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**English 1302**

**Professor Dybala**

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**Research Paper Formal Outline**

The following outline provides the structure for your research paper and ensures that you complete all nine required paragraphs. You may alter the order of the quotes or present additional quotes if you prefer in the body of the essay, but you must include at least two quotes in each body paragraph of the confirmation section and at least one quote from the secondary source in the concession paragraph and one in the refutation for a total of a minimum of ten quotes in the paper—four-six from the primary source and six or more from a variety of secondary sources. You may include additional quotes in paragraph two on the author’s background or other pertinent background information. Well-developed papers may include as many as twenty quotes, but you must introduce the quote in the same sentence that you state it and discuss each part of it in the next 1-3 sentences before introducing another quote**.**

Your paper should include **nine paragraphs** and **six to eight** typed pages followed by the works cited page. A **12 point, Times New Roman font is required**. The entire paper is **double-spaced including the heading**. Do not quadruple space before the title or between paragraphs. You may need to select “Remove space after paragraphs” when you select 2.0 for double-spacing in Microsoft Word. Use MLA style citations to document all direct quotes, summaries, or paraphrased information from a source.

**Note that each letter in the outline precedes one sentence so that paragraph one will have 3-4 sentences, paragraph two will have 7 sentences, paragraphs three-six will have 9-11 sentences, paragraphs seven-eight will have 7-9 sentences, and paragraph nine will have three sentences.**

**I. Introduction**

A. State the author, title and an intriguing aspect of the literary work to arouse interest

in your topic.

The story of, “The Yellow Wallpaper” by Charlotte Perkins Gilman is a tale about a woman named Jane who is bound to a single room by her husband and is told from her diary entries as she catalogues her thoughts over the course of her stay in said room.

B. Narrow the topic with a more specific focus or question.

The question that remains within the mind of the reader regarding Jane is, whether it is the room that is causing the progression of her mentality or if it is she alone that is afflicted regardless of the environment?

C. State the thesis by narrowing the topic more specifically and stating your claim

(argumentative interpretation) followed by a minimum of four subtopics that chart the organizing principles of your essay.

I claim that Jane in, “The Yellow Wallpaper” is suffering from psychosis that is irrespective of the environment and doesn’t just seem that way from flowery diary entries; begins to cry when she is completely alone, experiences lapse in her ability to perform even simple mental tasks, sees phantom figures in the wallpaper, and have aggressive thoughts towards others when thinking about the wallpaper.

II. **Exposition** (Ethical appeal)

In 7 sentences (A-G below) present any background information about the author or the historical period or any definitions of terms to prepare the reader for your interpretation. Include a topic sentence that narrows the topic to an aspect of the

author’s background that relates to the short story and state your claim about how they relate to one another. Add an in-text citation for the source(s) of the

information and a works cited entry on the last page of your paper for the complete bibliographic information.

1. Topic Sentence: What kind of background information will you describe? Make a claim about your focus in this paragraph (your purpose).

The background information that I will describe is the way that an individual that is afflicted with genuine psychosis acts, thinks, and perceives the world around them.

1. Discuss the significance of this background info.

This background information is significant because it will show how it pertains to the narrator’s thoughts and actions over the course of the story.

C. Introduce a quote and state it followed by an in-text citation in MLA style

(last name #).

Suess’ research analysis states, “Thus, the psychotic person is devoid of any ‘Normal’ connection to society or language” (SUESS pg83).

D. Discuss the most relevant aspects of the quote. (D-F)

This gives insight into how such an individual thinks.

E. Relate this information to your thesis.

Knowing how such a psychotic would think, assists in demonstrating the link between their actions and that of Jane’s.

F. Continue analyzing your topic.

Jane is unable to interact effectively with the people in her life as the story continues.

G. Sum up the significance of this information to your interpretation of the short story.

Jane is adequately described by the analysis and her actions increasingly fits the description presented by the quotation as the story progresses.

**III. Confirmation Section**—

Four body paragraphs that provide the best evidence (right reasons) to accept your interpretation of the short story. The **four body paragraphs** should include at least one quote from your **primary source** in each paragraph in C and one or two quotes from secondary sources in each paragraph (E and G or only E if you discuss it in 3 sentences). If you only include two quotes, you are still required to include a minimum of nine sentences (A-I), so you will have to analyze each quote with two or more sentences. Then, **synthesize** your information and add the transitional closing statement.

A. **Topic Sentence**-Re-introduce the first subtopic stated in your thesis and add your

argumentative **claim**.

The first subtopic is that Jane begins to cry at nothing constantly, but only when no one else is around.

B. Add information to further clarify the significance of this claim.

This is the result of stress which Jane is attempting to conceal from her husband John, as she fears that this evidence will only worsen her situation as it lends credence to her mental state not being normal.

C. Introduce and state a **quote** from the **story** as evidence of your claim.

Jane states, “I cry at nothing, and cry most of the time. Of course I don’t when John is here, or anybody else, but when I am alone” (GILMAN pg556).

D. Discuss the quote in 1-3 sentences.

Here Jane demonstrates the mental strain that she is experiencing. This is the start of her rapid decline into psychosis. The problems here will develop further and remain relevant throughout the story.

E. Introduce an additional **quote** from **secondary source #1 (journal article posted on the Readings and Resources page in Module Four)** to support this claim.

Poirer’s research states, “That Wharton was encouraged to ‘Act like a baby’ seems to reflect more Mitchell’s beliefs in the limited nature of women’s physical and emotional strength” (POIRER pg32).

F. Discuss the quote in 1 or 2 sentences.

This quote is from research included in Poirer’s analysis where Wharton is the subject of the case of Mitchell’s rest cure. Jane is clearly at her emotional limits.

G. Introduce another quote from a secondary source to develop your interpretation.

Another quote from Poirer’s research states, “The use of rest per se for overworked women is sensible…” (POIRER pg21).

H. Discuss a particular word choice in the quote to zoom in on its significance.

Notice how they say that the use of rest “Per se” is sensible, which to me means that there is an underlying issue with Jane that was not addressed before she began the rest cure.

I. Close the discussion with 1-3 sentences explaining your interpretation of the

significance of these three quotes and how they provide evidence to support your

topic sentence.

I interpret the information presented in these quotes as Jane demonstrating her current poor mental health after only a short time in the room. She is clearly dealing with some mental issues beyond what such a length of time could reasonably be expected to cause her. I feel that this adds to the claim that her initial mental state is upset rather than it being that way from the room.

J. Relate the secondary source quote to your quote from the short story.

Jane crying uncontrollably is encapsulated perfectly by Poirer’s analysis of someone’s genuine depiction of mental instability.

K. Closing sentence—summarize your main purpose and suggest the next subtopic.

As I continue to prove Jane’s initial genuine insanity I will speak about the impairment of her normal thought process.

**IV. Confirmation** (2nd subtopic)

A. **Topic Sentence**-Reintroduce the second subtopic stated in your thesis and add your

argumentative **claim**.

Jane experiences lapse in her ability to perform even simple mental tasks.

B. Add a detail to clarify the significance of this claim.

She is demonstrating cognitive decline, which is a symptom of mental instability.

C. Introduce and state a **quote** from the **primary source** as evidence of your claim.

She writes, “It is getting to be a great effort for me to think straight” (GILMAN pg556).

D. Discuss your general **interpretation** of the quoted passage.

I interpret this quote as Jane degenerating cognitively to the point where she will have trouble differentiating between reality and machinations of her mind.

E. Continue to discuss the quote by analyzing the significance of several **key words** in

the quote.

Notice how she describes the effort to think straight, in that it is getting to be a “Great” effort, to me this says she was already experiencing issues with thinking prior to this point.

F. Introduce a **quote** from **another analytical article (secondary source #2)** to add **expert evidence** and support your **claim**.

Davison writes, “These descriptions gesture towards the narrator’s later madness and offers one possible theory as to the case of her progressive mental division” (DAVISON pg62).

G. Fully discuss the quote in 1-2 sentences.

They are speaking of the divide in what Jane will begin to perceive as reality. Her mental strain is causing her own devolution.

H.

I. Conclude the paragraph with a discussion of the relationship of these two quotes or add a 3rd quote to further support the topic sentence. Do not end the paragraph

with a quote. The final sentence of the paragraph should be your emphasis on your claim and your transition to the next paragraph.

These two quotes demonstrate to me the genuineness of her decline and that they share a depiction of the unwell that sits quite closely with the way Jane acts in the story.

**J.** Discuss quotes.

I like how blunt Jane is in the quote provided, as she seems to understand the situation that she is really in even if it is for the briefest of moments.

K. Transitional Closing sentence

The prior section showed Jane admitting to her mental decline, however the next section will show the tears in her perception of reality.

**V. Confirmation** (3rd subtopic)

A. **Topic Sentence**-Re-introduce the third subtopic stated in your thesis and add your argumentative **claim**.

Jane is seeing phantoms in the wallpaper of the room in which she is confined, which is something that I claim is something that she is using to explain her mental fall.

B. Add information to further clarify the significance of this claim.

When she sees this phantom, she envisions it as a woman and later as herself, and in doing so she finds herself a familiar source of her ire and pain that dispels fault on the self.

1. Introduce and state a **quote** from the **story** as evidence of your claim.

Jane writes, “I can see a strange, provoking, formless sort of figure that seems to skulk about behind that silly and conspicuous front design” (GILMAN pg555).

D. Discuss the quote in 1 or 2 sentences.

This quote is the first of several times that Jane would write that she has seen a figure, form, woman, etc. in the wallpaper as she continues to see them during the story. At first these mentions are dismissive of the detailing in the wallpaper, as seen here, but later become the obsession and target of her ire.

E. Introduce an additional **quote** from **secondary source #3 (journal article or library resource)** to support this claim.

Suess states that, “Eventually, Jane not only recognizes but becomes the woman in the wallpaper” (SUESS pg93).

F. Discuss the quote in 1 or 2 sentences.

Suess is describing the sort of person that Jane is when she sees these phantoms. As she continues to see them she attributes, to what I interpret to be a tear of the mind, more and more of herself as her blame fails her.

G. Introduce another quote from a secondary source to develop your interpretation.

Suess then finalizes their analysis when they state, “…Jane does not belong to the same world or have the same identity as earlier” (SUESS pg95).

H. Discuss a particular word choice in the quote to zoom in on its significance.

I am drawn towards the way the quote says that Jane doesn’t belong to the same “World” as before.

I. Close the discussion with 1-3 sentences explaining your interpretation of the

significance of these three quotes and how they provide evidence to support your

topic sentence.

I interpret the quotes provided as her truly being in a different mental state than prior. That Jane is has changed state over the course of the story and not poetically writing of her grief. These quotes all tell a similar story of genuine mental instability that I feel supports my topic.

J.

K. Transitional Closing sentence

Jane has written of her view of the room around her and as I move into the next section she will disassociate herself from even the people around her.

**VI. Confirmation** (4th subtopic)

1. Follow the pattern in the previous body paragraphs to develop the 4th subtopic.

Jane begins to experience aggressive thoughts towards the persons in her life when they have anything to do with the wallpaper of her room.

B. Add information to further clarify the significance of this claim.

Jane’s hostilities are the final nail for her attempts to remain in reality.

C. Introduce a quote from the short story.

Jane writes, “But I am here, and no person touches this paper but me—not alive!” (GILMAN pg560).

D. Discuss the quote in 1 or 2 sentences.

The quote shows the finality of her stance regarding the yellow wallpaper. She has given enough of herself over to this crutch that she can’t see herself without it and will lash out at anyone as it belongs to Jane alone.

E. Introduce an additional **quote** from **secondary source #3 (journal article or library resource)** to support this claim.

Quawas states, “With this recognition and perception, the narrator begins to act wildly and assertively” (QUAWAS pg48).

F. Discuss the quote in 1 or 2 sentences.

Quawas speaks of Jane seeing herself as a part of the wallpaper and begins to act accordingly to those around her who in her mind are a threat to the relationship she shares with it. This realization is the tipping point for her sudden shift in thoughts when it comes to the people of her household.

G. Introduce a quote from a secondary source.

As Suess describes, “…Jane, who is not only a woman but who is also a psychotic, is twice-removed from an understanding of the Symbolic Order” (SUESS pg89).

H. Discuss a particular word choice in the quote to zoom in on its significance.

The use of the “Symbolic Order” here is particularly captivating as it is representative of even a child’s ability to accept the rules that dictate interaction between others, society, etc.

I. Close the discussion with 1-3 sentences explaining your interpretation of the

significance of these three quotes and how they provide evidence to support your

topic sentence.

These quotes provide evidence to the topic that Jane has drastically changed from her beginning point in the story. Her view of the other people in her life is drastically different from the beginning of the story to when the quote takes place. This demonstrates to me that she is indeed suffering mentally.

J.

K. Transitional Closing sentence

Now that Jane has been established to be genuinely impaired from before she encountered the yellow wallpaper, I will concede the other interpretations of the information provided.

**VII. Concession —Address the strengths of another interpretation of this story, but clarify that it is different from your interpretation, for example: James Tackach presents an alternative interpretation to the role of the narrator when he argues for a religious analysis of the characters rather than one related to a musical motif.**

**(Note: You are not required to discuss Tackach’s article. Select the secondary source that impressed you, but that interprets the story differently than you did.)**

1. **Topic Sentence**: Acknowledge a **counterargument** to your argumentative thesis that presents a strong **alternative interpretation.** State the author and title of this secondary source and its greatest strength. You will discuss the same source in both the concession and the refutation paragraphs.

Another interpretation of the story might suggest that the writings of Jane were just her expressing herself and her view of her surroundings and the situation that has been forced upon her.

1. In 1-3 sentences, discuss the strengths of this alternative view to your thesis.

Some of the strengths of this alternative view to my thesis are that it relies less on the interpretations of Jane’s book writings and more on the writer.

C.  
 Charlotte Perkins Gilman has made her criticism of Jane’s predicament known as the “Rest cure” that she has had to deal with herself.

D.  
 This combined with information regarding the era and the treatment of women at the time lends good factual evidence to support this view.

E. Introduce a quote from this alternative interpretation of the story (secondary source #5).

Davison writes, “The narrator’s complex vision of the horrors of patriarchy in *The Yellow Wallpaper* is only matched by the final complex and horrific vision of the senseless and crawling, infantile narrator…” (DAVISON pg66).

F. Explain the strength of this quote to support the alternative interpretation.

This quote does paint a picture of the type of treatment that women of the era were subjected to and further strengthens the claim that the narrator’s writings are akin to this treatment.

G. Transition to your refutation of this alternative interpretation.

This interpretation has its merits, but it hinges on a certain moment towards the end of the story being interpreted in one way.

**VIII. Refutation—Reject the interpretation of the article that you acknowledged in**

**your concession by revealing its flaws. Focus on the same secondary source that you analyzed in your concession.**

A. Topic Sentence: State the major reason the concession to a counterargument is not as powerful as the thesis that you have asserted.

The interpretation of the part of the story that acquires the most attention is John’s reaction to what Jane has done.

B. **Emphasize why your thesis** is more accurate than this alternative.

My thesis is does not falter based on one person’s reaction of one person in the story.

C. Explain any **flaws or oversights** in the other interpretation.

That interpretation believes that John faints out of shock from what Jane has done, in that she has continued to write, ignored his orders, and has demonstrated a behavior that is beyond what a lady of the time would do, which relies on an unreliable narrator or unreliable source from the narrator.

D. Introduce and state a quote from the secondary source #5.

Poirer states, “Gilman seemed aware of this exercise of both medical and male authority when she combined the roles of husband and physician in *The Yellow Wallpaper*” (POIRER pg27).

E. Analyze the weakness in this quote.

This quote is weak because of it’s assumption that Gilman only created their characters as symbols and that they had no agency or ties to how people behave in the first place.

F. Continue to analyze the quote.

When it says that John was a representative of , “The roles of husband and physician” I find that to be a far too broad depiction of two very large and varying groups that can differ so wildly that Gilman would hardly be expected to believe themselves.

G. Reaffirm the strengths of your thesis.

The psychosis of Jane is a far more direct approach to the character and holds the writings from the diary in which the entire story is based to be truthful, rather than a fantasy.

**IX. Conclusion: Do not introduce new evidence or quotes in the conclusion.**

A. State the **thesis** in a new way with a bolder and more definitive purpose.

Jane is genuinely psychologically impaired that has begun before the story’s beginning and not just writing in spite of her husband John in her own expressive manner.

B. Add a memorable comment to direct the reader’s attention more fully on your interpretive message. Do not introduce new evidence or quotes in the conclusion.

All interpretations of this story must ask whether or not that Jane can be trusted as a reliable narrator and my thesis says that she is, so one must wonder how can other thesis base themselves on such shaky ground if they do not trust the her?

C. Close with a significant final message to the reader about the value of the literary work.

The story of, “The Yellow Wallpaper” by Charlotte Perkins Gilman is a fantastic window in the life of someone that must live with immense strain that can be caused by numerous outside forces.

DAVIDSON. Davidson, Carol Margaret. “Haunted house heroine: *Female gothic closets in ‘The Yellow Wallpaper’”.* Literature Resource Room. Accessed 16th April, 2024.

GILMAN. Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. (1981). *The yellow wallpaper*. Virago Press.

QUAWAS. Quawas, Rula. “A new woman’s journey into insanity: D*escent and return in ‘The Yellow Wallpaper’.* University of Jordan. Literature Resource Room Accessed April 16th, 2024.

POIRER. Poirer, Suzanne. “The Weir Mitchell rest cure: *Doctor and Patients”*. Women’s Studies, 1983. Vol. 10. pp 15-40. Literature Resource Room. Accessed 16th April, 2024

SUESS. Suess, Barbara A. “The writings on the wall: *Symbolic orders in ‘The Yellow Wallpaper’”.* Women’s Studies, Vol. 32, 2003, pp. 79-97. DOI 10.1080/00497870390171248. Accessed 16th April, 2024.