

## Key Components to Include/Remember for Your Critical Article Handout



**Think “Main Issues” Instead of “Main Ideas”:** Instead of concentrating on main points of the article and/or summarizing it, try to focus just on the “**issues**” that the writer is bringing up. What issues related to children’s literature does he/she explain or focus on? Don’t worry so much about including everything the author says, but rather examining and sharing topics/concepts/issues are brought up as important to consider.

**Identify the Thesis and Pay Attention to Headings:** Usually, an author will identify his/her thesis or main point/argument in the first few paragraphs. Look for it, and try to identify early on what the writer is trying to prove. Then, many articles are broken up in sections, with each section making a specific point that supports the thesis. Watching for this structure can help you pick out the author’s main goals, which you want to include on your handout. And make sure to identify what books he/she uses as proof.

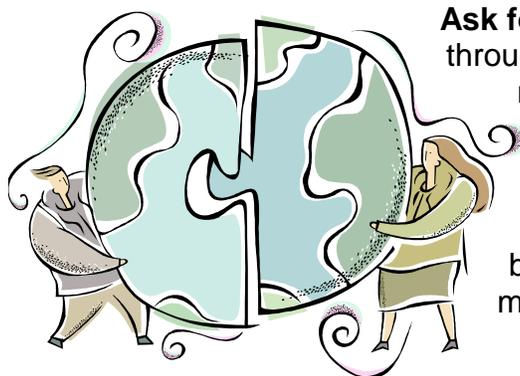
**Don’t Focus On Details, but Use Them For Support:** After you list/highlight the main issues brought up by the article, think about the specific details, examples or evidence the author provides to support these issues. Include just a little bit of this detail to help explain the author’s perspective... remember that you just want to hit the highlights.



**Make a Snazzy Handout:** Consider the design/layout of your handout. Make sure that it is easy to read and draws attention to your main ideas. Think about how you might use fonts, text boxes, bold or other format choices, headings, images, etc—these can be useful tools to create a snazzy handout.

### **Define Key Terms and Include Additional Resources:**

First, a great way to highlight key ideas for your colleagues is to identify terms they may not be familiar with, then define them. Also, don’t forget to include a short bibliography of other works that relate to the same topic. You might find some of these in the author’s works cited page. Try to include at least five examples of other articles/books that relate to the main issues brought up in your article, and cite these in MLA format.



**Ask for Help:** I suggest working with another student to talk through the ideas of the article, and I encourage you to ask me for help as well. Feel free to set up a time to meet in my office hours (or at another time) and go over your ideas/understanding of the article.

**Prepare to Share:** Make sure that you can offer just a brief description of what you read to the class- just a minute or so if asked in class!