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English 1

Monday, August 30, 2021

Diagnostic Paragraph

### English 1: Diagnostic Paragraph Assignment

**The Prompt:** This year we'll be reading a few novels and a several short stories and poems—all picked out by someone other than you. Students must read the literature assigned to them, and while teachers work hard to make those choices interesting and exciting, some students may not enjoy the texts the teacher chooses.

What if the choice was yours? Think of the books that you've read that you have enjoyed or found impactful. Choose a book that you found significant and offer the reasons you think as you do.

Take stock of the stories you like. These can be books in any genre or style from picture books to novels; those you've read yourself or those you've listened to; fiction or nonfiction. Which stands out to you as particularly valued? In a paragraph, discuss a book you prize and explain the reasons why it was so special.

**To get your ideas flowing, here are the “Five Qualities of Great Literature.” Pick one of the reasons and use it in your topic sentence.**

**Permanence:** “Stood the test of time”

**Artistry:** The literary devices and development of the story

**Author's Individual Style:** Uniqueness in expression

**Spiritual Value:** Biblical principle (Think of about Phil 4:8 or Gal. 5:22-23); Truths about Life

**Universality:** Appeals to a wide variety of ages and people

### Writing Task 1: (On your own)

**Follow these steps as you write this week:**

**1. Write a solid topic sentence. Here is one provided to you as an example:**

Readers consider Gary Paulsen's *Hatchet* a great piece of literature because of the universal appeal to people of all ages.

**2. Go ahead and write a solid concluding sentence. Restate the topic sentence creatively. Here is one provided to you as an example:**

Example: Whether young or old, *Hatchet* takes readers on an unforgettable adventure.

**3. Now, write the sentences in the middle of the paragraph.** The “body” of the paragraph needs a couple of examples about why you think your book meets one of the five qualities. You need to plan about two sentences (total of four) for each reason to explain why. Don’t retell the story. If warranted, read an online summary of the book to jog your memory.

***You should aim for at least 6 sentences for the sloppy copy.***

Type your **sloppy copy** paragraph below and bring the completed paragraph with you to class next week. We will conduct in an in-class writing workshop that you will need before you turn in the draft of this paragraph. **Do not stress this assignment.** At this point, you just want to get your ideas in down so that you have a productive work session in class.

Sloppy copy goes here.



Young adults see John Dennis Fitzgerald’s *The Great Brain* as a fantastic piece of literature because of its unique and interesting story.

This book has a awesome story with interesting characters and setting.

First off, the main character Tom always finds a way to earn money from literally everything.

Tom will find ways to earn money from chores, from walking in the city, etc.

Second, the setting really fits in with the story.

The setting is based in 1896-1898 in a small town of Adenville, Utah.

Teenagers will find that *The Great Brain* has an adventurous and entertaining story.

**Self-Assessment**-We will do this together in class. Please have your completed paragraph (*sloppy copy*) ready.

- ✓ In Word or Open Office, insert comments about your writing. You will need to include two encouraging comments and three improvement comments (a total of 5).
- ✓ Did you reference the prompt in the topic sentence?
- ✓ Do you have an action verb in the topic sentence? Is it arguable? Look at the sample one again if you need an idea.
- ✓ Did you choose two examples from the book to prove your point?

- ✓ Did you use at least one transition word, especially in the second example? **\*\*note: a list of transition words can be found [here](#)\*\***
- ✓ Did you restate the topic sentence to write an effective wrap-up sentence?
- ✓ Double space
- ✓ Did you color code your paragraph?

**Color Code for Body Paragraphs. You will use this the entire year.**

Topic  
 Follow-up  
 Example 1  
 Follow up  
 Example 2  
 Follow up  
 Concluding Sentence

## Writing Task 2

Type your first revision (*Draft 1 or D1*) (**after completing in-class self-assessment with your instructor**) paragraph below. *While sitting with your paragraph, you will probably see more changes that you need to make.* After you finish, use the same checklist above to make sure that you haven't left out anything. **At this point, you should have at least 7-10 sentences.** Now, submit this document to StudyPlace. Your instructor will return this to you after he or she makes comments.



Young adults see John Dennis Fitzgerald's *The Great Brain* as a fantastic piece of literature because of its unique and interesting story.

This book has an awesome story with interesting main characters and setting.

First off, the main character Tom will always find an interesting way to earn money from almost everything.

Tom finds ways to earn money from chores and tasks.

Second, the setting really fits in with the story.

The setting is based in 1896-1898 in a small town of Adenville, Utah.

Teenagers will find that *The Great Brain* has an adventurous and entertaining story.

### Writing Task 3 Part 1: Final Copy

**You will turn this entire document in for the final copy. Please wait for your instructor before you do this. Type the final copy below *after* you use the final copy checklist. See StudyPlace for this extra document.**



### Writing Task 3 Part 2: Reflection (You must complete this to get full credit on the paragraph.)



Once the writing is done and you have pasted the final copy above, it is time to look back and take stock of where the journey has taken you as a writer.

- Take some time to pause and ponder. Answer the questions below as completely as you can.
- Feel free to copy/ paste examples from your paragraph to demonstrate the point you're making.
- Please **use a different color** as you answer in complete sentences with examples and explanation. Each answer should be roughly 2-5 sentences.

Overall, I feel my essay was excellent / good / average / fair / poor. (highlight one)

1. What do you consider to be the greatest strengths of your paragraph?
2. As a writer, how has your knowledge, skills, or abilities grown as a result of going through the process of writing this paragraph?

3. How could you have improved this piece?
4. In what areas, if any, do you feel that more time or instruction would have helped you?
5. Did you enjoy this assignment? Why or why not?
6. **Parental Perspective:** From the parental perspective, what information would you like me to know about your child's writing process as he or she worked through this piece?  
*(level of independence, frustration, work ethic, attitude, etc . . . )*