

TEXT RESPONSE

Text Responses are forms of writing which are concerned with the reader's experiences and opinions about a text. The idea comes from a long literary tradition, where instructors would ask their students to respond to a text.

In a Text Response, you are expected to discuss how you agree or disagree with a particular text. For example, you may talk about how the text seems correct or incorrect in its facts or opinions. You may even include your own take on the situation, bringing in your own beliefs, faith, opinions, arguments, etc.

Usually, a Text Response is focused on an argumentative/persuasive text. Text Responses are unlike "Reader Responses" which are specifically centered on a work of literature (e.g., a work of fiction, poetry, or a novel).

EX: Reader Response (Spoiler Alert!)

The classic novella (or short book) entitled, *The Little Prince*, by Antoine de Saint-Exupery is a delightful and tragic tale about a little prince who lives on large asteroid called B-612. He spends his day caring for his little asteroid and the life there. Bored and interested in having some sort of adventure, he leaves his planet to explore other asteroids/planets. He eventually lands on Earth, and finds it not as hospitable as his home. So, he longs to return. He encounters a snake who says to him, "Send anyone back to the land from whence he came." The prince consents to the snake's promise; the snake bites the little prince; and, the prince dies.

The book seems troubling, since the prince dies so abruptly. I don't understand what the significance of killing the prince brings to the audience. Since the book is so short, I wonder if the author simply wanted to end the book, so he kills off the main character. In reading the book, there is much to consider in terms of life lessons. The prince encounters several people who are unique; each character brings a different lesson or moral. However, the snake simply seems to bring a quick and bitter end to a book that seems so invested in the main character.

EX: Text Response

The text, "The Case for Torture," by Michael Levin explores the idea of Torture. He suggests that although torture is unconstitutional, we might consider torture to save lives. He discussed how we might have killed Hitler (thus preventing the holocaust), yet we did not. Torture can be seen as a pre-emptive strike, a way of alleviating the losses of multiple lives by harming one person. He proposes the question/scenario: If a group of Terrorists had placed a bomb in a major city (like Manhattan), would it be okay to torture a captured terrorist in order to find the bomb and save millions? He suggests that we had better start thinking about this idea and the ethics involved with torture.

I agree with Levin that there are several cases for torture, and I agree that we must consider the ethics of saving lives over the harm of a terrorist. One thing that is particularly powerful in this text is the use of examples. These examples are powerful and potent.

Moreover, these examples are very real possibilities. Since Levin pulls in many real scenarios, he makes it seem very valid that we consider his proposals and ideas.

In completing a text response, you must realize that there is never a correct answer or presumption about the text (which the instructor wants). You simply “write what is on your mind.” You can praise a text’s position or even complain about a text’s position.

The main idea is to react to what you are reading. And, your reaction can be based on the reading as a whole, sections of the text, direct lines in the text, support within the text, etc. You can agree or disagree with anything. Again, the key is to react to the text.