

Prompt for Paragraph #4 | Skill or Attribute: Evidence (Part II)

Let us continue with triad paragraphs. I remind that a **triad** is a list of three items that are fundamentally connected in the context of the history we are studying. The basic goal is to identify and explore the historical relationship(s) among the three items. Focus above all on *the connections*, rather than addressing each item in isolation. As was the case for paragraph #3, I am asking you to assemble your own triad using three of the items listed below. Choose three of these nine items, which become your triad and the basis for your paragraph.

John Stuart Mill	Adam Smith	David Ricardo
the market	“natural price”	“invisible hand”
specialization	factory	technology
liberty	middle class	reform

The skill or attribute of this paragraph is again **evidence**. Be sure first of all to review the description of evidence for the previous paragraph. All of those points still apply. Here we focus on the *breadth* of evidence, and our main goal is to combat the tendency of students to ignore important evidence that is obviously relevant to their analyses. The idea is to be much more systematic in considering which primary sources can help to address the key issue of the triad. The key question is this: have you failed to consider and deploy any primary text in the reader that relates directly to the issue you are discussing? If I, as the reader, find myself ask: *why didn't this student include evidence from source X, which obviously relates to the question?* then this will make me much less willing to accept your argument.

Below I offer some ground rules and advice:

- Previous skills and attributes—title, topic sentence, and evidence (part I)—are as important for this paragraph as for previous ones.
- Underline or **make bold** the three items of your triad in the first sentence. Unless you identify the three, I may not be able to tell which three you are addressing.
- Use the handout “Effective Paragraphs” as well as “The Paragraph Manifesto” as guides, paying close attention in particular to the rules for submission.
- The best triad-paragraphs are the ones in which the author includes **all three items in the first sentence**, which becomes the thesis. Read that sentence again. Then again. And once more.
- Evidence from sources should take the form mostly of paraphrasing, with only limited direct citation. If one quote represents $\frac{1}{4}$ of your paragraph, then a substantial portion of the text is not really yours. Under no circumstances should you have a block quotation. Double- and triple-check when you quote to be sure that you have done so accurately.
- On the matter of citation, simply use this system: (Hirst, 25) or (Reader, 7) or (Lecture 2/13). But in the case of the reader, be sure that the author of your reference is clear. You could write, for example: *Adam Smith wrote that the quantity of a commodity brought to market “naturally suits itself to the effectual demand” (120).*
- In terms of length, three-quarters to one full page = the Goldilocks zone. Try to be in this zone.
- Be sure to give yourself time to write *and then revise* the paragraph. Without revision, the paragraph will be rubbish.
- Avoid the passive voice, contractions, “would” as a weird form of past tense, the word “led” (which usually tells little), and anything else that I have identified as undesirable.