, with its family-oriented beer gardens and festivals. Wine was built into my own Italian-American upbringing, in which children were given sips of my grandfather's homemade wine. This civilized practice descends from antiquity. Beer was a nourishing food in Egypt and Mesopotamia, and wine was identified with the life force in Greece and Rome: *In vino veritas* (in wine, truth). Wine as a sacred symbol of unity and regeneration remains in the Christian Communion service. Virginia Woolf wrote that wine with a fine meal lights a “subtle and subterranean glow, which is the rich yellow flame of rational intercourse.”

HOW TEENAGERS DRINK



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The age at which beer and wine can be purchased in Germany; the drinking age in France, Italy and the U.K. is 18



70%

Percentage of U.S. teenagers who have had at least one drink by the time they are 18

What the cruel 1984 law did is deprive young people of safe spaces where they could happily drink cheap beer, socialize, chat and flirt in a free but controlled public environment. Hence in the 1980s we immediately got the scourge of crude binge drinking at fraternity keg parties cut off from the adult world. Women in that boorish free-for-all were suddenly fighting off date rape. Club drugs—ecstasy, methamphetamine, ketamine (a veterinary tranquilizer)—surged at raves for teenagers and on the gay-male-circuit scene.

ALCOHOL RELAXES, FACILITATES INTERACTION, inspires ideas and promotes humor and hilarity. Used in moderation, it is quickly flushed from the system, with excess punished by a hangover. But deadening pills, like today's massively overprescribed antidepressants, linger in the body and brain and may have unrecognized long-term side effects. Those toxic chemicals, often manufactured by shadowy firms abroad, have been worryingly present in a recent uptick of unexplained suicides and massacres. Half of the urban professional class in the U.S. seems doped on meds these days.

As a libertarian, I support the decriminalization of marijuana, but there are many problems with pot. From my observation, pot may be great for jazz musicians and Beat poets, but it saps energy and willpower and can produce physiological feminization in men. Also, it is difficult to measure the potency of plant-derived substances like pot. With brand-name beer or liquor, however, purchased doses have exactly the same strength and purity from one continent to another, with no fear of contamination by dangerous street additives like PCP.

Exhilaration, ecstasy and communal vision are the gifts of Dionysus, god of wine. Alcohol's enhancement of direct face-to-face dialogue is precisely what is needed by today's technologically agile generation, magically interconnected yet strangely isolated by social media. Clumsy hardcore sexting has sadly supplanted simply hanging out over a beer at a buzzing dive. By undermining the art of conversation, the age-21 law has also had a disastrous effect on our arts and letters, with their increasing dullness and mediocrity. This tyrannical infantilizing of young Americans must stop! ■

Paglia is the author of Glittering Images: A Journey Through Art From Egypt to Star Wars