

Paragraph Writing Sample – Little Things by Raymond Carver

What are the themes conveyed in the story? How are these themes explored in the story?

Based on the questions above, choose **one theme** to write on as body paragraph.

Complete the body paragraph outline in the table below and then write a complete body paragraph according to the format given.

Body Paragraph Outline Sample

Topic Sentence	One of the most prominent themes in Raymond Carver's <i>Little Things</i> is marital discord.
Explanation 1 of Topic Sentence Lead-in to textual evidence 1 Claim 1	-Imagery to introduce "dark" setting * portrays extensive conflict and struggle # cause of discord between the couple
Textual Evidence 1 (Quote/Paraphrase) (In-text citation)	- Dark seen not only outside, but also inside * "it was getting dark on the inside too" (Carver para. 1) * The interior further described: # "no light" # "near-dark" (para. 29).
Commentary Analysis Warrant	- Emphasis on internal conflict and lack hope * can't patch things up * can't tolerate each other - Engulfed in darkness * conflict escalates # foreshadows physical struggle # horrifying resolution of marital discord
Explanation 2 of Topic Sentence Lead-in to textual evidence 2 Claim 2	- Physical struggle over the baby causes breakdown * sense of selfishness * inability to compromise
Textual Evidence 2 (Quote/Paraphrase) (In-text citation)	- Baby as item the couple want after ending marriage (para. 19) * adamant in their fight * do not care about hurting baby
Commentary Analysis Warrant	- Baby considered item both want to win * inability to compromise * selfishness # insolvable marital discord # victimize others
Concluding Sentence	- Lack of harmony in marriage can result in terrifying outcome

Body Paragraph Sample

<p>One of the most prominent themes in Raymond Carver's <i>Little Things</i> is marital discord. Carver's use of vivid imagery to introduce the "dark" setting of the story, to an extent, portrays the extensive conflict and struggle that can be said to have caused the discord between the couple. Even from the beginning of the story, the dark can be seen not only outside, but more importantly, "it was getting dark on the inside too" (Carver, para. 1). The interior of the house in which the story is mainly set in is then further described to be of "no light" and "near-dark" (para. 29). Through this description given, Carver is able to emphasize on the internal conflict and also the lack of possible hope for the couple to patch things up as it seems like their marriage has reached an extent in which they cannot tolerate each other anymore. Being engulfed in darkness, the conflict escalates and thus foreshadows the physical struggle at the end of the story, which seems to be the horrifying resolution of their marital discord. Moreover, reading into the physical struggle over the baby at the end of the story suggests a sense of selfishness and the inability to compromise as the main causes of the breakdown of a marriage. Apart from just using imagery to signify the lack of light or hope in the marriage, Carver (para. 19) further intensifies the marital discord through the introduction of the baby as an item the couple want to possess after ending their marriage. Both of them are so adamant in their fight to get the baby that they do not care whether they are hurting the baby or not in the process. This being said, it is very clear that the baby is only considered as an item that both of them want to win out of the marriage. It is very true that no marriage can be void of conflict and struggle but what Carver is trying to emphasize on here is that the inability to compromise and to put the other before self will result in an insolvable marital discord that will not end well for either party. Furthermore, this discord will not only affect the two parties involved but also victimize whatever or whoever comes between them. Therefore, it can be clearly seen that through the dark imagery and the selfishness portrayed in the story, Carver is suggesting that the lack of harmony in a marriage can result in a terrifying outcome not only to the couple involved but also to the people around them.</p>	<p>Topic sentence (ts)</p> <p>Explanation 1 of ts / Lead-in 1 / Claim 1</p> <p>Textual evidence 1</p> <p>Commentary Analysis Warrant</p> <p>Explanation 1 of ts / Lead-in 1 / Claim 1</p> <p>Textual evidence 1</p> <p>Commentary Analysis Warrant</p> <p>Concluding Sentence</p>
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