

“The Ugly Truth About Beauty” by Dave Barry

BASIC EXAMPLE vs. ADVANCED EXAMPLE

1. THE FIRST SENTENCE identifies the **essay's author, title, and genre**, provides the **article's date in parenthesis**, uses some form of the **verb** says (claims, asserts, suggests, argues, aka “a rhetorically accurate verb) followed by that, and the **essay's thesis** (paraphrased or quoted).

BASIC EXAMPLE: In Dave Barry's essay "The Ugly Truth about Beauty" (1998), he satirizes the ways that women unnecessarily obsess about their physical appearances.

ADVANCED EXAMPLE: In the essay "The Ugly Truth about Beauty" (1998), Dave Barry, nationally known humorist, argues that "...women generally do not think of their looks in the same way that men do" (4) and in the process become unnecessarily and unrealistically concerned with their appearances.

(Notice: title and author information, optional author description, and use of cited text in explaining the thesis)

2. THE SECOND SENTENCE conveys the **author's support for the thesis** (how the author develops the essay); the trick is to convey a good sense of the breadth of the author's support/examples, usually in chronological order.

BASIC EXAMPLE: Barry develops his ideas by juxtaposing men's perceptions of their looks with women's, contrasting male and female role models, and comparing men's interests with women's.

ADVANCED EXAMPLE: Barry illuminates this discrepancy by juxtaposing men's perceptions of their looks ("average-looking") with women's ("not good enough"), by contrasting male role models (He-Man, Buzz-Off) with female role models (Barbie, Cindy Crawford), and by comparing men's interests (the Super Bowl, lawn care) with women's (manicures).

(Notice: more sophisticated vocabulary and use of both direct and indirect citations of text in support of ideas.)

3. THE THIRD SENTENCE analyzes the **author's style** and **purpose** using an in order to statement:

BASIC EXAMPLE: Using examples from popular culture, he exaggerates and stereotypes these differences in order to poke fun at a social norm and encourage women to rethink their acceptance of these social expectations

ADVANCED EXAMPLE: Using examples from popular culture (the Oprah show, Brad Pitt), he exaggerates and stereotypes these differences in order to prevent women from so eagerly accepting society's expectation of them; in fact, Barry claims that men who want women to "look like Cindy Crawford" are "idiots" (10).

(Notice: fuller analysis of author's purpose, direct citation of text, and compound complex sentence structure.)

4. THE FOURTH SENTENCE describes the essay's **target audience** and characterizes **the author's relationship with that audience**—and addresses the essay's **tone**:

BASIC EXAMPLE: Barry opens and closes the essay by directly addressing men ("If you're a man...") and offering to give them advice, but his actual audience is both men and women, whom he addresses with a warm but mocking tone.

ADVANCED EXAMPLE: Barry's ostensible audience is men because he opens and closes the essay by directly addressing men ("If you're a man...") and offering to give them "advice" in a mockingly conspiratorial tone; however, by using humor to poke fun at both men and women's perceptions of themselves, Barry makes his essay palatable to both genders and hopes to convince women to stop obsessively "thinking they need to look like Barbie" (8).

(Notice: more specific references to the text and discussion of the connection between audience and speaker.)

Put it all together and it looks darn smart!

BASIC EXAMPLE

In Dave Barry's essay "The Ugly Truth about Beauty" (1998), he satirizes the ways that women unnecessarily obsess about their physical appearances. Barry develops his ideas by juxtaposing men's perceptions of their looks with women's, contrasting male and female role models, and comparing men's interests with women's. Using examples from popular culture, he exaggerates and stereotypes these differences in order to poke fun at a social norm and encourage women to rethink their acceptance of these social expectations. Barry opens and closes the essay by directly addressing men ("If you're a man...") and offering to give them advice, but his actual audience is both men and women, whom he addresses with a warm but mocking tone.

Word Count: 116

ADVANCED EXAMPLE:

In the essay "The Ugly Truth about Beauty" (1998), Dave Barry, nationally known humorist, argues that "...women generally do not think of their looks in the same way that men do" (4) and in the process become unnecessarily and unrealistically concerned with their appearances. Barry illuminates this discrepancy by juxtaposing men's perceptions of their looks ("average-looking") with women's ("not good enough"), by contrasting male role models (He-Man, Buzz-Off) with female role models (Barbie, Cindy Crawford), and by comparing men's interests (the Super Bowl, lawn care) with women's (manicures). Using examples from popular culture (the Oprah show, Brad Pitt), he exaggerates and stereotypes these differences in order to prevent women from so eagerly accepting society's expectation of them; in fact, Barry claims that men who want women to "look like Cindy Crawford" are "idiots" (10). Barry's ostensible audience is men because he opens and closes the essay by directly addressing men ("If you're a man...") and offering to give them "advice" in a mockingly conspiratorial tone; however, by using humor to poke fun at both men and women's perceptions of themselves, Barry makes his essay palatable to both genders and hopes to convince women to stop obsessively "thinking they need to look like Barbie" (8).

Word count: 205

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