

WORKED EXAMPLE

From Reading to a Simple Academic Response

See how an academic text can be analysed and turned into a basic academic response step by step.



Example Source (Real Study)

Tinto, V. (1993).
Leaving College: Rethinking the Causes and Cures of Student Attrition (2nd ed.).
University of Chicago Press.

“

Students' sense of belonging to the academic and social systems of the institution is a key factor in their decision to persist. When students interact with peers and staff, engage in learning activities, and feel part of the community, they are more likely to continue their studies.

”



The 5 Steps Overview

1



Read & Understand
Read the text carefully to get an overall understanding.

Understand the text and its key points.



2

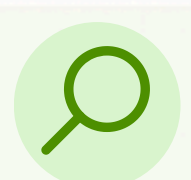


Identify the Main Idea
Ask what the author is mainly trying to say.

Find the central idea the author wants to communicate.



3

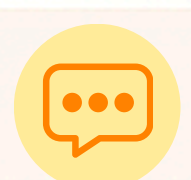


Identify Supporting Evidence
Look for reasons, examples or data that support the main idea.

Understand the key evidence and how it supports the idea.



4



Form Your Response
Decide your position and explain your thinking.

Agree, disagree or partly agree — and explain why.



5



Build a Simple Argument
Organise your ideas into a short academic-style paragraph.

Combine your ideas into a clear and logical response.



Key Takeaway

This example shows how to move from reading an academic text to understanding the main idea, identifying evidence, forming your own response, and building a simple academic argument.



STEP-BY-STEP EXAMPLE

Turn reading into understanding

1



READ & UNDERSTAND

Ask yourself:

- What is the text about?
- What is the overall message?

EXAMPLE



The text explains that students are more likely to stay at university when they feel they belong to the academic and social community.

2



IDENTIFY THE MAIN IDEA

Ask yourself:

- What is the author mainly trying to say?
- Summarise it in one sentence.

EXAMPLE



The main idea is that a strong sense of belonging to the university community is a key factor in student persistence.

3



IDENTIFY SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

Ask yourself:

- What reasons or examples does the author use?
- How do they support the main idea?

EXAMPLE



- Interaction with peers and staff
- Engagement in learning activities
- Feeling part of the community

These factors increase the likelihood that students will continue their studies.

4



FORM YOUR RESPONSE

Ask yourself:

- Do you agree, disagree or partly agree?
- Why?

EXAMPLE



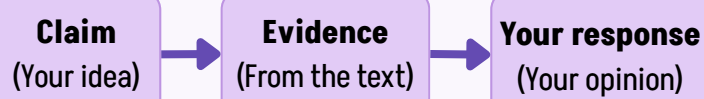
I agree with this idea because feeling connected and supported helps students stay motivated and confident, especially in the first year.

5



BUILD A SIMPLE ARGUMENT

Use a basic structure:



EXAMPLE PARAGRAPH



A sense of belonging is a key factor in student persistence. Tinto (1993) explains that when students interact with peers and staff, engage in learning activities, and feel part of the community, they are more likely to continue their studies. I agree with this idea because connection and support help students stay motivated and succeed.

TIPS FOR USING THIS GUIDE



Use these steps for journal articles, book chapters, and reports.



You don't need to understand every word.



Focus on ideas, not just information.



Take notes in your own words.



Practice regularly to build confidence!



Source: Adapted from Tinto, V. (1993). *Leaving College: Rethinking the Causes and Cures of Student Attrition* (2nd ed.). University of Chicago Press.