

Student's name

Instructor's name

English 275

Due date of essay (day month year)

Analytical Papers (Your Title--centered, not bold or underlined)

The heading, title, and first paragraph of this assignment sheet demonstrate the MLA Style you are to use for your **two** analytical essays. Please refer to a handbook or the MLA web site, available through the Oviatt Library. **Your essays must:** be 3-6 pages in length (double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-pt font), contain a clear thesis, present supporting evidence, be well-organized, contain in-text citations, and contain a Works Cited page. See syllabus for due dates.

Your Choices: You may choose to complete any of the options listed below (you may write about the text you presented in class; however, you must present an aspect of the text that was not presented in your class presentation). When writing an analytical paper, avoid summarizing the plot--it is necessary to say something specific and significant about the work and to use specific evidence from the text to support your point(s).

Format: Your essay should consist of several paragraphs, which logically follow each other.

- **Title:** The title should tell enough about the topic of the essay to capture the interest of readers and let them know the focus of the essay.
- **Introduction:** To avoid a dull beginning, lead into your thesis with an engaging opening. Be sure to include the author's complete name and the title of the work you are going to discuss. (If you are comparing texts, then you will need to mention both authors' full names and both titles of the texts discussed.) After the initial reference, continue to refer to the author by his or her last name. The titles of texts should be punctuated appropriately. The introduction establishes a context for your thesis by briefly summarizing the work in terms of what you want to argue. Your thesis statement should be somewhere in the introduction, and it should be narrow, specific, and clearly stated.
- **Body:** The body paragraphs should provide support for your thesis position by offering specific evidence from the text and explanation as to how this support is significant for your thesis. Develop your thesis fully, making sure each paragraph connects to it. Document any in-text citations. Analyze only those details that fit your thesis. Use transitional words and phrases to help establish comparisons/contrasts/connections.
- **Conclusion:** The conclusion should refer to your introduction, without repeating your thesis statement. It should expand the thesis idea with a concluding insight gained from reading the work(s) or even from writing the paper. The conclusion paragraph should provide closure to the essay without announcing that this is the conclusion.

Explanation of the Analytical Essay:

Characteristics of an essay:

1. An essay is relatively short--from roughly two to no more than fifty pages.
2. An essay is somewhat formal; that is, it follows certain forms that have become conventional. It adheres to the rules of usage--punctuation, spelling, syntax, diction--expected in published writing. It has a thesis that unifies the whole essay. It follows an organizational pattern that emphasizes intellectual coherence.
3. An essay is aimed at a serious audience, one that cares about your subject and will take time to consider what you have to say.
4. An essay is persuasive. Your purpose is to persuade people that your ideas are worthy of consideration.
5. An essay is dialogic. It often responds to other people who have written or spoken, and it assumes that its audience might talk back.
6. Most importantly, an essay is argumentative. It develops a line of thought (a logically related series of claims) that relates to a thesis. It supports claims with evidence (facts and reasoning). It organizes its claims and evidence in a coherent and logical order.

The Writing Process:

While not in any particular order, most writers think and write through stages of a process in order to come up with a final product. This process consists of:

Inventing/Planning: Studying the subject (or text). Identifying your purpose and audience.

Generating ideas. Recognizing any limitations on your essay (length, time in which you have to write it, specifics of an assignment). Gathering information and support.

Drafting: Determining your thesis and supporting claims. Gathering facts from the texts and, if necessary, secondary sources, to support your claims. Organizing and developing ideas. Writing your first draft.

Revising: Reading your draft critically. If possible, getting others to read your draft and make comments on it. Revising and checking for clarity, coherence, and unity. Editing and proofreading. Rethinking your plan of organization and line of reasoning.

TIPS:

- Do not summarize; analyze. Use the techniques we've been exploring in class.
- Stick to your thesis--discuss one element, instead of trying to cover everything.
- When analyzing fiction, consider how the author uses the elements of fiction to develop his/her story.
- When writing about literature use the present tense and appropriate literary terms.
- Don't regurgitate what was discussed in class or in discussion forums. Use your own insights; support your ideas textually.
- You may draw from your own knowledge of the material, if appropriate, including biographical material about the author. Make sure you cite your sources and include a Works Cited page.
- You may draw from what you are learning in other classes, as long as it is pertinent to your discussion of the text.
- Show that you understand the text and demonstrate that an analysis requires more than one reading of a text. In other words, do not discuss the surface level of the text (analysis should go beyond the surface level that any reader could easily recognize). Make your reader think.
- Extra Credit: Use the Learning Resource Center Writing Lab (BH 408 Student Services Building 4th floor).
- No cover page.
- No folders.