

Critical Essay Analysis Directions

After reading a critical essay on the class's current literary selection, write an analysis of the essay in which you

1. Identify and explain the author's thesis. In other words, restate his or her thesis as written and then put it in your own words with more explanation if needed. Include this information in your opening paragraph in which you also give the name of the essay and the author. Make a smooth transition to the next paragraph.
2. Show how the author supported this thesis. This is the longest part of your analysis. There is not just one way to organize these paragraphs, but a good suggestion is to give his/her main supporting points and how she/he supported them in some logical order, perhaps even giving each main point its own paragraph. So, you could have three to four paragraphs in this section. Be sure that you are showing how the thesis was supported. You will use tags like (say the author's name is Mary Brown) "Brown believes," "Brown explains," "Brown gives the example," etc.
3. Finally, end with a paragraph in which you do *one of two* things:
 - Say whether or not you agree with the author's thesis and give solid, text-based reasons for your opinion.
 - Say how reading this essay gave you new insight into the work. Explain clearly how and in what ways.

These analyses are not typical 5 paragraph essays. Do not add superfluous paragraphs. Develop each paragraph **fully** according to directions. Proofread before handing in. Also, be sure that you understand what you've written. **And**, ask yourself if someone else will understand what you've written. **These essays are worth 100 points each so carefully review the rubric that has been provided for you.**

Setting up the assignment

You do not need a title page; however, your analysis needs its own title (not a label like *Critical Analysis of John Smith's essay on Catcher in the Rye*). After the title, include the bibliographic information for your essay. Follow MLA style. Skip two spaces and begin your analysis.

Guidelines

Typed, proofread, proper use of MLA guidelines, ON TIME!! Submitted to Turnitin.com by midnight of the due date – Turnitin.com will NO LONGER accept late papers.

Titles and Due Dates:	Title	Due Date
Frankenstein C.E.A. #1:	_____	_____
Frankenstein C.E.A. #2	_____	_____
Frankenstein C.E.A. #3	_____	_____

Tips for Scholarly Writing

Never, Never List

- Never begin a sentence with a pronoun.
- Never begin a paragraph with a pronoun.
- Never start a sentence with the word "me," which is, of course, also a pronoun.
- Never use a word you don't know the meaning of or a word that is not comfortable for you to use (especially if your purpose is to impress instead of explain).
- Never ramble. Keep a tight check on your digression. If you find yourself out there in ramble-land, rein in your brain--stay focused on the main idea.
- Use sentence fragments, even for effect, in scholarly writing.
- Never "suck up" to the writer by stating how great he or she is. It is unlikely that you have read everything this author has written, so your assessment of his or her work is not going to be valid anyway. And, it sounds hollow. And, it doesn't add anything to your argument. Focus on the text as if you don't know who wrote it.

Excise These Words or Phrases from your Vocabulary

- very
- whole (as in "the whole story" or "the whole novel")
- the reader

Questions Good Thinkers Ask

- Am I saying what I mean?
- Does this make sense?
- Have I made good connections between ideas?
- Are my ideas logical?

Always, Always List

- Understand the prompt.
- Use the literary present tense. In literature, a character is living in the present.
- Assume your reader has read the text.
- Assume your reader has a full understanding of literary elements and conventions.
- Focus on the text, not on a personal feeling or reaction to the text. Personal insight is important to your understanding, but ignoring the text in favor of personal response will result in an "empty" essay.
- Learn from your mistakes. Be analytical in assessing what you do well as a writer and what you need to improve on.