Tips on Writing Rhetorical Analysis

Ms Lewis AP Language and Composition

1. Identify the main point, idea or purpose, state it clearly! (e.g. Annie Dillard encourages the reader to live life with passion.)
2. Do not use information from the prompt to pad your first paragraph!
3. Avoid summarizing!!!

4. Do not use useless phrases such as “...keeps the reader’s interest ...uses good syntax, ... to keep your attention... ... uses excellent rhetorical strategies.”

5. For every strategy mentioned, give an example (short quotes or implicit examples) (e.g. Dillard uses savage imagery such as “stalks,” “killing,” “crunching,” “to introduce her theme.)

6. Connect every strategy to the author’s idea or main point. (e.g. Dillard uses violent imagery such as “crunching,” “bites,” “splitting,” and “in order to foreshadow her point at the end that people should shed their lackadaisical ways and live with passion.” or (e.g. Words such as “bites,” “killing,” “and “splitting foreshadow the intensity of her purpose.)

7. AVOID PASSIVE VOICE! These are passive voice examples. Change these passive constructions to active. Add words if necessary:

   a) Used most prominently in the first paragraph is violent diction to describe the weasel.

   b) There is violent diction used to foreshadow the main point at the end.