

DIRECTIONS FOR WRITING ESSAYS

Most of your writing will be in the form of either a theme paper or a persuasive essay. The structure will be a 4--5 paragraph (or longer) essay with an introduction, body and conclusion.

FORMAT: Your introduction should contain a "hook" to grab the reader's attention, a brief (one or two sentence) description of the plot, a theme or main idea that you will explore or defend, and the supporting points you will cover in your discussion of the theme or main idea. Do not go into great detail in your introduction. It is meant as a preview of coming attractions.

The body of your paper is made up of 3 or more paragraphs. Each paragraph explores the supporting point mentioned in the introduction. (These paragraphs should be in the order you mentioned them in the introduction. This is called parallel structure.) Here is where you use examples from the book to illustrate your points (just as a lawyer uses evidence in court). Show the reader what you mean with two or more examples for each point.

The conclusion will recap your supporting points and indicate how they prove your main idea or statement on the theme. Use different words than you used in the introduction. **** For persuasive papers conclude with a call to action (what people should do about the issue. ** For theme papers conclude with a universal idea, which extends the theme beyond the book into the real world.** You may also add a concluding remark or personal note at the end. (Make sure this is not something that needs to be supported with evidence - if so, it belongs in the body of your paper.)

Points to consider

Theme Paper:

- A theme is a message or idea being explored - it's the point, moral, or main idea of the book.
- A clue to determining the theme is to ask, how the protagonist (the main character) changes during the course of the novel.
- One option to write about: how do a character's choices illustrate the theme?

Persuasive / Analytical Paper:

- What are the book's strengths and weaknesses? Explain why & give examples.
- Is there logical consistency within the world created?
- Are you able to relate to the protagonist? Why/why not?
- Is there depth and breadth to the character (is s/he three-dimensional)?
- Did the style of writing keep you engaged?
- Explain why you would or would not recommend the book.
- Do not use a 1-10 scale. Be creative.

Plot:

- **DO NOT simply describe the plot!**
- Use examples from the story to illustrate the points you are making in either your theme paper or persuasive (analytical) paper. **SHOW, DON'T JUST TELL.**

*** Use the format sheet on the other side to help you organize your thoughts.

-Format for Essays-

- 1) Fill in the blanks.
- 2) Turn in these directions into Original Sentences.
- 3) You will end up with a great essay every time.

I. Hook: _____

Context (a brief synopsis of the plot):

Main idea/theme : _____

Topic sentence (overall opinion or statement of theme):

Three reasons why: 1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

II. Reason #1: _____

2 examples: 1) _____ ***describe & analyze**

2) _____ ***describe & analyze**

III. Reason #2: _____

2 examples: 1) _____ ***describe & analyze**

2) _____ ***describe & analyze**

IV. Reason #3 _____

2 examples: 1) _____ ***describe & analyze**

2) _____ ***describe & analyze**

Conclusion: Due to reasons:

(1) _____

(2) _____ **&**

(3) _____ **,**

your topic sentence (overall opinion or theme statement) is true. (You may add a personal concluding remark here.)

Universal Idea or Call to Action :
