

Writing With Visual Evidence in an Essay - A Sample Paragraph

Strong informational and argumentative essays require students to cite evidence. Evidence in an essay must come from a reliable source. It may be a written primary or secondary source, or visual evidence gained from a political cartoon, photo, or video. Students must show where this evidence came from by citing the source or using in text citation, along with a works cited page.

Citing Evidence from a Visual Source

If you have the name of the visual resource and the artist or photographer, be sure to identify the author and title. In addition, give your reader a quick description of the visual resource. Include the in text source citation in parenthesis.

Look at the sample paragraph below, written using a political cartoon entitled, “History Repeats Itself...” by Samuel Ehrhardt. The source is Ehrhardt, Samuel, “History Repeats Itself - The Robber Barons of the Middle Ages and the Robber Barons of Today”, Puck Magazine, 1889.

During the Industrial Revolution businesses grew rapidly. The increased size of businesses, also expanded the wealth and power of the businessmen who owned crucial industries such as oil, steel, and automobiles. Critics called these new powerful businessmen robber barons. In his political cartoon, “History Repeats Itself -The Robber Barons of the Middle Ages and the Robber Barons of Today,” political cartoonist Samuel Ehrhardt compares the powerful businessmen of the Industrial Revolution with the feudal lords of the Middle Ages. The industrialists are drawn as huge, fat figures, wearing top hats. Their sashes say “Trust” and “Monopoly,” indicating the control they have over entire industries. Bowing before them are figures dressed as farmers, workers, and small business men, each giving the robber barons bags of money labeled taxes and wages. In the top left hand corner is a smaller picture of Feudal barons collecting tribute from peasants, comparing these old feudal lords with the new robber barons of the Industrial Revolution (Ehrhardt). Many, like the political cartoonist, felt that the industrial businessmen gained their riches at the expense of the workers.

