

# WHAT IS AN ANALYSIS IN AN ACADEMIC ASSIGNMENT?

- **An encounter between object and tool:** An analysis is the encounter between, on the one hand, an object (text, statement, observation, source, case, artifact or type of empirical data) and, on the other hand, a tool from your subject field (theory, concepts and method). It appears from your problem statement which objects and tools should meet.
- **Splitting an object into components:** Analysing means splitting an object into its components. Not in the sense that you split the object up completely, but in the sense that you split the object into certain components based on some academic tools that you have selected.
- **Not just retelling:** Analysing is not just retelling. When you retell a text, you reproduce the content, bit by bit. When you analyse a text, you are focused on making interesting academic observations. In this case, the aim is not to say everything that can be said. The aim is to point out important aspects of the object using the selected academic tools.
- **Creating overall understanding:** When you are analysing, you first take a mechanical and systematic approach and split your object into parts using the academic tools you selected; you then assemble the different parts, creating a new holistic understanding of the object.
- **An important section of the assignment:** In an assignment, the analysis will normally appear after the introduction and after paragraphs in which you give an account of the object(s) and of the tools you intend to use to analyse the object. The analysis often takes up much space in an assignment because this is where you demonstrate that you have not only understood the tools of the subject; you are also able to use them and arrive at new insights about objects.
- **Independent and investigative work:** When you are analysing, you are working in a very independent manner. You are exploring an object using academic theories, concepts and/or methods which you (or your teacher) have chosen. The analysis results do not exist in advance, you are creating them. When you are analysing, you discover something that you can only discover because you are applying the tools of exactly your subject field.
- **Documentation for the conclusion:** The analysis functions as documentation for the conclusion of your assignment.