

Name _____ Date _____
Date Assigned _____ Date Due _____

Literary Analysis Rational for the Assignment

The ability to take some written piece of work and tear it apart to gain a greater understanding of it is an indispensable tool to many professions. Of ten in the business world it isn't what is said as much as what is not said that makes the difference between being successful and setting on the sidelines watching others be successful. When a person receives a written communication from another company, it is important to be able to break it down into all the things the writer is saying flatly to you as well as being able to find all the implications of the correspondence, and the things that aren't said but implied in the correspondence. The Harvard Business Review in it's September '99 Issue says that of the many talents a person must possess to succeed in this day and age of information exchange the ability to break down information to it's most rudimentary foundations and to be able to recognize all the implications of the information may well be the single greatest talent needed to succeed in the coming age. The ability to write a literary analysis is a first step in developing this important skill.

It may well appear that a literary analysis is little more than a critique' of the work to be investigated. This is not what it is. It is a part of the process but it is not a literary analysis. In the analysis you will be looking at what works and what does not, but there is much more to the analysis. The analysis will examine all of the works elements such as; plot, characters, setting, theme, use of literary elements, etc.. You will provide support for your ideas from the work in the form of quotations and other details. You will discuss the relevance of the piece's ideas and how the author chooses to reveal them. The literary analysis will have all the characteristics of a well-developed composition that will include an opening, a thesis, a body, and a closing. You must choose a position as far as what you will prove about the piece and then persuade the audience that you are correct. For instance, **you may take the position that the author fails to develop all aspects of the novel leaving it in your opinion incomplete.**

Assignment

The student will write a literary analysis from a choice of short stories. For this assignment the student will be responsible for all of the following and the specific deadlines as listed below:

- | | | |
|---|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| * set of preliminary notes from the story
(cannot be made up if late loss of points) | due _____
late | worth 100pts
worth 0pts |
| * outline based upon the prelim notes
(cannot be made up if late loss of points) | due _____
late | worth 100pts
worth 0pts |
| * rough draft
(if I am to be editor) | due _____
due _____ | worth 100pts
worth 50pts |
| (failure to meet this deadline and I will not edit) | | |
| * peer editing sheet
(must be done in class on specific day) | due _____ | worth 100pts |
| (can be made up for half credit) | late | worth 50pts |
| * Final draft | due _____ | worth 400pts |
| late one day irregardless of illness | late | minus 100 points |
| late two days irregardless of illness | late | minus 160 points |
| late three days irregardless of illness | late | minus 200 points |
| no paper irregardless of illness will be accepted after being three days late. | | |

Assignment Consideration

In putting together your analysis there are several things to consider. First and foremost remember it is your job to tear this piece apart. It is your job to get inside the writers mind and turn it out for us to see. Since a conversation with the writer is not possible it will be your task to analyze the piece from the standpoint of the literary elements to get inside the writers head and expose this to the audience you are writing for.

Therefore, the first three things to consider in writing a literary analysis are the audience, the tone you want to establish, and the purpose of the paper. A good thesis and a good outline will help drive this portion of the paper.

- One of the most basic elements to be considered is the plot. This very simply is the idea of what happens in the story. This should also include all of the conflicts, and problems that center on the main character. These can be external, internal, and/or both. Usually these conflicts or problems lead to some sort of climax. All of this should be included in tearing the story apart. In the end the question of whether it works or not needs to be answered.
- Another element which should be considered is the setting. This should include such details as the weather, the time, the place, the landscape, buildings, streets, etc... In speaking of the setting there are three things to be considered in determining the details importance 1) does the background lend itself to understanding the characters and events in the story, 2) does the setting aide in creating the conflict in the story, 3) does the setting aid in creating the mood or the emotional effect of the story. The analysis should answer these questions and it should tell whether it does this effectively or not.
- It will be important to evaluate the characters in the story as well. This is not an exhaustive character analysis but rather more of a way of looking at how the characters fit into the scheme of the story. It will be important to evaluate the effectiveness of the characterization as far as the interplay among characters and their significance to the story itself. The evolution of the main character is important as to the movement of the story. Do not ignore minor characters of ten in a literary analysis they give insight into the author's purpose nothing else can give. Sometimes it is the minor characters that drive the story and the main character to the end the author wishes us to consider. This is especially true in mysteries.

- Something to consider is the point-of-view from which the piece is written. This is the vantage point from which the person telling the story is telling it. This is important for two reasons. One it tells us whether there may be things we don't know and can only be revealed through the minor characters, setting, theme, etc... Usually this is done when the story is told from a first person perspective. If the story is told from a third person perspective the author gives the reader many perspectives to choose from and leaves little unsaid. The reader in this case may need to decide whether they are hearing the story from a variety of perspectives or indeed the teller is omniscient.
- It is rare that an author has no theme they wish to explore through the story. Usually the author wants to explore some important idea about life, human nature, or the human condition. This is the purpose for writing. Voltaire once wrote that it was the writer's responsibility to put man through every deplorable condition he could conceive in order to protect him from those conditions. He further said it is a shame that all we write of seems to be prophetic. Take this to heart in analyzing the theme.
- In addition to all the basic elements of the piece you will be analyzing do not fail to overlook all the subtle literary elements a writer may use to solidify the importance of the piece such as irony, imagery, satire, humor, and many more. To ignore these would be to leave the analysis incomplete.
- Remember, do not write a paper that appears to be little more than a bullet by bullet answer session. Anyone can do this. An analysis is a piece of literature in itself. You are being asked to take this piece of literature and discover everything about it you can. You are to know as much about this piece as the author who wrote it. If you do not, the grade will not matter because you will have failed to accomplish the task before you. When I read the paper you must give me the impression that it is scholarly and that you could discuss this piece with the author or that in fact you have.

Requirements

Make two copies of everything you do up to the final draft. One copy you will hand for credit and the other you may wish to use to finish the paper. **Do not count on getting the assignment you hand in back to finish the paper. This will not be an excuse for not finishing on time.**

The finished draft should not just be a series of answers to the preceding questions. It should read like a research a paper. It should be organized with a thesis, topic sentences, an opening, a closing, transitions, and evidence to prove everything you say. All evidence from the book should be cited MLA style. **You must have proved something. I will not guess as to what your thesis is. If it is not clear, you do not have one. I will not ask you what it is. If I have to ask, then you have not proven anything, but have written a junior high report. This means you can expect no higher grade than a “D” if the paper is perfect in every other aspect.**

Check List

Rough Draft check list

- underline their thesis _____
- highlight your evidence _____
- underline topic sentences _____
- header _____
- works cited page _____
- circle opening _____
- circle the closing _____

Final Draft check list

- 12 point type _____
- New Times Roman Font _____
- double-spacing _____
- header (last name, page number) _____
- cover page _____
- final draft _____
- works cited _____
- peer editing sheet _____
- edited rough draft _____
- is evidenced cited MLA _____
- placed in a binder _____
- have used quotes for proof _____
- have offered proof from book _____
- have cited where necessary _____

Absolutely, no handwritten papers will be accepted regardless. If your printer fails you on the day the paper is due, your paper is late. If you are absent your paper is due at the beginning of class when you return or it is late. It is not my responsibility to print your paper. I will be happy to print your paper if I can, but if I cannot, it is your responsibility and failure to turn your paper in on time because I could not print it means your paper is late. If your absence is unexcused your paper is late. Your paper is due before I leave on the day it is due. Fail to meet this deadline and your paper is late.

Grading

Paper will be graded on the AIMS format and converted to a scale based on 200points.

In addition, the following grades will be given:

- vocabulary	may have 5 mistakes on the sixth no points	50 points
- grammar	may have 5 mistakes on the sixth no points	50 points
- mechanics	may have 5 mistakes on the sixth no points	50 points
- use of MLA	may have 5 mistakes on the sixth no points	50 points
- works cited page	may have 5 mistakes on the sixth no points	50 points
- meets English dept	may have 5 mistakes on the sixth no points	50 points
- edited rough draft		50 points
- binder	extra credit points	75 points
- all papers 1 week early receive extra credit		75 points