

The Basis¹

S.I. Hyakawa's Levels of Abstraction

Typical Manifestations in Writing:

Thesis		Topic Sentence	Evidence
Level Four (Most Abstract)	Level Three (Less Abstract)	Level Two (More Defined)	Level One (Specific)
<p>Abstractions:</p> <p>Life, Beauty, Love, Time, Success, Power, Happiness, Faith, Hope, Charity, Evil, Good,</p> <p>Food</p>	<p>Noun Class (Broad Groups):</p> <p>People, men, women, young people, everybody, nobody, industry, we, goals, things, television,</p> <p>Vegetables</p>	<p>Noun Categories (More Definite Groups):</p> <p>Teenagers, Middle-Class, Clothing Industry, Parents, College Campus, Newborn Child, Comedies,</p> <p>Potatoes</p>	<p>Specific (Identifiable Nouns):</p> <p>Levi 501 Jeans, My Blue and Three-bedroom house on Hollis Street, <i>The Hunger Games</i>,</p> <p><i>French Fries</i></p>



Basic Essay Frame

Thesis

Topic Sentence

Evidence

C o m m e n t a r y

Topic Sentence

Evidence

C o m m e n t a r y

Topic Sentence

Evidence

C o m m e n t a r y

¹ Based on a lesson originally delivered by Valarie Stevenson; used with permission.

THE PATTERN

Taken from Question 2 overview from 2013: “In short, rhetorical analysis means explaining not only **what** writers are saying but also **why** and **how** they are saying it.”

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Sentence Templates and Frames

Most Basic:

- *(Author/Speaker) presents² (summary of major literary event—potentially including a literary term)*

E.g.

Connell presents a mysterious, tropical night time setting.

Poe presents a first person narrator recounting his murder of an innocuous old man.

Orwell presents the many hardships that the animals had to endure under the leadership of the pigs.

Bradbury presents rival cities continually inferring impending threats.

More Advanced:

(Author) presents (summary of major literary event—potentially including a literary term) in order to (answer what you understand about characters/plot/Universal Insight based on the summarized element—potentially including a literary term).

E.g. Connell presents a mysterious, tropical night time setting in order to develop an eerie mood.

Poe presents a first person narrator recounting his murder of an innocuous old man in order to demonstrate the narrator's mental instability.

Orwell presents the many hardships that the animals had to endure under the leadership of the pigs in order to illustrate the detrimental outcomes of oppressive regimes.

Bradbury presents rival cities continually inferring impending threats in order to characterize the nonsensical nature of their conflicts.

Holistic:

² Feel free to substitute any applicable rhetorical or literary verb.

Literature:

(Author) writes **(Title)** in order to illustrate **(Universal Idea)** **(Insight about universal idea that is true for most, if not all, people)**.

Rhetoric:

Understand:

(Speaker) delivers/writes **(speech/article)** in order to highlight (answer to what the speaker wants the audience to understand about the (subject)).

President John F. Kennedy delivers his steel crisis media address in order to highlight the unjustifiable and selfish actions recently taken by US steel executives in the midst of a time of economic recovery.

Do:

(Speaker) delivers/writes **(speech/article)** in order to move **(insert audience)** to **(answer to what the speaker wants the audience to do now that they have the understanding)**.

President John F. Kennedy delivers his steel crisis media address in order to move the American public to join him in condemning the US steel executives' actions and ultimately provide social pressure—derived from their anger at the injustice—which will hopefully assist in lowering steel costs.

Combined:

(Speaker) delivers/writes **(speech/article)** in order to highlight **(answer to what the speaker wants the audience to understand)**, ultimately moving **(insert audience)** to **(answer to what the speaker wants the audience to do now that they have the understanding)**.

President John F. Kennedy delivers his steel crisis media address in order to highlight the unjustifiable and selfish actions recently taken by US steel executives in the midst of a time of economic recovery, ultimately moving the American public to join him in condemning the US steel executives' actions and provide social pressure—derived from their anger at the injustice—which will hopefully assist in lowering steel costs.

Stems for Integrating Textual Evidence:

- a. ~~Take, for example, how~~ (choose one: before/after)...
- b. ~~For example,~~ (choose one: before/after)...
- c. ~~For instance,~~ (choose one: before/after)...
- d. Although it may be commonly (choose one: argued, theorized, proposed, presented, accepted) that “insert source information that the paragraph will refute without mentioning source’s name)” (insert citation), (present your counterclaim which may include another source’s text).
- e. (Expert’s (or publication’s) Name), a (credentials that suggest validity), (choose one: argues, presents, details, theorizes, refutes, challenges, exposes, (anything but “says,” “states,” or “claims”)) (insert text and citation).
- f. (Expert’s (or publication’s) Name), a (credentials that suggest validity), (choose one: argues, presents, details, theorizes, refutes, challenges, exposes, (anything but “says,” “states,” or “claims”)) (flow “into the less than 13 words you intend on quoting” (Citation)); however, it must be admitted that (insert a point of concession in relation to the sources argument).
- g. Summarize the context before the textual evidence and then flow “into the less than 13 words you intend on quoting” (Citation).
- h. Summarize the context before the textual evidence and then flow “into the less than 13 words you intend on quoting” (Citation); however, it must be admitted that (insert a point of concession in relation to the sources argument).

Thesis Statement Frame for Literary Analysis:

In the (Genre) (Title), (Author’s Name) *presents*[1] ___ (Literary Element(s) 2x-4x) ___ in order to (choose one: highlight, convey, showcase, expose) textual understandings based on literary elements), ultimately illustrating that (universal idea) (specific insight about the idea based on the literary elements).

Poetry:

In her poem “The Century Quilt,” Marilyn Waniek *weaves together natural symbolism, describes familial memories, and conveys the speaker’s hopes for her future* in order to showcase *her role in the development of the quilt’s multi-faceted pattern*, ultimately illustrating that *family is comprised of the intricate interplay between past, present, and future generations*.

Literary Short:

In the excerpt from the story “Cherry Bomb,” Maxine Clair *presents a childish philosophy, contrasts a juvenile lesson with a harsh reality, and presents an arduous journey along with an attitude of gratefulness* in order to *characterize the narrator’s childhood as a time of blissful and naive adventure*, ultimately illustrating that *nostalgia brings comfort and joy to a mature mind*. [2]

Literary Argument:

In the novella, *Of Mice and Men*, Steinbeck *presents two mercy killings* in order to showcase *the deep care that the characters involved shared for one another*, ultimately illustrating that *companionship often requires immense sacrifice*.

Thesis Statement Frame for Rhetorical Analysis:

In the (Genre) (Title of the Piece)—(Contextual Information about Author and/or Text)—(Author’s Name) (Rhetorical Choice 1), (Rhetorical Choice 2), (Rhetorical Choice 3) in order to ____ (Answer: What is the audience supposed to understand after experiencing the text?)____, ultimately moving (insert audience) to ____ (Answer: what is the audience supposed to do after experiencing the text?).

E.g.,

Throughout the 1962 press release in response to the steel crisis, John F. Kennedy—the president at the time—presents public sacrifice, lists dire consequences, alludes to Cold War tensions, and reveals voluminous profits in order to vilify the actions of the steel executives, ultimately moving the American public to join the cause in demanding lower prices and greater public responsibility.

Thesis Statement Frames for Synthesis and Argument:

Generating a Complex Thesis	Against Horror-Based Entertainment	Support Horror-Based Entertainment
<p>It’s now time to generate a thesis that will guide your essay. Because your essay is meant to be sophisticated, it must present compound and/or complex thoughts about the issue(s) you are discussing; consequently, your thesis should be a compound, complex, or compound-complex sentence. Feel free to use any of the general templates below (as long as they fit the prompt), or you can make sure that you include at least one of the words in italics at the bottom of this box when you construct your own thesis.</p> <p>Template 1 (Closed) (Claim about topic) because (list reason(s)).</p> <p>Template 2 (Open) (Claim(s) about topic) because (list unifying idea/reason).</p> <p>Template 3 (Open) (Concession/counterargument language) (concession/counter claim), (claim about topic you will prove).</p>	<p><i>What affects does horror-based entertainment have on an individual’s response to the unknown and macabre?</i></p> <p><i>What are the ways individuals respond to the unknown and macabre?</i></p> <p><i>What is my position about this relationship? (This will be naturally articulated when you combine your answers to questions 1 and 2 in your initial claim and thesis)</i></p> <p>Template 1 Commercializing fear and horror negatively influences human responses to the unknown and macabre <i>because such media desensitizes individuals to troubling content and normalizes culturally inappropriate gender norms.</i></p> <p>Template 2 Individuals shouldn’t engage with commercialized, fear and horror-based entertainment because such media negatively influences human responses to the unknown and macabre.</p> <p>Template 3 <i>Although it’s natural to be intrigued by the unknown, and commercialized horror-based entertainment seems like a safe way to satisfy that intrigue, the greater negative psychological impacts that individuals develop from consistently consuming such</i></p>	<p><i>What affects does horror-based entertainment have on an individual’s response to the unknown and macabre?</i></p> <p><i>What are the ways individuals respond to the unknown and macabre?</i></p> <p><i>What is my position about this relationship? (This will be naturally articulated when you combine your answers to questions 1 and 2 in your initial claim and thesis)</i></p> <p>Template 1 Commercializing fear and horror is beneficial to individuals <i>because doing so provides them with safe ways to explore their natural instincts that draw them toward understanding the unknown, while simultaneously allowing people to build stronger social and individual bonds.</i></p> <p>Template 2 Individuals should enjoy commercialized, horror-based entertainment because it provides them with safe ways to understand the mysterious elements of life.</p> <p>Template 3 <i>Although it is documented that horror-based entertainment may have negative effects on psychological health, and therefore some suggest the genre should be avoided, commercialized fear-focused media actually provides individuals with</i></p>

<p>Template 4 (Closed) (Concession/counterargument language) (concession/counter claim), (claim about topic you will prove) because (unifying idea/reason(s)).</p> <p>Template 5 (open) Since (concession/counter claim), and (insert another counter claim); however, (claim about topic you will prove) because (unifying idea/reason).</p> <p>Sample Factors/Issues Prompt Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on what issues are most important for an individual to consider when making decisions about engaging with horror-based entertainment.</p> <p>Template 6 (Synthesis Only: Factors and Issues Prompts) (Closed) When discussing (topic of essay), (issue/factor 1), (issue/factor 2), and (issue/factor 3) are important to consider because (unifying reason(s) based on larger implications: Efficiency, Economics, Politics, Human Nature, etc.).</p> <p><u>Increase complexity without using a template:</u></p>	<p><i>entertainment should make them wary of exploring the more mysterious elements of life through genre.</i></p> <p>Template 4 While it's natural to be intrigued by the more mysterious elements of life, individuals shouldn't engage with commercialized, fear and horror-based entertainment because such media desensitizes individuals to troubling content and normalizes culturally inappropriate gender norms.</p> <p>Template 5 Since it's natural to be intrigued by the unknown, it may seem as though horror-based entertainment is an acceptable and safe way to engage with the urge to explore life's enigmas; however, individuals should be wary of examining the more mysterious elements of existence through such media because consuming commercialized fear and horror has the proven ability to normalize adverse psychological and emotional reactions.</p> <p>When discussing personal engagement with horror-based entertainment, the media's social value, intrinsically violent nature, and cognitive developmental impact are important to consider because, though enjoying such forms of entertainment may be emotionally invigorating, embracing the genre seems to have an overall negative influence on the human psyche.</p>	<p><i>safe ways to explore their natural instincts that draw them toward understanding the unknown, while simultaneously allowing them to build stronger social and individual bonds.</i></p> <p>Template 4 While it is documented that horror-based entertainment may have negative effects on psychological health, commercialized fear can actually be beneficial to individuals because such media provides them with safe ways to explore their natural instincts that draw them toward understanding the unknown, while simultaneously allowing people to build stronger social and individual bonds.</p> <p>Template 5 Since it's documented that horror-based entertainment may have negative effects on psychological health, it may seem like horror media should be disregarded; however, commercialized fear is beneficial to individuals because such entertainment provides them with safe ways to understand not only the mysterious elements of life but also a little more about themselves.</p>
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<p><i>Although</i> ←Implies Concession or Counterargument <i>Because</i> <i>; however,*</i> ←Implies Concession or Counterargument <i>While</i> ←Implies Concession or Counterargument <i>; consequently,*</i> <i>Though</i> ←Implies Concession or Counterargument <i>Even though</i> ←Implies Concession or Counterargument <i>In order to</i> <i>Until</i> <i>Provided that</i> <i>Since</i> ←Implies Concession or Counterargument <i>; thus,*</i></p> <p><i>*Use Mid-sentence, not at the beginning</i></p>		
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Frames for Adding Transitional Language and Analytical Essays:

Authorial Statement and Organizational Stems:

Beginning of Text:

(Speaker/Author) begins by/with...

Body of Text:

(Speaker/Author) follows this by/with...

Following this, (Speaker/Author) (action verb)...

Moving on, (Speaker/Author) (action verb)

(Speaker/Author) transitions to...

In order to transition, (Speaker/Author) (action verb)...

(Speaker/Author) then shifts to...

(Speaker/Author) moves to compare...

(Speaker/Author) then contrasts...

(Speaker/Author) exemplifies...

Conclusion of text:

(Speaker/Author) concludes by/with...

Finally, (Speaker/Author) reminds...

Body Paragraphing

Topic Sentence: What/Why?

Textual Evidence: Where?

Commentary: How? (does the info from the “where” convey the meaning of the “why”?)

Poetry:

Body Paragraphing Template:

Topic Sentence (What and Why): (Chronological phrasing), (Last Name) (lit element/technique 1) in order to (textual understanding).

Shelley begins by immediately producing a reflective, 1st-person frame narrative and including multiple instances of caesura, suggesting that the fractured structure of the sonnet mirrors the present state of the monument the traveler is considering.

Textual Evidence (Where): Take, for example, how (after/before) (insert context and textual evidence that shows the technique from the topic sentence).

Take, for example, how before the speaker grants control of the narrative to a secondary "traveller from an antique land," he pauses at the beginning of the forthcoming recollection (Shelley 1). Then, at the onset of this secondary narrative, the aforementioned traveller even generates another extended pause (mid line) after describing the "trunkless legs of stone/ [that] stand in the desert..." where close by "half sunk a shattered visage lies" (Shelley 2-3, 4).

Commentary (How): (This evidence/Or mention the language from the text you will focus on) (verb from topic sentence) (answer to the textual understanding also found in the topic sentence) because (explain how the textual evidence reveals the effect; this is usually done in at least two sentences. This is also done by focusing on explaining word connotations and stereotypical assumptions. Make sure to use purposeful verbs and cause/effect language in this section of your text: because, due to, since, so, consequently, etc.).

The frame narrative in and of itself mirrors the fractured state of the statue because though the sonnet can be observed and viewed, there is a conspicuous separation between the two main individuals telling the stories. Mirrored division is echoed further in the poem when, though Ozymandias's sculpted appearance and words tell of his reign, the sculptor's work is actually what is fully articulating his--Ozymandias's character--to the present viewer, thus suggesting that it's actually the sculptor speaking for the famed king rather than the king himself. Likewise the shifting narrative form takes the view away from the original speaker and projects it onto an unknown passerby, and yet it's the passerby who ultimately tells the story. This divided narrative continues to shift the timeframe of the poem into the past, highlighting the disconnected continuity between the past and present. The speaker recounts the words of a traveler in the present, who is recounting an experience in the past about an item from antiquity. Thus, generations of time and history are ironically included and encompassed in the narrative form, which is collectively separated, yet functioning as a whole. In a similar sense this wreckage, though separated, can still convey the perceived might of the ruler though millennia have passed. The greater pauses that both the initial speaker and secondary speaker generate work to highlight the passing of time, the same history that separates the secondary speaker from not only his observation, but the ancient pharaoh himself. The visual interruption of the pauses turn the lines into fragmented parts, providing a similar sensual experience to that of the image being described by the unnamed narrator.

Literary Argument:

Body Paragraph Template:

Topic Sentence: (Ordering Word/Phrase)(Author's Last name)+Powerful Verb + (summary of chronological listed literary strategy/element/device/plot event) in order to (Answer to Textual Outcome).

Example Topic Sentence: At the beginning of the story—once the main characters arrive at their new jobs—Steinbeck introduces Candy—a crippled old man—reluctantly allowing Carlson—another worker—to euthanize his geriatric sheep dog in order to showcase how difficult it is to sacrifice the deep, caring bond he has built with his pet.

Evidence: Take, for example, how after (insert detailed, summarized context and evidence. Do this by specifically describing the plot event/element referenced in the topic sentence. Note that the best evidence is 4-6 sentences and provides accurate verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. A summary of the text is evidence, especially when you don't have the full text to quote from.)

Example Evidence: Take, for example, how when George and Lennie originally meet Candy, he's followed by a decrepit k9 who not only moves slow, but has no teeth and smells foul. In fact, the dog is consistently criticized by the other bunkmates due to his tangible stench and failing health, to the point where many of them petition Candy to put it out of its misery. Upon such a suggestion, Candy reminds his colleagues that the dog was such a great sheep dog in its prime; however, they challenge him to notice how the dog's current quality of life is only getting worse than it already is. Upon deep consideration, and the offer of Carlson, Candy reservingly allows Carlson to shoot the dog in the back of the head so that it, as Carlson suggests, won't even feel it. As this happens, Candy slumps into his bed—devastated—and even later reflects that he should have been the one to mercifully put down his own dog.

Commentary: (Summarize or identify exactly what you want to use that is found in the textual evidence) (choose one: verb from topic sentence, demonstrates, shows, exposes, reveals, develops, exposes, elicits) (insert the “why” from the topic sentence) **because** (explain **how** the textual evidence reveals the part or all of the textual understandings from the topic sentence ; this is usually done in at least two sentences. Also, these explanations often focus on explaining general assumptions, stereotypes, and word connotations. Make sure to purposefully select your verbs to provide vibrant analysis)).


Example Commentary: Candy mentioning the recollective merits of his sheep dog highlights the bond he has to his pet **because**, though the pet’s best days are behind it, Candy is willing to overlook its offensive faults due to the positive circumstances they have shared; essentially all of the positive moments in the past makes the dog worth having around in the present. Although the dog would never have been able to relive such “glory days,” Candy has seemingly kept it around as long as he has **due to the fact that** if the dog were gone, perhaps those memories would die with it. Furthermore, the consistent relationship with the dog, in the midst of the transient lifestyle Candy has, would have moved Candy to keep it around **since** individuals typically find comfort in the familiar, and caring for this dog has been an emotional constant for Candy for many years; it has given him a sense of purpose and a relationship to rely on. The violent and sudden end of such would have the potential to shock his sense of purpose, which Candy most likely questions anyway, **seeing as though** his handicap already limits his actual ability to be a productive member of the farm. However, in the midst of all of these thoughts, Candy is forced to realize that his reasons for keeping the dog are selfish in nature, particularly **because** the dog is suffering (and forcing bunkmates to suffer—those who are not as willing to overlook his terrible stench). **Consequently**, as Candy considers his loving relationship, he realizes that what is best for the dog’s well-being relies heavily on him—Candy—sacrificing his desire for comfort and defined purpose; this sacrifice is hard for Candy, but knowing it’s for the best, and that he loves his dog, he agrees. Though, he does later recount his regret of not shooting his own dog, **as** he would have had closure—something all individuals desire—knowing that he not only made, but enacted, the final caring, purposeful moment of their relationship.

Rhetorical Analysis Topic Sentence Stems:

1. (Speaker or Author) begins by (rhetorical choice 1), which (verb)s (purpose/effect of rhetorical choice).
2. (Speaker or Author) then shifts to (rhetorical choice 2) (verb)ing (purpose/effect of rhetorical choice).
3. (Speaker or Author) then finishes by (rhetorical choice 3) in order to (verb) (purpose/effect of rhetorical choice).

Body Paragraphing Template:

Topic Sentence(What/Why): (Ordering Phrase—See Rhetorical Stems attachment), (Author) (Rhetorical Choice from thesis) in order to (answer to what the audience should understand or do found in thesis).



Textual Evidence (Where): ~~Take, for example, how~~ (summarize the context that comes before your quote and then flow into quoted textual evidence that shows the strategy referenced in the topic sentence in action) (citation).

Commentary (How): (summary of text for analysis that is derived from quote) (choose applicable verb: showcases, highlights, exposes, evokes, or something as strong) (*insert the understand--the "why"--found in the topic sentence*) **because** (*explain how the textual evidence reveals the purpose/effect/answer to the understand or do that is mentioned in the topic sentence. Commentary is usually at least two sentences. These explanations often focus on explaining general assumptions, stereotypes, and word connotations. Make sure to purposefully select your verbs to provide vibrant analysis*).

Final Sentence(s): This would move (*the audience*) to (*purpose (do/persuade) from thesis*) **because** (*explain how the information provided by the author would move the audience to act as identified*).

Argument Organizers and Stems:

S ⁸ (General)	Somewhat Specific (Topic Sentence)	Specific (Textual Evidence) 3-5	Commentary
<p>Type of Evidence: <i>In this column, you will classify your evidence. Make sure to consider how your audience will respond to the type of evidence you provide.</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Subject(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> History <input type="checkbox"/> Math <input type="checkbox"/> Science and Technology <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mass Media <input type="checkbox"/> Sports <input type="checkbox"/> Literature <input type="checkbox"/> Art <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <p><input type="checkbox"/> Self</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Experience <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary Anecdote <input type="checkbox"/> Hypothetical Example 	<p>Changing year-end holiday titles and materials</p>	<p>A few years ago, in order to signify their transition to the winter-holiday season, Starbucks decided to replace their ornamental Christmas cups with ones that were merely colored red. In response to this change, many individuals protested it by calling it the newest manifestation of the “war on Christmas.” Of course, this figurative conflict was magnified since in about 2010—around the same season—there had been consistent reports of schools and municipalities relabeling their Christmas concerts, pageants, and decorations as “holiday” events and adornments. Also important to note here is that since the early 21st century, the public has been encouraged by the media to greet others with “happy holidays” instead of the more traditional “Merry Christmas.”</p>	<p>Reasoning: <i>Provide your basic reasoning in the box below. In order to do this, you must explain HOW your evidence relates to, and proves, the unifying idea presented in your claim. This is completed by articulating the common assumptions, stereotypes, and implications that connect your evidence to your unifying idea. Thus, as you reason out your evidence, you will consistently refer back to parts of it while extrapolating its implications. When creating your commentary—or, in other words, articulating your reasoning—consider using this template:</i></p> <p>This evidence (choose one: proves, supports, confirms, refutes, disproves, shows the limitations of, suggests, implies) (insert unifying idea based on the claim) because (explain how your evidence relates to the claim by articulating the assumptions that must be accepted to consider the evidence as valid).</p> <p>This evidence confirms the easily-offended nature of human beings because many took something as simple as the coloring of a cup and turned it into a figurative war on an ideology (which technically is impossible). Interestingly enough, the change to the red cup still showcases actual Christmas colors—especially when combined with the green Starbucks logo—so most individuals who knew just about any element of Christmas tradition should have been able to clearly see that the company wasn’t necessarily neglecting Christmas at all. And yet, the lack of ornamentation somehow became a firestorm of controversy, when in reality, a color of a cup changed. Now, even if the cup were made less ornamental to be more inclusive, much like the language the municipalities and schools have begun to embrace, this is ironically polarizing since it further highlights the fickle nature of humanity. The social divide is not, however, due to the fact that the colors or language are off-putting, but rather because individuals make bigger deals about petty things than they should. In fact, it doesn’t make sense that someone who’s part of a larger community wouldn’t want to be more inclusive in their public lives, especially during a season that is meant to highlight charity toward others. Quite often people are taught to respect other people and be sensitive toward personal differences, so this deep-seated offense in becoming more communally inclusive is actually quite puzzling and even borderline nonsensical, standing in stark contrast to accepted morals. The silliness of this controversy further promotes the point that trying to anticipate—let alone label—what may offend others is quite a murky science since offense can be quite an unreasonable free-for-all for any individual; now multiply the opportunity for individual insult by 7 billion individuals that make up the global population. Yikes.</p>
		<p>Audience Acceptable?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Why?</p>	