

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

## How to Write a Literary Analysis (in General)

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### LITERARY ANALYSIS:

The purpose of a literary analysis is to carefully examine and sometimes evaluate a work of literature or an aspect of a work of literature. As with any analysis, this requires you to break the subject down into its component parts. Examining the different elements of a piece of literature is not an end in itself but rather a process to help you better appreciate and understand the work of literature as a whole.

For instance, an analysis of a poem might deal with the different types of images in a poem or with the relationship between the form and content of the work. If you were to analyze (discuss and explain) a play, you might analyze the relationship between a subplot and the main plot, or you might analyze the character flaw of the tragic hero by tracing how it is revealed through the acts of the play. Analyzing a short story might include identifying a particular theme (like the difficulty of making the transition from adolescence to adulthood) and showing how the writer suggests that theme through the point of view from which the story is told; or you might also explain how the main character's attitude toward women is revealed through his dialogue and/or actions.

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### WHAT TO REMEMBER:

Writing is the sharpened, focused expression of thought and study. As you develop your writing skills, you will also improve your perceptions and increase your critical abilities. Writing ultimately boils down to the development of an idea. Your objective in writing a literary analysis is to convince the person reading your essay that you have supported the idea you are developing. Unlike ordinary conversation and classroom discussion, writing must stick with great determination to the specific point of development.

This kind of writing demands tight organization and control. Therefore, your essay must have a central idea (thesis), it must have several paragraphs that grow systematically out of the central idea, and everything in it must be directly related to the central idea and must contribute to the reader's understanding of that central idea. These three principles are listed again below.

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### 3 PRINCIPLES OF A LITERARY ANALYSIS:

- 1.) Your essay must cover the topic you are writing about.
- 2.) Your essay must have a central idea (stated in your thesis) that governs its development.
- 3.) Your essay must be organized so that every part contributes something to the reader's understanding of the central idea.

## How To Write Your Literary Analysis (for Our Class)

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### OUR LITERARY ANALYSIS:

The purpose of this specific literary analysis will be to break down the lesson that you discovered in *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* and that you are also using in your graphic novel. You will essentially be discussing and explaining how this same lesson is taught in three different types of literature: (1) TATDOAPTI, (2) your graphic novel, (3) and another piece of literature of your choice.

This week we will break down each component and paragraph of the analysis so that you have a clear idea of how to construct it. This will allow you to think holistically about these three texts and see the similarities between them. Additionally, you can illustrate your writing form skills by showcasing your MLA formatting and complex, compound sentences.

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### INITIAL IDEAS:

Since you have already selected the lesson, you should already have a good grasp of what to write about in your analysis. You do not need to spend much time brainstorming, however you do need to determine another piece of literature of your choice that teaches the same lesson as well. Answer the following questions in order to begin the process of this analysis.

1.) How would you describe the lesson in your own words?

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2.) What are 3-5 other books, films, etc. that you recognize this lesson also being taught?

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3.) How can you make this lesson relatable to a wide audience?

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