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BA English Honours | Semester VI | ENG6FS113

Academic Writing

Module 2: The Research and Writing Process: Thesis, Outlining, and Drafting • Comprehensive Notes

Chapter 2: The Architecture of the Research Essay

Writing an academic paper is an iterative, multi-stage recursive process encompassing conceptualization, thesis formulation, structural outlining, drafting, and rigorous peer revision.

2.1 Engineering the Thesis Statement

The thesis statement is the intellectual backbone of an academic essay. A successful thesis is not a statement of undeniable fact ("Shakespeare wrote Hamlet") or a broad topic announcement ("This paper discusses tragedy"). Rather, it is a focused, arguable, and defensible claim that guides the entire evidentiary structure of the manuscript.

2.2 Paragraph Architecture: The MEAL Framework

Effective academic body paragraphs follow the MEAL structure:

- **M - Main Idea:** A clear, focused topic sentence stating the paragraph's core claim.
- **E - Evidence:** Direct textual quotes, empirical data, or scholarly citations substantiating the claim.
- **A - Analysis:** The researcher's critical interpretation explaining *how* the evidence proves the claim.
- **L - Lead-out / Link:** Connecting the paragraph's insight back to the central thesis and transitioning to the next paragraph.

Advanced Critical Theory, Hermeneutics & Literary Praxis

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1. Hermeneutic Paradigms and Textual Mechanics

Critical inquiry into Module 2: The Research and Writing Process: Thesis, Outlining, and Drafting reveals how textual forms construct meaning through complex aesthetic strategies and structural choices:

- **Structuralism and Semiotic Deconstruction:** The organization of signs, tropes, and syntactical structures establishes narrative authority while simultaneously revealing internal fissures. Binary oppositions embedded within the discourse—such as center versus margin, tradition versus modernity, and subjective interiority versus objective reality—are systematically problematized through textual slippages and ambiguous signifiers.
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- **Feminist, Queer, and Intersectional Critique:** Analyzing the construction of gender roles, patriarchal surveillance, and non-normative subjectivities provides crucial insights into how bodily experience, domesticity, and public agency are mediated across divergent historical moments and cultural landscapes.
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2. Historiographical Context and Reception Theory

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3. Comparative Aesthetic and Thematic Matrix

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