

Writing Like an ACE: A Guide to Academic Reading and Writing

Whenever you place information into the ACE model matrix, you must be clear on what **type** of information you're writing and how it **functions** for the good of the paragraph. Below are some guides to help you determine what kind of information should go where. The list of types is not exhaustive.

Assertion:

- Types: causes, correlations, opinions, your observations, and your suggestions.
- Function: Describe how this helps demonstrate your essay's thesis statement.
- This is the only idea that you are trying to teach your reader in this paragraph.
- If there's more than one idea, you need to have more than one ACE. If there's nothing to argue, then it is likely not an assertion but commentary or evidence.

Evidence:

- Types: studies, definitions, images, quotations, others' observations and suggestions.
- Function: Briefly note how you intend for this to help you defend your assertion.
- Remember, "All cited information is evidence; all evidence must be cited."
- This is corroborated information, not your own ideas. Only when you've performed a peer-reviewed study may you cite your own work as evidence.

Commentary:

- Types: analysis, interpretation (e.g. "This means ..."), elaboration, explanation.
- Function: How does this connect your evidence to the assertion?
- No evidence should be placed here.
- This is where you showcase your voice and understanding of the evidence and how it proves your assertion.

NB: Understand that most writers do not consciously write in this manner, but the best academic writing approximates this structure. If you use the ACE model to help you read others' writing, you will find that authors can exercise significant freedom in and around this form. But you will quickly notice how even the best authors commit logical fallacies and fail to articulate their points in a compelling manner. The most rigid use of the ACE model will keep you from becoming such a writer.

Exercise: Use the ACE model to analyze the anatomy of the paragraph below. Citations have been removed so as not to give away the evidence. Use blue to color the assertion; green, the commentary; and red, the evidence.

	The Writing Center is an invaluable resource for students. It teaches
	students study and time management skills. These equip students to make
	the most of their education. Writing Center usage also comes at no extra
	cost to students, so to not use it is a waste of student fees. And many
	students have reported grade improvement on account of the assistance
	provided. Thus the Writing Center can enhance the student learning
	experience.

The ACE Model Matrix

ASSERTION	
<p>Type: Function:</p>	
EVIDENCE	COMMENTARY
<p>1.</p> <p>Citation: Type and Function:</p>	<p>1.</p> <p>Type and Function:</p>
<p>2.</p> <p>Citation: Type and Function:</p>	<p>2.</p> <p>Type and Function:</p>
<p>3.</p> <p>Citation: Type and Function:</p>	<p>3.</p> <p>Type and Function:</p>
<p>Transition:</p>	