



Short Story Analysis

While many of you will not be English majors in college, you may be asked to perform a written analysis of literature in which you interpret what a work of literature means and what writing tools the author used to convey that meaning. Regardless of your occupation in life, whether you're a mechanic, a medical professional, or a monk, the skills you acquire from literary analysis will serve you well. Aside from the ability to read and think critically about a work of art, as well as the ability to pick apart a piece of writing and interpret its meaning based on elements contained in the work, literary analysis provides you with the skills it takes to be a living and thriving human being. After all, isn't literature created by humans writing about humans in an attempt to provide some lesson about humans? Reading literature is one huge lesson in human nature. Our attempts to understand humans in literature will make us better equipped to understand our fellow humans as we live our lives, and that will serve us all better in the long run.

For this assignment, choose any two (2) short stories we've read and provide the following:

- A clear thesis comparing both stories across a single unifying theme. That is, your interpretation of the author's message about the way the world works or should work. (Your thesis should include TAG – Title, Author, Genre.)
- Two (2) well-crafted body paragraphs detailing how the author's depiction of character and ANY other literary element (e.g. setting, symbolism, conflict) contribute to your larger theme.

PLEASE NOTE:

- I did not ask for Introductory or Concluding paragraphs. This is because I want you to focus DEEPLY on the ideas you are presenting, how you communicate and craft those ideas within the body of your essay, and how you consistently tie it all back to theme.
- While you **MUST** discuss the main characters' evolution throughout the stories, you do **NOT** need to discuss the same literary element for both works. For example, you might discuss Connie/Symbolism in one paragraph and choose Sammy/Setting for the other. In each case, however, you must retain a theme that unifies them both.
- You should employ The Sandwich Model and Snippet ideas we've recently discussed, as well as all the sentence structure tools you have in your toolbox ("I'd like Complex Sentences for \$500, Alex!"). These tools will help keep your writing organized and tight and give you a chance to make it sing.

100 Points

Short Stories – Literary Analysis Essay Evaluation

Ideas & Content: (30 points) _____

Topic is narrow & manageable
Relevant, telling, quality details go beyond obvious
Substantive support details
Writing from experience/ ideas fresh & original
Reader's questions are anticipated & answered
Demonstrates insight into themes, characters, etc.

Organization: (30 points) _____

Powerful intro invites reader in
Powerful conclusion leaves reader pondering
Thoughtful/effective transitions
Logical & effective sequencing/arrangement
Pacing is well controlled/services effect
Flow is smooth & unnoticeable

Voice: (5 points) _____

Reader feels strong interaction with writer
Writer willingly takes risk
Tone & voice add appropriate flavor
Writing is honest, personal/reflects strong commitment

Word Choice: (15 points) _____

Words are specific & accurate
Words, phrases create pictures & linger in reader's mind
Natural language/Not overdone, over the top
Striking language catches reader's eye/ear
Lively verbs, precise nouns, vivid modifiers
Precision is obvious

Sentence Fluency: (10 points) _____

Sentences enhance the meaning
Sentences vary in length & structure
Purposeful & varied sentence starts
Creative & appropriate connectives
The writing has cadence, pace, flow

Conventions: (5 points) _____

Correct spelling
Correct punctuation
Correct grammar & usage
Sound & effective paragraphing
Conventions deftly manipulated for stylistic effect

Presentation: (5 points) _____

Typed appropriately (proper font, sizing, spacing)
Name/Date/Course/Teacher/Class period

TOTAL: _____