

Evaluating the essay

1. Put your name on the paper you have been given.
2. Read the essay prompt. Using a pen or highlighter, mark the specific question(s) the essay should answer.
3. Read the paper.
4. Using a pen or highlighter, mark the following:
 - Introduction:
 - a. Title of the work (underline)
 - b. Author's name (underline)
 - c. Thesis statement (overall topic sentence for the paper) (underline)
 - d. On your own paper, tell what other information has been given in the introduction (number this 1d).
 - Body paragraph #1:
 - a. Topic sentence (underline one time)
 - b. Specific reference (detail or example) from the literary work (underline two times) **You may wish to use a different colored pen.
 - c. Sentence(s) explaining the specific reference (circle)
 - d. On your own paper, tell one thing you feel makes this a good paragraph (number this 2d).
 - Body paragraph #2
 - a. Repeat steps a-d for body paragraph #1. For step d, number your answer 3d.
 - Body paragraph #3
 - a. Repeat steps a-d for body paragraph #1. For step d, number you answer 4d.
 - Conclusion
 - a. Restatement of thesis (usually the first sentence in the paragraph) (underline one time).
 - b. On your own paper, tell what other information has been given to tie the paper together (number this 5b). **You may sum up the information instead of recopying the other sentences.
 - Entire paper
 - a. On your own paper, list all challenging vocabulary used in the essay (Number 6).
 - b. List all literary terms used in the essay (Number 7)
 - c. State two sentences that you think enhance (make better) the quality of the paper. These sentences may be well-written, have great vocabulary, or tie in other literary terms, for example. (Number 8)

Small groups

Each person in the group will lead a discussion of a particular paragraph. Initiate the discussion of your paragraph. Go over all questions and responses. Refer to the essay prompt sheet. Discuss what part of the topic your paragraph content answers. Other group members should share what they marked. Any disagreements should be discussed. After discussing if a consensus can't be reached, ask for the teacher.

- Person 1: Introduction
- Person 2: (Person to the right of #1) Paragraph 2
- Person 3: (Person to the right of #2) Paragraph 3
- Person 4: (Person to the right of #3) Paragraph 4
- Person 5: (Person to the right of #4) Conclusion

Use the sample essay and assignment sheet to guide your writing.

Group effort

1. Write an introductory paragraph for the given topic. Be sure to include the title, author, and thesis statement. Include any other information you think will enhance your introduction.
2. Write a topic sentence for each body paragraph. Write at least one specific reference from the play that supports the topic sentence. **You must have a different reference for each topic sentence. ***EXTRA CREDIT: Relate one literary term other than the main topic to the paragraph.
3. Restate your thesis statement. Write one additional sentence you feel will help to conclude your essay.

Essay Prompt #1 (Use this prompt for your small group activity.)

Many works of literature contain an element of suspense.

From the novels, short stories, poems, and plays you have read, select a work in which suspense adds significantly to the appeal of the work. Using a specific example or examples of suspense from the work, explain how the author creates suspense, the effect the suspense has on the reader, and the importance of the suspense to the overall work. Give the title and, if you remember, the author of the work. In your response:

- Be sure to focus on the suspense of the work.
- Be sure to give specific examples and details from the work to explain how suspense affects the reader and the overall work.
- Do not give a plot summary.
- Write well-written sentences and complete paragraphs.
- Use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

Helpful hints

Group A and B writers

- **Introduction**
 - Before writing your introduction, mark exactly what the prompt sheet asks you to do in the essay. Restating this will be your thesis statement.
 - Also mark any additional information in the topic which may be useful in the introduction. Typically, the information at the beginning of the topic (before the statement beginning "From the novels, short stories, full-length plays you have read in world literature,...") can be reworded or even copied word for word to begin your opening paragraph.
 - Be sure to include the title of the work and the author's name, and any other important information (like the time period in which it was written, information about the time period, information about the author, etc...)
- **Body paragraphs**
 - Some topics have three specific questions to answer. If this topic does, each question should be turned into the topic sentence for that body paragraph. The body paragraphs should be ordered the same as the questions. If your essay prompt does not have three specific questions, refer to the first or second bullet for clues as to what specifically should be answered.
 - For this exercise you should choose one specific reference to the work to support your topic sentence. You should then explain (in one or two sentences) how this example supports your topic sentence.
***Important reminder: when you write a full-length essay on your own, one specific reference is not enough!!! Typically, you need three examples in each paragraph, and you must follow each example with a sentence that tells how the example supports the topic sentence.
- **Notes on specific body paragraphs**
 - Usually, the last body paragraph is on the overall effect the topic has on the whole work. This is a very important paragraph. It is also the paragraph on which most students do poorly (or even leave out!) This paragraph should explain how the essay topic works together with other literary terms to make the entire work. For this reason, you should tie in as many relating literary terms (at least three to really do a good job). Easy terms to tie in are:
 - **theme** (tell what the overall message is and how the author is trying to convey this through the topic)
 - **conflict** (tell how important conflicts – internal or external – effect the topic and, thus, the overall work)

- **epiphany** – where the character has a moment of insight, or realizes something important about his life and the effect the conflict has had on him and others around him (tell about this realization and what the character has realized).
 - ****Remember, these are only suggested terms to tie in. You may think of others depending on what the essay prompt is.**
- **Conclusion**
 - The first sentence should restate your thesis statement from your introduction. You should not recopy it word for word; rather, you should find another way to say what you said in your thesis. This should be a general statement. Then you should add a couple of sentences to tie the loose ends together. You can do this in a variety of ways. One way is to make some general comments that extend how the thesis is answered by the work as a whole. Another way is to tie in how this work relates to our culture.
- **Important writing strategies for a “quick fix”**
 - Proofread your paper and eliminate any "to be" verbs (am, is, was, were)
 - Proofread your paper and edit sentences using the following: it, which, that, and there
 - Use action verbs in your writing. Examples of good verbs are: clarifies, describes, illustrates, shows, proves, echoes, and mirrors.