lilyPD
Grab-N-Go

Organization Strategy: Paragraph Colormarking

Task: Use different colors to reveal organization within a body paragraph of argument writing.

Instructions:

1. Look at a couple body paragraphs from an argument-writing WAGOLL. Here are a few from a *USA Today* op-ed, "We're holding Gen Z to a standard that doesn't make sense":

> "Young people are coming of age amid financial strain, political conflict, climate anxiety, mass violence and a digital culture that brings every catastrophe onto the screens in their pockets. Recent Federal Reserve data show that financial well-being declined among young adults in 2025, with the decline especially pronounced among those ages 18 to 24.
>
> They are told to build successful lives while many traditional markers of adulthood – financial independence, stable work, home ownership – feel harder to reach.
>
> And then there is loneliness.
>
> Loneliness is often treated as separate from debates about motivation, work and education. It isn't. Social connection is deeply tied to well-being – and to motivation.
>
> Decades of research on self-determination show that people are more likely to thrive and sustain motivation when fundamental needs for competence, autonomy and relatedness are supported.
>
> In plain English: We work harder when we believe we can succeed, when we have some ownership over what we are doing, and when we feel that we belong and matter."

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2. After reading it, go back through and look for the following elements: Idea, Evidence, Explanation of Evidence / Reasoning.
3. Mark each of these with a different color. (You can see our colormarking model below!)
4. Reflect:
    - What do you notice?
    - Is there a pattern to the colors?
    - What do you notice about the proportions of ideas to evidence to explanation/reasoning?
5. Now, colormark your own draft. Reflect:

- How do your colors compare to the WAGOLL?
- How do your proportions compare to the WAGOLL?
- Based on this, what should your next steps be? Jot them down here:

Colormarking Model

Ideas / Evidence / Explanation of Evidence or Reasoning

"Young people are coming of age amid financial strain, political conflict, climate anxiety, mass violence and a digital culture that brings every catastrophe onto the screens in their pockets. Recent Federal Reserve data show that financial well-being declined among young adults in 2025, with the decline especially pronounced among those ages 18 to 24.

They are told to build successful lives while many traditional markers of adulthood – financial independence, stable work, home ownership – feel harder to reach.

And then there is loneliness.

Loneliness is often treated as separate from debates about motivation, work and education. It isn't. Social connection is deeply tied to well-being – and to motivation.

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In plain English: We work harder when we believe we can succeed, when we have some ownership over what we are doing, and when we feel that we belong and matter."

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