

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ PERIOD: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## The Body of a Literary Analysis and the Importance of Topic Sentences (in General)

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### THE BODY:

The term regularly used for the development of the central idea of a literary analysis is the body. In this section you present the paragraphs (*at least 3 paragraphs for a 750-1000 word essay*) that support your thesis statement. Good literary analysis essays contain an explanation of your ideas and evidence from the text (*short story, poem, play*) that supports those ideas. Textual evidence consists of summary, paraphrase, specific details, and direct quotations.

### TOPIC SENTENCES:

Each paragraph should contain a topic sentence (*usually the first sentence of the paragraph*) which states one of the topics associated with your thesis, combined with some assertion about how the topic will support the central idea.

The purpose of the topic sentence is twofold:

- (1) To relate the details of the paragraph to your thesis statement.
- (2) To tie the details of the paragraph together.

The substance of each of your developmental paragraphs (*the body of your essay*) will be the explanations, summaries, paraphrases, specific details, and direct quotations you need to support and develop the more general statement you have made in your topic sentence.

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**EXAMPLE:** The following is a first body paragraph with an introductory paragraph to give context:

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	The setting of John Updike's story "A & P" is crucial to the reader's understanding of Sammy's decision to quit his job. Even though Sammy knows that his quitting will make life more difficult for him, he instinctively insists upon rejecting what the A & P represents in the story. When he rings up a "No Sale" and "saunter[s]" out of the store, Sammy leaves behind not only a job but the rigid state of mind associated with the A & P. Although Sammy is the central character in the story, Updike seems to invest as much effort in describing the setting as he does Sammy. The title, after all, is not "Youthful Rebellion" or "Sammy Quits" but "A & P." <u>The setting is the antagonist of the story and plays a role that is as important as Sammy's.</u>
<b>THESES STATEMENT</b>	
<b>TOPIC SENTENCE</b>	Sammy's descriptions of the A & P present a setting that is ugly, monotonous, and rigidly regulated. The chain store is a common fixture in modern society, so the reader can identify with the uniformity Sammy describes. The fluorescent light is as blandly cool as the "checkerboard green-and-cream rubber tile floor" (486). The usual traffic in the store moves in one direction (except for the swim suited girls, who move against it), and everything is neatly organized and categorized in tidy aisles. The dehumanizing routine of this environment is suggested by Sammy's offhand references to the typical shoppers as "sheep," "house slaves," and "pigs" (486). These regular customers seem to walk through the store in a stupor; as Sammy indicates, not even dynamite could move them out of their routine (485).
<b>EXPLANATIONS AND TEXTUAL EVIDENCE</b>	

This paragraph is strong because it is developed through the use of quotations, summary, details, and explanation to support the topic sentence, and *it relates back to the thesis statement.*

## The Body of the Literary Analysis (for Our Class)

**THESIS STATEMENT:** Select a thesis and write it here since each body paragraph relates back to it.

### THE BODY:

- (1) Supports your thesis statement
- (2) Contains an explanation of your ideas
- (3) Includes evidence from the text that supports those ideas
- (4) Consists of summary, paraphrase, specific details, and/or direct quotations

1.) **Text:** *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*

**Topic Sentence:**

**Textual Evidence #1:**

• \_\_\_\_\_

**Textual Evidence #2:**

• \_\_\_\_\_

**Textual Evidence #3:**

• \_\_\_\_\_

2.) **Text = Your Graphic Novel:**

3.) **Text = Other Literature of Your Choice:**

In your notebook or another sheet of paper, complete the outlines of your body paragraphs for text 2 (*your graphic novel*) and text 3 (*other literature of your choice*) with a topic sentence and 3 bullet-pointed pieces of textual evidence each as you did for text 1 (*TATDOAPI*) above here.