

Claims, Evidence, Elaborations...

1. Begin with a **claim**.
 - A claim is a debatable statement. It states the argument you wish to make in your paragraph.
 - It should be concrete, clear, and complete, using key words from the prompt when applicable.

Prompt: How does the writer develop her point that Muhammad Ali was an inspirational figure for black Americans during his career?

Non-example: She does it by showing what others thought of him.

Non-example: The writer develops him as an inspirational figure.

Example 1: The writer proves Muhammad Ali to be an inspirational figure to black Americans by recounting his experiences and how they affected others.

Example 2: The author develops Ali as an inspirational figure for black Americans by demonstrating how proud he is to his Islamic faith and culture by speaking out about it.

2. Support your claim with **evidence**.
 - Evidence comes from the text. It can be in the form of examples or direct quotations.
 - Your evidence is your proof in support of the claim you've made.
 - You should have at least two pieces of solid evidence per claim. Gather these BEFORE you start writing so that you don't end up wasting your time. You will need to explain how each quote supports the claim, but that is the next step.
 - If you're quoting the text in any way, look to blend the quote into your writing.
 - Cite page numbers when quoting text.

Non-example number #1: "For black people, especially, he becomes the biggest symbol of black power and activism in the late 60's in a kind of defiant black masculinity" (paragraph 5)

Non-example number #2: For example, she states, "For black people, especially, he becomes the biggest symbol of black power and activism in the late 60's in a kind of defiant black masculinity" (paragraph 5)

Blended quote example #1: Ali proved to be "the biggest symbol of black power and activism in the late 60s," because he was unafraid to speak his mind and do things on his own terms. (paragraph 5)

Blended quote example #2: Ali embodied "a kind of defiant black masculinity," which empowered the black community during a time when activism was the focus of the Civil Rights movement. (paragraph 5)

3. All that's left is **elaboration**.
- This is where you explain how your evidence supports the claim you've made.
 - It's not about just summarizing or paraphrasing the quote or example... that would be redundant.
 - Instead, you get to add insight. It's your chance to take some risks and explore the possibilities of the quote/examples you chose.
 - Notice how when you do a good quote blend, some of the elaboration has already begun!

Example #1: (Based on my last example from the previous step)

While African Americans struggled against systemic oppression, they needed the kind of role model Ali made himself by not shying away from the aspects of life that typically might have held people back. He instead proudly touted his convictions, including his Islamic faith, which inspired others to do the same.

You follow this same format for short responses on assessments and with AoW analysis -- see below.

1. Make a claim about word choice or structure or figurative language or evidence or tone...
2. Support it with blended text evidence.
3. Elaborate, discussing how/why your evidence is meaningful.
4. Repeat with a new claim.

Let's try. Start by reading this brief article:

(1) It's almost Thanksgiving, and that means it's time to eat - and time to nap. You may have heard that turkey is to blame for your post-Thanksgiving sleepiness. But although turkey does contain a chemical that makes humans want to curl up in bed, you can't blame your sluggishness on the bird. Stuffing is the more likely culprit.

(2) Many people believe that turkey makes them sleepy, and for good reason: The meat contains an amino acid - those are the building blocks of proteins - called tryptophan. It helps the body make important chemicals called hormones, including melatonin . High melatonin levels tell your brain it's time to go to sleep.

(3) "Melatonin is well-known as being the hormone that lulls everyone to sleep. So people assume that this must be why turkey makes everyone so sleepy," says Kimberley Chien. She's a doctor at Weill Cornell Medicine and New York-Presbyterian Hospital whose specialty is kids' digestive systems. But lots of other foods have tryptophan - even chocolate has it - and some meats contain more of it than turkey does. So why is it just turkey that has a reputation for making us drowsy?

(4) Chien thinks that other Thanksgiving foods give turkey a boost. All of the stuffing, mashed potatoes, rolls and pies you eat are full of sugars. The chemicals your body uses to digest them happen to make it easier for other chemicals to get to your brain. A sort of wall usually exists between the blood flowing through your body and the blood flowing through your brain. But the process of digesting a tummy full of sugar makes it easier for certain things to slip through. This means tryptophan can trigger sleepytime chemical production more quickly.

(5) Eating a large meal full of fats and sugars will make you tired even without tryptophan, Chien says. When your stomach is full and stretched, your brain gets a signal telling it to send plenty of blood and energy down there to help you digest. That means less blood and energy for the rest of you!

(6) Then there's the fact that the holiday is busy. You probably spent the morning helping clean up the house and set the table - or bundled up on a long car ride to have dinner at someone else's house. Who wouldn't be tired?

(7) If you want to avoid feeling as stuffed as your roast turkey, try eating slowly and starting off with small portions. You can always have more food later, but taking your time will keep you from eating so much that you feel sick. Also, eat plenty of vegetables and drink plenty of water. It's easier to enjoy your pumpkin pie when you're not falling asleep in it!

Do your short response below. Make a claim about a move you saw the writer make, support it with blended and attributed text evidence, and discuss the evidence you provide specifically.