

CRITICAL ANALYTICAL RESPONSE TERM PAPER
How to...Term paper

English 30-1

*Essay Formatting using the Modern Languages Association (MLA)
methodologies*

1. Use white paper of standard size (8 ½ x 11). Use unlined paper for word processing.
2. Use blue or black ink. Do not hand in essay in pencil.
3. Write/word process on one side of the page only.
4. **Double-space** when processing or writing. **Everything is double-spaced.**
5. Leave margins of 1 inch on the left and top, and 1 inch on the right and the bottom if handwriting.
6. Number the pages. Put the page numbers in the top right hand corner ½ inch down along with your last name, i.e. Jackson 1.
7. The “Title Page” should look like this: (*check with me for further clarification*)

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Name 1 | |
| Your Name | |
| Teacher's Name | |
| Course | |
| Date Due | |
| Title | |
| _____ | |
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8. In a Literary essay, (that is, an essay based on literature), do not use the title of the story, poem, etc. as your title; that belongs to the author. **Make up your own.**
9. Underline titles of separate publications (such as books, plays and long poems) referred to in your essay. Use quotation marks for all other titles (short stories, short poems, subdivisions in books, articles)
10. The first time that you refer to an author, you should use the full name that he/she customarily made use of. After this it is customary to refer only to his or her last name.
11. **Avoid use of the pronouns, “I” and “You”, contractions (use do not instead of don’t etc), and colloquialism/slang (guy, well, like, etc.)**
12. You may use either the present or past tense. The important thing is to be consistent. The present is often best when discussing literature. Although historical facts usually require the past tense, in a literary context the present is quite acceptable, since the literary work with all its action lives on in the present for the reader.
13. **Acknowledge quotations taken from literature with parenthetical citations.** As well, **include a Reference page** as the last page of the essay. Use the MLA format for referencing quotations and texts. The teacher and the librarian have information on MLA reference procedures.

THEME/THESIS

A. What is a theme?

A theme is a general statement that reflects what an author is trying to communicate to the reader by giving the reader a “story” with a particular set of events, conflict(s), and characters. The theme in one or two sentences reveals “something” about the human condition. *A theme does not use the names of characters found in the story but it is obvious to the reader who and what will be discussed.*

DEVELOPING A THEME: A FORMULA

1. I will be given a topic which is one or two words or a short phrase.
2. Once I have a topic I ask myself, “What do I think the author is saying about the topic in terms of the story’s protagonist?”
3. When generating a thematic statement I:
 - a. do not name specific characters or events
 - b. do not use personal pronouns (I, you)
 - c. do not simply define the topic
 - d. must account for the way the conflict is resolved or not resolved, the way the story ends
4. Always keep in mind, *the theme is a general statement* that obviously applies to the protagonist and as well can obviously apply to some people in the real world because a theme is a generalization about reality.

5. Formula Phrase

In the (Story Title) by (Full Name of Author), (Last Name of Author) develops the idea that...

B. What is a thesis?

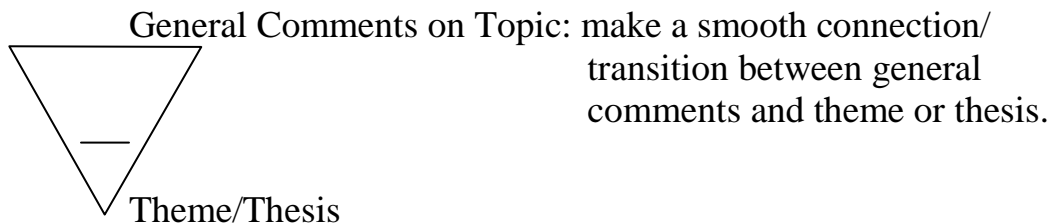
Unlike a theme, a thesis does not require that you avoid the specifics of a story. A thesis statement will use whatever names or details that you deem necessary as you formulate a statement of intent based on the given topics. Like a theme, the thesis should be placed at the end of the introductory paragraph.

When generating a theme or thesis make sure you consider the end of the story (point 3d on page 3) and include that in your statement. As well, qualify the given topic words with adjectives or descriptive phrases to help with the creation of original ideas in the theme or thesis.

Remember a theme or thesis is more than the assignment topic. It should clearly establish the student's intention by taking a position relative to the topic in a uniquely defined manner.

It is your choice: Theme, Thesis? Or perhaps a Combination?

ESSAY STRUCTURE



The developed theme or thesis would be at the end of the introductory paragraph. The theme or thesis is a minimum of one sentence and a maximum of two. Remember a theme is a *general* statement while a thesis is a *specific* statement.

ESSAY STRUCTURE CONTINUED

In the body of the essay the discussion of details and characters will serve to prove the theme or thesis that you have written at the end of your introductory paragraph. In the body of the essay your discussion is an examination of a particular story; *every sentence in the body is specifically discussing, at all times, character and detail.*

An introductory paragraph should be between ½ - ¾'s of a double-spaced page maximum.

*Remember not to use **I** and **You** in a Critical Response paper.*

EXAMPLE OF AN EFFECTIVE INTRO PARAGRAPH 30-1

Discuss the idea(s) developed by the text creator in your chosen text about *the need to **escape** when an individual is feeling the effects of **alienation**.*

Alone with oneself may at times be a comforting feeling, but nobody ought to live in total seclusion from the world. Being denied physical interaction and emotional connection keeps a person from really living and enjoying life. In the short story, "A Rose For Emily" by William Faulkner, Faulkner develops the idea that an individual needs to **escape** when feeling the effects of **alienation**. Miss Emily had been forcibly isolated by her father and this torment has affected her perception of reality. To escape her isolation, and to her detriment, she creates her own world where she sets the limits and boundaries of what is acceptable and what is not.

Note: 2 to 3 sentences of introduction followed by the Formula phrase/Topic phrase followed by your unique understanding of the Topic phrase written as a theme or thesis. The theme or thesis should be no more than 1 or 2 sentences.

EXAMPLE OF AN EFFECTIVE CONCLUSION 30-1

Discuss the idea(s) developed by the text creator in your chosen text about *the ways in which individuals struggle to maintain a sense of **identity** when dealing with **adversity**.*

After her romantic idealism is shattered at the mere age of twenty, Granny Weatherall spends her life desperately struggling to regain and maintain both her eternal and internal sense of identity. To this end, Granny physically continues on with her life despite the ever-present emotional vacancy left by the acute pain of her heartbreak, and struggles to maintain control of her life in order to ensure that she can never again be as hideously hurt as she was on the day of her jilting. Perhaps most of all, Granny turns to her religion as a coping mechanism in the face of adversity, for her faith provides her with a sense of strength, comfort, hope and worth, all of the things that were stolen from her when she was abandoned. However, while she is successful in regaining the external identity of a wife and mother that she would have possessed had she never been jilted, Granny fails to ever emotionally overcome her heartbreak and so these attempts to regain her internal sense of identity remain based on self-deceptions which ultimately degrade in the face of the realization that control over one's life is an illusion and that there is no caring and comforting God nor hope-filled and happy afterlife.

Note: In the conclusion, keep summary comments specific to the character under examination. As well, a conclusion should be approximately the same length as an introduction.

It is evident that this exemplar conclusion is 'longer.' The introductory paragraph for this student essay was done according to the above direction: approximately the same length as an introduction.

DO NOT CONFUSE SINGULAR AND PLURAL

Wrong: The path **one** weaves in life depends entirely on the choices **they** make for **themselves**.

- The pronoun **one** is singular. Any pronoun or noun referring to it needs to be singular as well.

Right: The path **one** weaves in life depends entirely on the choices **a person** makes for **himself**.

One Right.... Which is it?

Because of the pride **one** has, **they** can accomplish a lot in their life.

When **a person** is being manipulated, the choices that **they** make are often difficult.

As **a child** grows up, depending on how **they** were raised, **they** are taught morals and respect.

Usually, **a person's** initial interest helps guide **her** to beneficial choices.

One's personal views can have a significant effect on the people around **them**.

The outcome could haunt **one** for a very long time, therefore making **them** wish **they** had carefully considered beforehand.

In **a person's** life, **everyone** will have to make a choice.

The author points out that **one's** youthful enthusiasm can obscure reality, leaving **them** disillusioned about the ways of the world.

This problem occurs primarily in the introduction. When deciding whether to use he, she, him or her as the singular pronoun, base your decision on the gender of the character who is the subject of your paper. Do not overuse "one"; consider using person, individual, child, man woman...

TRANSITIONS TO QUOTATIONS

1. *Quotations are needed to support interpretations made.*
2. *Quotations usually follow interpretations.*
3. *Transitions are needed so that they reader can move from the writer's words to the words of the quotation without feeling a jolt.*

TRANSITIONAL STRATEGIES:

#1 Embedding – the use of a phrase quotation somewhere within your sentence/interpretation:

- Ex. A) On her death bed, Cinderella's mother exhorted her to be "good and pious" (Grimm 86).
- B) Cinderella's stepsisters may have had "beautiful and fair features"(87), but this could not disguise their "nasty and wicked hearts" (87).

#2 Signal Phrase – phrases used to bridge your ideas/interpretations to quotations:

- Ex. A) After the glass slipper test, the stepmother and sisters were forced to admit defeat **when the prince exclaimed**, "Cinderella is my true bride!" (92).
- B) Justice prevailed when goodness was rewarded and evil defeated. **The prince's pronouncement** "Cinderella is my true bride!"(92) liberated the beautiful young maiden.

#3 The colon (:), a colon acts as an introducer. Use a colon when introducing a longer passage, ie. a sentence or two or three. Be careful though, do you *really need* this longer quotation? No...

- Ex. After the death of Cinderella's mother, her new family increasingly revealed their animosity towards her: They dressed her in an old grey smock and gave her wooden shoes" (87).

AN EXAMPLE OF USE OF QUOTATIONS AND APPROPRIATE TRANSITION

From Willa Cather's *Paul's Case*

...The morning of the day he commits suicide, Paul has his second "[attack] of clear-headedness" (185). At this point Paul thinks of the realities of life and his memories "[fall] upon him like a weight of black water" (185). He has very little money left and fully realizes that money is "the wall that [stands] between all he loathed and all he wanted" (185). As Paul readies himself, he is rational for the third time. The author describes this state of mind as "merciless clearness" (186). It is merciless because now there is no turning back. Paul suddenly realizes "the folly of his haste" (186) and is aware of "the vastness of what he had left undone" (186). He is left imagining what might have been, what could have been his future travels: "the blue of Adriatic water, the yellow Algerian sands" (186) ...

POINTS AND PUNCTUATION WHEN DOING QUOTATIONS AND PARENTHICAL CITATIONS

1. When using a quotation (verbatim, word for word, text) certain information has to be provided in parenthesis. This info is called the parenthetical citation. It includes, in the first quotation in the essay, the following:
author's last name, and page number where quotation is taken from: (Hart 6). *Note: there is no punctuation or abbreviation for "page" included in the citation.* If two page numbers are noted do this: (Hart 6, 9).
2. All subsequent quotations in the paper list only the page number as the parenthetical citation: (7) or (7,10). If more than one source/text is used, then the author's last name and page number must always be included in the parenthetical citation.
3. If a quotation is dialogue do the following:
At that moment Vanessa pointed out that ““decisions are not always with the best of intentions”” (7).
Note the double quotations marks (“) followed by the single quotation (‘) at the beginning and end.
4. ***The parenthetical citation is placed immediately after the quotation.***
5. Punctuation and citation when the quotation falls at the end of a sentence.
If quoted material ends with a period or if using a phrase as a quotation, then put a period *outside* the citation
Ex. It was important that “[all] went well” (Lee 6).
Note the period is after the citation not after the word well.

If a quotation ends in an exclamation mark or a question mark, include that punctuation inside end quotation marks, then write the parenthetical reference and after that put a period.

Ex. After considerable thought, John inquired as to “what was the right way?” (Barker 6).

6. Ellipsis means 3 dots... Ellipsis is used to prompt the reader that material has been omitted. If quoted material is part of a sentence from the source/text ellipsis indicates that only a part of the sentence was used.
Ex. 1 – It was felt by George in his obvious frustration that “... the plan to build the factory was senseless and pointless because all financial backing would disappear” (321).
In example 1 the latter half of the textual sentence was used. If the first half of the sentence had been used, the ellipsis would be placed at the end. See example 2.
Ex. 2 – It was felt by George in his obvious frustration that “[if] Jack could not get the money from the bank then the plan to build the factory was senseless and pointless...” (321)
Ellipsis could fall in the middle of a quotation as in example 3.
Ex. 3 – It was felt by George in his obvious frustration that “[if] Jack could not get the money... all financial backing would disappear” (321).
7. Use brackets [] to:
 - a. change from capitals to small letters
 - b. change verb tense
 - c. change a word or verb from singular to plural
 - d. add a connecting word to achieve coherence

**LINK SENTENCES BY USING TRANSITIONAL
EXPRESSIONS.
THESE CAN ALSO BE USED AT THE BEGINNING OF
A NEW PARAGRAPH.**

1. For **ADDITION** purposes:
Moreover, further, furthermore, besides, and, and then, also, nor, too, again, in addition, equally important, next, first, second, third, in the first place, in the second place, finally, last.
2. For **COMPARISON** purposes:
Similarly, likewise, in like manner.
3. For **CONTRAST** purposes:
But, yet, and yet, however, still, nevertheless, on the other hand, on the contrary, after all, notwithstanding, for all that, in contrast to this, at the same time, although this may be true, otherwise.
4. **PLACE**:
Here, beyond, nearby, opposite to, on the opposite side.
5. **PURPOSE**:
To this end, for this purpose, with this object.
6. **RESULT**:
Hence, therefore, accordingly, consequently, thus, as a result.
7. **SUMMARY, EXAMPLES**:
To sum up, in brief, on the whole, in sum, in short, in other words, that is, to be sure, as has been noted, for example, for instance, in fact.

A CHECKLIST

Most good essays are not *written* but *rewritten* – often – more than once. *Try to finish your essay a few days before it is due*; before you hand it in, reread it carefully, asking yourself these questions:

I. Organization

A: **Title:** Does it express the theme or thesis of the essay?

B. **Introduction:** (3-5 sentences, generally, for an essay of 500-1000 words)

1. Is the thematic/thesis statement clear and informative?
2. If theme is used, does it meet the 4 criteria for developing a theme on page 3?

C. **Body of the Essay** (3 or more **balanced** paragraphs)

1. Does each paragraph contain a topic sentence that is clearly related to the theme?
2. Does each paragraph contain reasons to support the topic sentence, or details and quotations to clarify it?
3. Is each paragraph unified (every sentence dealing with the same topic) and coherent? (the logical relation between sentences clear)
4. Do the paragraphs follow one another logically?
5. Are there effective transitions from paragraph to paragraph?
6. Balance: developmental paragraphs are more than less equal length.

D. **Conclusion:** (3-5 sentences, generally, for an essay of 500- 1000 words)

- 1) Does the conclusion sum up the evidence presented in the body of the essay and show its relationship to the theme or thesis stated in the introduction?
- 2) Is the conclusion specific to the character discussed in the paper? (see page 6)
- 3) Does it introduce new ideas or new evidence? *It shouldn't.*

CHECKLIST CONTINUED

1. Avoid personal pronouns, I and you and contractions (ex. *is not correct*, *isn't incorrect*).
2. Need opening comments before the theme or thesis, minimally 2 sentences.
3. Avoid slang/colloquialisms, “kids”, “sure”, “like...” Formalize!
4. Balance the essay: Intro and concluding paragraphs are similar in length and the body paragraphs are similar in length.
5. No him/her...choose gender of protagonist when deciding on the pronoun. (see page 7)
6. Do not repeat the opening comments in the theme or thesis.
7. Avoid clichés, “*in society today*”, “*in this day and age*”, “*back in the day*”...etc.
8. Transitions to quotations: ***ensure quotation has a bridge*** (embedding, signal phrase...see pages 8 and 9)
9. Do not use a quotation to repeat what was just said.
10. Conclusion must not be abrupt and it needs/must be specific in terms of the discussed character.
11. Use apostrophes to show possession (ex Captain Black's home town)
12. First citation needs author's last name and page number: (Wood 135)
13. Do not underline or put quotations around the title of the essay. Use a Pragmatic or Creative title.
14. Avoid using ***a lot***; try “much”, “many”, “considerable...”
15. Be aware, if hand-written, of right and bottom margin.
16. Do not start every sentence of the essay the same way.
17. Reference page included.

SCORING CRITERIA CRITICAL ANALYTICAL PAPER

10-1 20-1 30-1

Thought & Understanding

When marking **Thought and Understanding**, the marker should consider

- * how effectively the student's ideas relate to the assignment
- * the quality of the literary interpretations and understanding

0 1 2 3 4 5 X2 =

Supporting Evidence

10%

When marking **Supporting Evidence**, the marker should consider

- * the **selection** and **quality** of evidence
- * how well the supporting evidence is integrated, synthesized and/or developed to support the student's ideas

0 1 2 3 4 5 =

Form and Structure

5%

When marking **Form and Structure**, the marker should consider how effectively the student's organizational choices result in

- * a **coherent, focused, shaped, and concluded** discussion in response to the assignment
- * a **unifying effect** or a controlling idea that is developed and maintained

0 1 2 3 4 5 =

Matters of Choice

5%

When marking **Matters of Choice**, the marker should consider how effectively the student's choices enhance communication. The marker should consider

- * **diction**
- * choices of **syntactical structures** (such as parallelism, balance, inversion)
- * the extent to which the stylistic choices contribute to the creation of **voice**

0 1 2 3 4 5 =

Matters of Correctness

5%

When marking **Matters of Correctness**, the marker should consider the correctness of

- * **sentence construction** (completeness, consistency, subordination, coordination, predication)
- * **usage** (accurate use of words according to convention and meaning)
- * **grammar** (subject-verb/pronoun-antecedent agreement, pronoun reference, consistency of tense)
- * **mechanics** (punctuation, spelling, capitalization)

0 1 2 3 4 5 = **5%**

FORMAT PENALTY (Max. 10%)

LATE PENALTY (5% or 10%)

Descriptors for each category's numbers will be given to you.