

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

## The Elements of a Literary Analysis (in General)

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### THE THESIS STATEMENT:

The thesis statement tells your reader what to expect: it is a restricted, precisely worded declarative sentence that states the purpose of your essay -- the point you are trying to make. Without a carefully conceived thesis, an essay has no chance of success. The following are thesis statements which would work for a 750-1000 word literary analysis essay:

#### EXAMPLES:

- (1) The fate of the main characters in *Antigone* illustrates the danger of excessive pride.
- (2) The imagery in Dylan Thomas' poem "Fern Hill" reveals the ambiguity of humans' relationship with the world.
- (3) The conflict found in *Jurassic Park*, *Into the Wild*, and *Swiss Army Man* proves that man cannot control nature.

**Typically, the thesis statement falls at the end of your introductory paragraph.**

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### THE INTRODUCTION:

The introduction to your literary analysis should try to capture your reader's interest. To bring immediate focus to your subject, you may want to use a quotation, a provocative question, a brief anecdote, a startling statement, or a combination of these. You may also want to include background information relevant to your thesis and necessary for the reader to understand the position you are taking. In addition, you need to include the title of the work(s) of literature and name(s) of the author.

EXAMPLES - The following are introductory paragraphs including appropriate thesis statements:

- (1) What would one expect to be the personality of a man who has his wife sent away to a convent (or perhaps has had her murdered) because she took too much pleasure in the sunset and in a compliment paid to her by another man? It is just such a man—a Renaissance duke—who Robert Browning portrays in his poem "My Last Duchess." A character analysis of the Duke reveals that through his internal dialogue, his interpretation of earlier incidents, and his actions, his traits—arrogance, jealousy, and greediness—emerge.
- (2) The first paragraph of Alberto Alvaro Rios's short story "The Secret Lion" presents a twelve-year-old boy's view of growing up—everything changes. As the narrator informs the reader, when the magician pulls a tablecloth out from under a pile of dishes, children are amazed at the "stay-the-same part," while adults focus only on the tablecloth itself (42). Adults have the benefit of experience and know the trick will work as long as the technique is correct. When people "grow up," they gain this experience and knowledge but lose their innocence and sense of wonder. In other words, the price paid for growing up is a permanent sense of loss. This tradeoff is central to "The Secret Lion." The key symbols in the story reinforce its main theme: change is inevitable and always accompanied by a sense of loss.

## The Elements of a Literary Analysis (for Our Class)

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### THE THESIS STATEMENT:

- (1) Tells your reader what to expect
- (2) A restricted, precisely worded declarative sentence
- (3) States the purpose of your essay
- (4) Gives the point you are trying to make

Construct at least 2 potential thesis statements below:

(1) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(2) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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### THE INTRODUCTION:

- (1) Captures your reader's interest
- (2) Brings immediate focus to your subject
- (3) Includes relevant background information if necessary
- (4) Also includes the title of the work(s) of literature and name(s) of the author

From what you know about your lesson and the 3 texts that it is taught within, answer the following:

1.) How can you capture your audience's attention and/or bring focus to your subject?

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2.) Do your texts and/or topic require background information? If so, what should you include?

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3.) What are your 3 texts and names of each author?

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In your English notebook, see if you can combine your answers into a rough draft of an introduction.