

Exercise walk-through

Developing commentary ■ 5.9

eXercise

You must be able to

- define a line of reasoning
- state how it is communicated
- explain what poetry commentary must do that prose commentary need not
- avoid paraphrase in place of commentary

Method — Line of reasoning

The logical sequence of claims that work together to defend the overarching thesis statement.

Method — How communicated

Through commentary that explains the logical relationship between the thesis and the claims and evidence within the body of the essay.

Method — Poetry's extra job

Because a poem's evidence is a few words, commentary must first establish what the words are doing before it can say what that supports. Prose commentary can often assume the sense of a quoted sentence; poetry commentary usually cannot.

Method — Not paraphrase

Restating a line in ordinary words is not commentary. Paraphrase tells the reader what the line says; commentary tells them what it does and why it matters to the claim.

Practice 2.1 ■ 2 marks

Define a line of reasoning and state how it is communicated.

Solution 2.1

Method: Line of reasoning

Worked steps

the logical sequence of claims defending the thesis **B1**, communicated through commentary explaining the relationship between thesis, claims and evidence **B1**.

Practice 2.2 ■ 2 marks

Explain what poetry commentary must do first.

Solution 2.2

Method: Poetry's extra job

Worked steps

establish what the words are doing **B1** before saying what that supports **B1**.

Practice 2.3 ■ 2 marks

Paraphrase is not commentary.

(a) State the difference.

(b) State why poetry commentary cannot assume the sense.

Solution 2.3

Method: Poetry's extra job

Worked steps

(a) paraphrase says what the line says **B1**; commentary says what it does and why it matters to the claim **B1**. (b) a poem's sense is often not obvious from the quotation alone **B1**.

Exam-style 3.1 ■ 1 mark

Paraphrase tells the reader what the line

A says

B does

C proves

D implies about the thesis

Solution 3.1

Method: Not paraphrase

A says



B does

C proves

D implies about the thesis

Worked steps

A. what it says.

Exam-style 3.2 ■ 1 mark

A line of reasoning is a sequence of

- A** claims
- B** quotations
- C** paraphrases
- D** titles

Solution 3.2

Method: Line of reasoning

A claims



B quotations

C paraphrases

D titles

Worked steps

A. claims.

Exam-style 3.3 ■ 1 mark

A student quotes a line and restates it in plain words.

- (a) State what is missing.
- (b) Explain what should follow the restatement.

Solution 3.3

Method: Not paraphrase

Worked steps

(a) the commentary **B1**. (b) a statement of what the line's wording does **B1** and how that supports the paragraph's claim **B1**.