



# Analyzing and Annotating

## Expository and Opinion Writing

### LESSON AT A GLANCE:

#### Whole Class Activity

- Read opinion and expository pieces
- Analyze, annotate, summarize according to instructions.

### Objective

Students learn to identify the salient features of expository and opinion writing and recognize the organizational structures of each without the benefit of headings, photographs, or diagrams.

### Procedure

1. Explain to students that you'll be looking at two different pieces of writing about Siamese cats, each with a different purpose.
2. Reproduce and distribute The Expository Pillar, p. 64, as well as The Opinion Pillar, p. 65. Ask students to think about the elements featured on each pillar before reading the pieces. Then, reproduce and distribute Siamese Cats, p. 66, and The Unique and Beautiful Siamese, p. 69. **A great way to help with comprehension is to build background by showing an appropriate online video that illustrates the topic. You can also gather vivid online images to inform their reading.**
3. Project the text and ask them, at a glance, what's different about this piece than the previous pieces they've analyzed. (This piece appears in basic paragraph form, not in columns, and is missing the main idea headings.) Explain that the job of the reader is to determine what each main idea might be, even without the headings.
4. Next, read the entire piece aloud to them to familiarize students with the content. This helps students who might not read as fluently as others to better access the information.) Then project the student copy of the piece. Explain that they will be annotating the text, meaning that they'll be marking all the salient features. Use the annotated teacher pages and guiding questions to inform your discussion. Demonstrate how to mark all of the designated parts of the writing, pp. 67 and 70. Have students annotate their papers, identifying and labeling all key elements by following your lead. (Help students notice that the first sentence of each body paragraph usually contains the main idea.)

**Pay particular attention to the relationship between the main idea/reason and supporting details in each paragraph of the body of the piece.** Ask the class if each detail supports the main idea/reason – ex. If the main idea sentence is: *They have short, cream colored fur that darkens to a rich chocolate brown on their ears, face and toes...* ask the students for a “blurb” that summarizes what the entire paragraph is about (*appearance*) and have them mark that in the margin. Then, as you read each subsequent detail ex. *This elegant breed takes good care of its slim, muscular body so that it needs very little extra grooming...* ask the class if that detail supports the main idea. (yes) It's important to emphasize this relationship between main ideas and details so that they'll transfer this critical thinking to their own writing.

Finally, answer the accompanying questions, pp. 68 and 71. Repeat the process for the partner piece, pointing out the differences in genre and purpose.

5. On another day, reproduce and distribute Safety First: The Necessity of Snow Days, pp.72-73 (an expository piece), and Save Me From Snow Days!, pp. 77-78 (an opinion piece), and proceed in similar fashion.

(continued)

# Analyzing and Annotating









## Expository and Opinion Writing



**Note:** Because the organizational frameworks of opinion and expository writing are so similar, your students might need extra practice in distinguishing between the two and that is the purpose of this activity.

6. Choose from the sample texts provided, pp. 82-117. Unlike the *Siamese Cat* and *Snow Day* pieces these do not have “partners” in the alternate genre. Read and annotate these pieces until you’re certain your students understand the differences in the organizational structures and salient features of each. This is an essential foundational skill for the writing activities found in subsequent sections of this book. For extra practice recognizing the organizational structure of expository writing, you could ask your students to use the Summarizing Framework, p. 64, to summarize their independent reading of nonfiction texts.

### Key:

1. A Longer School Day? - opinion 
2. Honey Badgers - expository 
3. Bowling Party - opinion 
4. Birds of Prey - expository 
5. Hatchet by Gary Paulsen - response to text 
6. Because of Winn Dixie by Kate DeCamillo - response to text 
7. Great Smoky Mountain National Park - opinion 
8. The Loch Ness Monster - opinion 
9. Venomous Snakes vs. Constrictors - compare/contrast (See Teacher Reference Page, p. 112)

The significant difference between the Opinion and the Expository pillars is that body of the expository piece is composed of **main idea** paragraphs made up of factual details designed to inform the reader, while the body of the opinion piece is composed of **main reason** paragraphs. The information in **main reason** paragraphs is selected to support the author’s reasons for the opinion held.

**Note:** The Student Reference Sheet with Summarizing Framework, p. 64, can be used to summarize any text students have read. Also, you will find “Make it Your Own” instructions for creating texts for annotation and analysis that directly relate to your content area themes and topics, pp. 119-120.



# Student Reference Page

## EXPOSITORY PILLAR

### INTRODUCTION

Lead/Topic Sentence

Main Idea #1 \_\_\_\_\_

Detail

Detail

Detail

Detail

Main Idea #2 \_\_\_\_\_

Detail

Detail

Detail

Detail

Main Idea #3 \_\_\_\_\_

Detail

Detail

Detail

Detail

### Conclusion

#### Expository/Informative Summarizing Framework

TOPIC: \_\_\_\_\_

MAIN IDEA #1: \_\_\_\_\_

MAIN IDEA #2: \_\_\_\_\_

MAIN IDEA #3: \_\_\_\_\_



## OPINION PILLAR

### INTRODUCTION

Lead/Opinion Sentence

Main Reason #1 \_\_\_\_\_

Detail

Detail

Detail

Detail

Main Reason #2 \_\_\_\_\_

Detail

Detail

Detail

Detail

Main Reason #3 \_\_\_\_\_

Detail

Detail

Detail

Detail

### Conclusion

Creative Restatements of Main Reasons

#### Opinion Summarizing Framework

TOPIC: \_\_\_\_\_

MAIN REASON #1: \_\_\_\_\_

MAIN REASON #2: \_\_\_\_\_

MAIN REASON #3: \_\_\_\_\_



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## SIAMESE CATS

One of the oldest cat breeds in the world, the Siamese cat is a popular pet in the United States today. Let's learn more about the regal history, elegant appearance and unique needs of this charming breed.

Siamese cats were brought to America from Thailand back when it was called Siam. It is believed that the royal family of Siam kept these exotic felines as pets and that they were sometimes used to guard ancient temples. The breed arrived in America in 1878 when a Siamese cat was given to the wife of President Rutherford Hayes at a gift, who was a well-known cat lover. Mrs. Hayes said that the "mahogany-colored feline enjoyed making grand entrances" when she was entertaining at the White House. By the early 1900s, Siamese cats were exhibited in American cat shows.

These beautiful animals are known for their distinctive appearance. They move gracefully with their tails held high as though they know just how lovely they are. The royal cats of Siam have sparkling, bright blue eyes with a slight slant that adds to their exotic appearance. They have short, cream colored fur that darkens to a rich chocolate brown on their ears, face and toes. This elegant breed takes good care of its slim, muscular body so that it needs very little extra grooming. In some Siamese, the bright eyes are closely set and they can appear cross-eyed.

Unlike most cats, a Siamese is not an independent creature. They crave the company of their owners and will meow loudly and persistently to get it. If left alone too often, they are likely to get into mischief. I know of a Siamese who shredded a large quilt with its claws one lonely afternoon. All are capable of such destructive behavior, so be prepared to spend lots of time playing with your pet. Like a dog in a cat body, some even play fetch and most can be trained to walk on a leash.

With their interesting history and undeniable beauty, Siamese cats can be great companions to those who understand their unique needs. They are an excellent choice for people who have lots of time to devote to a pet.





## SIAMESE CATS

lead fact

introduction

1.) One of the oldest cat breeds in the world, the Siamese cat is a popular pet in the United States today. Let's learn more about the regal history, elegant appearance and unique needs of this charming breed.

topic sentence

2.) Siamese cats were brought to America from Thailand back when it was called Siam. It is believed that the royal family of Siam kept these exotic felines as pets and that they were sometimes used to guard ancient temples. The breed arrived in America in 1878 when a Siamese cat was given to the wife of President Rutherford Hayes at a gift, who was a well-known cat lover. Mrs. Hayes said that the "mahogany-colored feline enjoyed making grand entrances" when she was entertaining at the White House. By the early 1900s, Siamese cats were exhibited in American cat shows.

origin

3.) These beautiful animals are known for their distinctive appearance. They move gracefully with their tails held high as though they know just how lovely they are. The royal cats of Siam have sparkling, bright blue eyes with a slight slant that adds to their exotic appearance. They have short, cream colored fur that darkens to a rich chocolate brown on their ears, face and toes. This elegant breed takes good care of its slim, muscular body so that it needs very little extra grooming. In some Siamese, the bright eyes are closely set and they can appear cross-eyed.

appearance

4.) Unlike most cats, a Siamese is not an independent creature. They crave the company of their owners and will meow loudly and persistently to get it. If left alone too often, they are likely to get into mischief. I know of a Siamese who shredded a large quilt with its claws one lonely afternoon. All are capable of such destructive behavior, so be prepared to spend lots of time playing with your pet. Like a dog in a cat body, some even play fetch and most can be trained to walk on a leash.

like company

5.) With their interesting history and undeniable beauty, Siamese cats can be great companions to those who understand their unique needs. They are an excellent choice for people who have lots of time to devote to a pet.



# Student Page

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## SIAMESE CATS

1. This is an example of what kind of writing? Circle one:

Expository      Opinion

2. Number each paragraph.

3. Circle the **introduction**.

4. Box the **conclusion**.

5. Circle the **title** and identify the **topic**.

6. Underline the **lead** in red.

7. Underline the **topic sentence** in blue.

8. Underline each **MAIN IDEA** sentence. Write a blurb (a word or two) in the margin next to the paragraph explaining what the entire paragraph is about.

9. Read this detail: *Owners will need to spend a great deal of time at home so their furry friends don't get depressed.*

Where does this detail belong? Paragraph # \_\_\_\_\_

10. What word referent for "cat" is used to describe the Siamese in the second paragraph? \_\_\_\_\_

11. Number the references to each main idea restated in the conclusion. Use paragraph numbers.

12. Fill in the summarizing framework/author's prewriting plan:

TOPIC: \_\_\_\_\_

Main Idea #1 \_\_\_\_\_

Main Idea #2 \_\_\_\_\_

Main Idea #3 \_\_\_\_\_