

## Literary Analysis Essay Structure & Format

Explain a piece of literature, using your own inferences, interpretations and evaluations.

### Two Part Title

#### I. Catchy Title

1. Identification of Topic (Text & Author)
2. Summary/Identification of Purpose (Theme) - 3-6 words

#### II. Paragraph 1: Introduction – Should include the following elements:

Must be written in the following order:

- Hook 5-7 sentences -- that generally introduce the essay's topic
- Summary 5-7 sentences -- summing up the novel
- Thesis \*\*\*1 sentence -- states your claim

#### III. Paragraph 2: First Body Paragraph [REMEMBER 1+1+1]

- A. Topic Sentence (*Statement*)
- B. Context for the quote
  - Who says it?
  - What's happening in the text when they say it?
- C. Evidence/Quote from the text (cited with author's name & page number)
- D. Explanation/Analysis of the quote: How does it prove your thesis?
- E. Concluding sentence (wrap up the paragraph to transition to the next body paragraph)

Note:  
You will need 2-3 quotes  
per body paragraph!

Parts B, C & D will repeat.

#### IV. Paragraph 3: Second Body Paragraph [REMEMBER 1+1+1]

- A. Topic Sentence (*Statement*) 1 sentence Identifying the focus of the paragraph - one clear/specific element from the text
- B. Context for the quote
  - Who says it?
  - What's happening in the text when they say it? 1 sentence or short phrase that introduces your evidence
- C. Evidence/Quote from the text (cited with author's name & page number)
- D. Explanation/Analysis of the quote: How does it prove your thesis? 2-4 sentences per quote
- E. Concluding sentence (wrap up the paragraph to transition to the next body paragraph) 1 sentence - restate the purpose of the paragraph, and connect back to your thesis/claim

#### V. Paragraph 4: Third Body Paragraph [REMEMBER 1+1+1]

- A. Topic Sentence (*Statement*)
- B. Context for the quote
  - Who says it?
  - What's happening in the text when they say it?
- C. Evidence/Quote from the text (cited with author's name & page number)
- D. Explanation/Analysis of the quote: How does it prove your thesis?
- E. Concluding sentence (wrap up the paragraph to transition to the next body paragraph)

#### VI. Conclusion:

Must be written in the following order:

- A. Re-state your thesis. \*\*\*1 sentence -- re-states your claim
- B. Summarize your main points. 5-7 sentences -- summing up the body paragraphs
- C. Extend Your Argument. 5-7 sentences -- provides the reader with a connection to the real world/the reader's life

## Parts to a Great Essay

### I. A Catchy Title

### II. Introduction: the opening paragraph. The introduction should include the following:

*Hook, a short summary of the novel, and your thesis statement.*

- A. **Hook:** The beginning sentences of the introduction that are used to catch the reader's interest. This should introduce your reader to the **TOPIC** of the essay in a broad approach. Ways of beginning **creatively** include the following:

- research
  - A startling fact or bit of information **historical facts/modern-day facts**
  - A meaningful quotation (from the text you are discussing or another source)
- creative
  - A rich, vivid description (that pulls the reader into the world of the story)
  - An analogy or metaphor

- B. Introductions should **identify** the work of literature being discussed, **name the author**, and **briefly summarize** the events of the story, as well as the **main characters**. You will be analyzing the story in your body paragraphs, so the story should be summarized in the introduction! The **final sentence of your introduction is always your thesis statement.**

### II. Body: The body of your essay should logically and fully support your thesis. Each body paragraph should focus on **one main idea** that supports your thesis. These paragraphs must include:

- A. **Topic Sentence (Statement)** – a topic sentence **states the main point of a paragraph**: it serves as a mini-thesis for the paragraph. It might be helpful to think of a topic sentence as working in two directions simultaneously. It relates the paragraph to the essay's thesis, it also explains the purpose of the paragraph itself.
- B. **Context for the Quote**
- Who says it? What is happening in the text when they say it?
  - This prepares the reader for the quote by introducing the speaker, setting, etc.
- C. **Evidence/Quote** – a specific quotation from the text used to provide evidence to illustrate the argument you have laid out in your statement/topic sentence.
- D. **Explanation** – Your explanation and interpretation of the quotation/evidence. This should also connect the quote to your original statement, as well as the thesis statement.
- E. **Clincher/Concluding Sentence** – last sentence of the body paragraph. It concludes the paragraph by summarizing your key points, and transitioning into the next body paragraph.

### III. Conclusion: the last paragraph where you provide a sense of closure.

- A. **Re-State Your Thesis** – Remind your reader of your central argument. This should be rephrased in new words (you do not need to include the author's name or the type of text).
- B. **Summarize** your main points from each body paragraph.
- C. **Extend Your Argument** – Extend your essay to explain why you think this text is important for readers to engage with. What does the text tell us about society and what issues does it ask us to consider about the world at large?