

In-Class Exercise: Identifying the Elements of Thought and Analyzing the Logic of an Article

It would be easy to dismiss Lady Gaga as yet another example of the music industry's sexualization of its female stars. She appeared on the cover of *Rolling Stone* in an outfit of translucent plastic bubbles designed to give the impression that she was naked and just out of the shower. She spit flames from her nipples onstage. She regularly performs in lingerie, and the opening section of her video for "Paparazzi" looks and feels just like a porn flick. To those of us old enough to remember, she seems like another incarnation of Madonna, except that the battle over women's right to embrace their own sexuality seems to have been settled decades ago. Viewed in that light, Lady Gaga is no gender rebel, just a retreaded sex object.

However, there are elements of her star persona that are more encouraging for those who hope that popular music can be a place for undermining rather than reinforcing traditional gender roles. In particular, though she has refused to comment on it, fans and critics persistently circulate the rumor that she is transgendered or intersex. The Internet was abuzz recently with close analysis of an accidental crotch flash, which some claimed showed a small penis. Her unwillingness to distance herself from the rumors—some of this analysis took place in the fan sections of her official site—places her on the side of intersex and transgendered people even if she herself is neither. So perhaps she is more of a gender rebel than we think.

- 1) The main **purpose** of this article is _____.
(State as **accurately** as possible the author's purpose for writing the article.)
- 2) The key **question** that the author is addressing is _____.
(Figure out the key **question** in the mind of the author when s/he wrote the article.)
- 3) The most important **information** in this article is _____.
(Figure out the **facts, experiences, data** the author is using to support her/his conclusions.)
- 4) The main **inferences/conclusions** in this article are _____.
(Identify the key **conclusions** the author comes to and presents in the article.)
- 5) The key **concept(s)** we need to understand in this article is (are) _____.
By these **concepts** the author means _____.
(Figure out the most **important** ideas you would have to understand in order to understand the author's line of reasoning.)
- 6) The main **assumption(s)** underlying the author's thinking is (are) _____.

Text in Red

Indicates the infusion of the
Elements of Reasoning

Text in Blue

Indicates the infusion of the
Intellectual Standards

Text in Green

Indicates the infusion of the
Intellectual Traits

[Bracketed Text]

Indicates the indirect use of
critical thinking **[Elements]**,
[Standards], or **[Traits]**

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Framework for Critical Thinking**

(Figure out what the author **is taking for granted** [that might be questioned].)

7a) If we take this line of reasoning seriously, the **implications** are _____.
(What **consequences** are likely to follow if people take the author's line of reasoning seriously?)

7b) If we fail to take this line of reasoning seriously, the **implications** are _____.
(What **consequences** are likely to follow if people ignore the author's reasoning?)

8) The main **point(s) of view** presented in this article is (are) _____.
(What is the author looking at, and **[how is s/he seeing it]**?)