

Situation & Purpose Analysis Instructions

Situation Analysis Preliminary Instructions:

First of all, your task is to *identify* all of the “situation clues” in the passage you were assigned. It might be helpful to print a copy of the passage, leaving wide margins for notes. Then, use a highlighter to highlight each situation clue you observe within the passage. We’ll talk more about situation clues in our class lectures.

1. Keep in mind that a situation clue consists of anything within the Biblical text itself that tells you something about the situation or circumstances...
 - ✓ The biblical writer is writing to...
 - ✓ The biblical writer is writing from...
 - ✓ The biblical writer is writing about...
 - ✓ The biblical writer is writing because...
 - ✓ Situation clues help answer the question of “why”. Why was the author writing? What situation was going on that led the author to write this passage? Why did God want to communicate this through the biblical writer to the original readers?
2. These clues may consist of historical information, sociopolitical data, or cultural matters within the text that point to what it was like back “then and there”.
3. They may also be warnings, exhortations, or descriptions of problems and feelings that tip us off to what was going on back “then and there”.
4. Now that you have identified situation clues you need to determine what those clues tell you. What do they all mean? Jot down in the margins your personal observations about what the situation clues you have identified tell you about the situation behind the passage you are studying.
5. Finally, read over the book of the Bible in which your passage is found and consult your Synthetic Overview. Identify the significant features of the overall situation you observed in the *broader context* (i.e. clues in the surrounding passages or book in which your passage is found). In other words, how do the situation clues in your passage compare or relate to other situation clues throughout the entire book? How does the rest of the book reflect the situation clues from your passage? An important part in this process is to identify the situation clues in your passage, but another crucial step is to see how situation clues throughout the rest of the book give you insight to help you understand your specific passage better.

Purpose Analysis Preliminary Instructions:

Next, do what you did earlier regarding situation analysis, but now do it with the focus on purpose clues and purpose analysis. You will, first of all, *identify* all of the

“purpose clues” in the passage you were assigned. To do this, utilize the copy of passage you used earlier for situation analysis. Highlight each purpose clue in the passage using a different color highlighter. Keep in mind that situation clues and purpose clues sometimes overlap. When that happens, you will highlight the same clue twice with two different highlighters which creates a new third color of highlighting. (For example, a blue and yellow highlighter together will give you a green color.)

1. Keep in mind that purpose clues are anything within the Biblical text that tell us...
 - ✓ What was the biblical author’s immediate purpose in writing the passage?
 - ✓ What was God’s purposes in this specific situation or event?
 - ✓ What was God trying to communicate through the biblical author to the original readers?
 - ✓ Purpose clues help answer the question of “what”. What was the author writing? What was the author’s goal? What was the author’s purpose?
2. These may be expressed as imperative verbs (i.e. commands), purpose clauses (i.e. “in order that”, etc.). At times the biblical writer will just come out and state his purpose (i.e. “I want you to...”). Sometimes the logical flow of the passage or emphasis will point to it (repetition, etc.).
3. These purpose clues will tip you off about what the inspired biblical writer was trying to accomplish by what he wrote or what God’s purposes were in the situation or event described in Scripture.
4. Jot down your observations about what the purpose clues you have identified tell you about the biblical writer’s purpose in writing the passage or God’s purpose in the situation or event described in Scripture.
5. Finally, read over the book in which your passage is found and *identify* the major “purpose clues” in the *broader context*. Also, consult your Synthetic Overview regarding what you discovered about the writer’s overall purpose or purposes were in the book. How does the purpose(s) identified throughout the book reflect the purpose(s) you identified in your specific passage? How does the purpose(s) you discovered in your specific passage tie into the overall purpose(s) in the entire book?

Actual Project Instructions:

Step 1: After completing the steps above, consult the notes you have taken about the situation clues in the passage and write a paragraph of 5-7 sentences in which you simply describe the situational background of the passage you are studying in terms of what was going on back “then and there.” Remember, this paragraph is about our specific passage, not the entire book.

Step 2: Next, pull all of the purpose clues together, evaluate them, consult the notes you have written regarding the writer’s purpose clues and write a paragraph of 5-7 sentences in which you describe the writer’s purpose or God’s purpose within the passage you are studying. You should take into account both the broader purposes

and you can talk about how the purpose of the passage reflects the purpose(s) throughout the book, but remember that your goal here is to write about the purpose of our passage. This is not a “book purpose” paragraph.

Step 3: Make to include a heading called “Situation Analysis” and “Purpose Analysis” before each of your paragraphs. As always, include the appropriate title page too. Upload the assignment which contains your two paragraphs (5-7 sentences for each paragraph) in Blackboard in a Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) or PDF (.pdf) format.