FRENCH 222 - “Plan détaillé” – How to Prepare a Detailed Outline

Remember that a “plan détaillé” is your roadmap for the rédaction. It should articulate your thesis statement and indicate how each paragraph will develop and with which examples. It should be written in your best French and be typed and double-spaced. This is not a “draft” but rather an overview of where you will take your fully developed analysis. Be sure to refer to the fact that you are analyzing a film and not just talking about a story or characters (personnages) in a vacuum.

**Step 1** – Review the entire scenario and think about the film as a whole. Identify which examples seem to suggest a good thesis (take note of those examples). Review events and examples in the chronological order they occur; cause and effect may be essential to your claims about how the meaning (la signification) takes shape. Be attentive to what changes in the story (des changements, une évolution; un thème qui se développe) and about how and when those changes or developments are expressed. Think in terms of contrasts or comparisons, recurring images, turning points (points culminants) or significant moments (moments importants). **Do NOT choose your thesis without doing this first.**

**Step 2** – Develop a thesis statement (une idée maîtresse) that is not merely a summary statement about what happens. Try to discuss “how” and “why” events it happens.

Statement: “Julien est un enfant égoïste et jaloux.”
Analysis: “Bien que Julien se comporte comme un enfant gâté au début du film, il...”

Be sure to construct sentences that connect your ideas and engage in analysis:

Statement: “Julien est jaloux quand il écoute Jean au piano.”
Analysis: “Dans la scène où Jean joue du piano, le regard de Julien exprime ...”

**Step 3** - Write a full-length introductory sentence which situates the overall text (author or filmmaker, title, main circumstances of the story) very succinctly (one well-written sentence should suffice). Your thesis statement and this introductory sentence should structure your first paragraph.

**Step 4**: Write your introductory paragraph concentrating on strong and clear French. You should be confident about what you want to say. (You already know what examples you’ll use and where they will take you.)

**Step 5**: Decide how to group your examples into paragraphs. Decide whether to use short quotations, snippets or single words that you think will be effective. Do not quote extensively. Give the page number in parentheses, if you do quote.

**Step 6**: Write a topic sentence for each paragraph and indicate briefly which examples you plan to use.

**Step 7**: Write a possible sentence or two to begin your concluding paragraph. Your remarks at this point should refer to the topic in a more in-depth way than the language you used in the introduction.

**Step 8**: Think of a title that is relevant to your analysis.
Faites très attention à l’expression grammaticale et au vocabulaire; essayez d’éviter “vos” fautes habituelles et soignez votre français – pas de fautes d’inattention!!

Essayez de commencer chaque phrase par un mot de transition pour relier vos idées. Par ex: Pourtant,... Meme si ... En contraste avec ..., Bien que .... A la différence de.. De même façon, .. De plus, ... Par ailleurs... Par contre, ... D’une part... d’autre part... Au début, il est évident que..etc...

Consultez très souvent un bon dictionnaire et votre livre de grammaire pour vérifier les conjugaisons, le genre des noms et l’accord avec des adjectifs, quelles prépositions à utiliser avant l’infinitif, comment exprimer la temporalité (après... avant .... en ....).