

Commonplace Outline/Example

1. **Describe the act in dramatic fashion.**

The evening light danced across the entrancing and melodic courtyard fountain. As he sat in a seemly introspective pose, the emperor Charlemagne's ambassador Gan slyly caught the King Marsilius's reflexion in the pool's water. The king's expression, cautious but encouraging, let Gan know that Marsilius would be someone he could use to execute his treacherous plan.

2. **Make an undisputed statement:**

As Paul says in the letter to the Galatians, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." When a man betrays his friends, betrayal will be his end.

3. **Contrast a wrongful act with a noble one.**

Gan, a member of Charlemagne's illustrious court, showed by the perfidy hatched in this scene that he had allowed jealousy to destroy his soul. Trusted by Charlemagne as a "wise counselor" (p.202), Gan betrayed that relationship by "corresponding with Marsilius" (p. 208), the great emperor's enemy, to lay an ambush at Roncevalle. In contrast, the paladins of Charlemagne's court repeatedly demonstrate their loyalty, both to their emperor and to each other. (a strong example should follow of a noble deed by one of the paladins, preferably related to Roncevalle)

4. **Compare with something worse.** Gan's enmity for Orlando is mentioned several times in the *Tales of Charlemagne*. While we are not given a reason for his hatred, there is no mention of corresponding animosity from the paladins. Because he was unable to see beyond his own jealousies, Gan's perfidy not only led to the deaths of the greatest knights of Christendom, but also to the death of his own son, Baldwin, a knight of fine character who was in the paladins' army. Gan had thought that he could spare the life of Baldwin by tricking him into wearing "a vest with the colors of Marsilius" (p. 217). When Baldwin learned of his father's treachery, he immediately "pulled off the vest" (p. 218) in shame and threw himself into battle on behalf of his friends and his emperor, Charlemagne.

5. **Show that the first act was done intentionally.**

6. **Reproach the wrongdoer's past life. (may need to be hypothetical as, for example, we know very little about Gan's earlier life. Use your best insight to imagine what might have transpired that led him to act this way? In this case, we'd not want him to appear to be a victim.**

7. **Demand that no pity be shown** (he should have known not to be treacherous — tell why.

8. A **conclusion** that reflects section #2