

Three Ways to Insert Proof in Your Paper

1. P - I - E = Point Illustration Explanation
Make a point.
Illustrate the point with something from the text.
Explain how the illustration proves your point.
2. Quotation sandwich:
Bread—Say where a quotation comes from or who said it
Filling—Quotation, summary, or paraphrase
Bread—Say what this adds to your paper without repeating the quote
3. Use different levels of detail in a quote and a comment (be more general or more specific).
If the quotation is fact, talk about it in ideas.
If ideas, talk about it in facts.
Don't simply repeat the quote in different words.
Idea: Arizona is too hot to require students to wear long pants to school.
Information: When the temperature rises above 100°, Cholla students wear shorts.

Remember that these are formulas; try not to let your writing look formulaic. That means that some P-I-E paragraphs will be I-I-I-E-E-P or P-I-I-I-E-E or P-I-I-E-I-E. Remember, too, that the 5-paragraph essay, though handy on an essay test, isn't necessarily the best formula for *all* writing.

Kinds of evidence

Point

A thesis statement (assertion) or a topic sentence for a paragraph

Illustration

quotations or summaries from a source
examples or illustrations
facts or statistics
pictures, drawings, or charts
rules, laws, or records
stories or memories
expert or witness testimony or opinion
past experience
metaphor or simile comparing one subject to another

Explanation

What does the evidence prove?
Why is it included in the essay?
How does the illustration prove the point?

P-I-E

P - I - E = Point Illustration Explanation (easier to identify while composing, not after it's written)

Make a point.

Illustrate the point with something from the text.

Explain how the illustration proves your point.

Made-up example:

POINT: Arizona is a great place to live.

ILLUSTRATION: We can wear shorts in the winter.

ILLUSTRATION: We can also go outside almost any day of the year without being chilled.

EXPLANATION: Those are two examples of weather-related reasons why Arizona is a great place.

Example from an actual student paper (note that divisions come in the middle of sentences sometimes).

POINT: The homeless person taking shelter in the boxes is the first symbol of separating the rich from poor.

ILLUSTRATION: In the picture a person rests within a dirty makeshift cardboard home that is tied to a bench with string and plastic tape. Inside the box lies a new pillow with no pillow case along with a pink towel and a green sheet. The bench is next to a fence

EXPLANATION: that seems to divide the rich and poor.

ILLUSTRATION: There is garbage on the ground underneath the bench,

EXPLANATION: where it seems to be that the fence represents the separation "trash" from the "wealthy."

Quotation Sandwich

Quotation sandwich:

Bread—Say where a quotation comes from or who said it

Filling—Quotation, summary, or paraphrase

Bread—Say what this adds to your paper without repeating the quote

Made-up example:

BREAD: Plato was speaking to a group of young students one day at his school.

FILLING: He said, "Wise men talk because they have something to say; fools talk because they have to say something."

BREAD: He wanted speakers to think before they spoke.

Example from an actual student paper

BREAD: When they were settling into the mansion, she was made to stay in a room that was obviously designed to house small children.

FILLING: "It was a nursery first, and then a playroom and gymnasium, I should judge, for the windows are barred for little children, and there are rings and things in the walls" (256).

BREAD: The nursery was an unusual choice since the couple had a baby who most logically should have stayed there.