

RESEARCH PAPER GUIDELINES
ENG 243: INTRODUCTION TO SHORT STORY
Instructor: Y. Bailey-Kirby

You will write an analytical research paper of approximately 1,500-2000 words or, in other words, about 5-6 typed pages. The essay must be double spaced with one inch margins and use a legible font style like "Times New Roman" or "Arial" (size 12). You must include an outline with your essay, and you must apply the MLA format for the "Works Cited" page for all of your primary and secondary sources as well as provide parenthetical citations whenever you quote, paraphrase, and/or summarize as well as a "Works Cited" page at the end of your essay. Moreover, you will present your findings in a 10 minute presentation to the class at the end of the semester. See the handout for the final presentation guidelines on my website.

With your new topic of interest, you will be required to include a minimum of three secondary sources, in which you will be required to quote, paraphrase, and/or summarize from each of them at least once. You are permitted **ONLY ONE BLOCK QUOTE**, so do not rely on chain linking block quotes to write your paper because you are supposed to use your own words; hence, analyze, interpret, and evaluate the original text before writing the essay on your understanding of the reading.

You should support your thesis with evidence from the original story's text, and you should quote at least once from the story in each body paragraph. In other words, if you have five body paragraphs, you will have a minimum of **FIVE QUOTES** from the story (Primary Source). Of course, you are permitted to use more quotes as evidence to support your analysis. In addition, you are required to use secondary sources to lend your discussion authority. Your primary source is the story that you are analyzing while your secondary sources must be legitimate, scholarly, literary criticisms from our library.

You will find literary criticisms through our CSN Library when you search directly in click "Databases". You will look for literary criticisms/essays on your story in ProQuest, EBSCO, JSTOR, Academic Resource Center, and/or Literature Criticism Online, etc. Hence, you should have a minimum of **THREE SECONDARY SOURCES** (Literary Criticisms from our Library) that you will integrate in your research paper. In other words, you should quote from each source at least once for a total of **THREE QUOTES**. Of course, you can include more quotes or more secondary sources if necessary to support your thesis. **(NOTE: DO NOT USE WIKIPEDIA, SPARKNOTES, CLIFF NOTES, OR ANY OTHER NON-ACADEMIC SOURCES IN YOUR ESSAY!!!)**

You may choose any one of the short stories listed in our course syllabus and analyze it for a specific theme, but when you decide to select the secondary sources to assist and lend your discussion authority, you may want to do a feminist criticism, psychological analysis, or even historical analysis. You are also required to go visit the writing center with your research paper, have it stamped/dated, and submit it as your rough draft with your final revised copy of the research paper. (Note: You will be penalized one full letter grade (10 points) if you do not go to the writing center.)

Your main objective will be to analyze any one of the reading assignments from the semester. You will determine the theme and turn in a clearly stated thesis for my approval. You will need to choose which Element(s) of Literature [Character: Protagonist vs. Antagonist or Round/Dynamic vs. Static/Flat; Plot: Exposition, Rising Action (Complications and Conflicts), Climax, Falling Action, Resolution/Denouement as well as Foreshadowing; Setting; Point of View; Symbolism/Symbols; and Style, Tone, and Irony) you want to discuss regarding the theme. (Note: If you find yourself struggling, arrange a time to meet with me in advance, and I will be more than glad to assist you in organizing your ideas, answering any questions, or giving you any feedback on your analysis of the short fiction.)

CHECKLIST FOR RESEARCH PAPER BEFORE YOU TURN IN THE FINAL DRAFT:

1. ____ Underlined thesis in the introduction and included an outline, "Works Cited" page, and stamped/dated copy of your rough draft from the writing center. (Scan entire writing center draft and attach it, or submit the actual stamped/dated copy to your instructor during class.)
2. ____ Wrote approximately 1,500-2,000 words for the essay and stayed consistent in formal voice of third person point of view (No slang, no contractions, or jumping around between first, second, and third person.).
3. ____ Used the MLA format for parenthetical citations whenever you quoted, paraphrased, or summarized from the story (primary source) and/or the literary criticisms (secondary sources).
4. ____ Integrated three secondary sources with a minimum of three quotes/at least one quote per source in your paper) as well as a minimum of five quotes from the primary source (short story). Of course, you can exceed this amount for both.
5. ____ Submitted PDF attachments (NOT JUST LINKS THAT MIGHT NOT OPEN), but attach the entire literary criticism/article as a PDF file in the electronic drop box in Canvas when you submit your work.

*******REMEMBER YOU MUST SUBMIT THE FINAL DRAFT OF YOUR RESEARCH PAPER IN THE DROP BOX IN CANVAS.*******

FOLLOW THE STEPS BELOW TO HELP YOU FORMULATE A THESIS STATEMENT, LIST YOUR LITERARY CRITICISMS SOURCES, AND GET STARTED ON AN OUTLINE BY TYPING THESE STEPS OUT ON A SEPARATE SHEET OF PAPER FOR YOUR INSTRUCTOR'S APPROVAL OF YOUR TOPIC, THESIS, SOURCES, AND OUTLINE.

Step 1: Choose a story from the syllabus as well as a theme that you want to analyze in your research paper and list the theme, title, and author below:

(Here are a few examples to help you get started: the themes of revenge and pride in "The Cask of Amontillado" by Edgar Allan Poe; the themes of good vs. evil in *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad; the themes of denial and isolation in "A Rose for Emily" by William Faulkner; the theme of mortality in *The Death of Ivan Ilych* by Leo Tolstoy; and the theme of alienation in "The Metamorphosis" by Franz Kafka, etc.)

Step 2: Choose an element of literature (1-3 is the most manageable) and list it below:
(Here a few examples to help you get started: Character, Symbolism/Symbols, Setting, Irony, Plot.)

Step 3: Formulate a thesis statement by filling in the blanks of the template thesis listed below:
(Example: The theme of redemption is conveyed through the characters, symbols, and setting in "Sonny's Blues" by James Baldwin.)

Template Thesis: The theme of _____ is conveyed through
_____ , _____ , and _____
in _____ by _____ .

Step 4: Locate three literary criticisms/secondary sources on your story from our library and list their full citation of the source in the MLA format below:

Source 1: _____

Source 2: _____

Source 3: _____

Step 5: Create a typed outline on a separate sheet of paper by following the steps from the example outline provided for you on the next page. You should include quotes from the story to show your instructor that you have evidence from your primary source, and then, later you can add quotes from the secondary sources.

AN EXAMPLE OF AN INFORMAL OUTLINE

Thesis: The theme of good vs. evil is conveyed through the characters and symbols in *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad.

- I. Introduction
 - A. Briefly summarize the reading (i.e. story, play, etc.) and identify the literary elements that you will be analyzing as well as the critical approach (i.e. historical or psychological overview, etc.)
 - B. State thesis.
- II. Topic sentence: Character A & Theme
 - A. Example 1
 - 1. Quote or paraphrase from the reading as evidence.
 - 2. Explain meaning/relevance in supporting your thesis.
 - a. Quote or paraphrase secondary source as evidence.
 - b. Explain meaning/relevance in supporting you.
 - B. Example 2
 - 1. Quote or paraphrase from the reading as evidence.
 - 2. Explain meaning/relevance in supporting your thesis.
 - a. Quote or paraphrase secondary source as evidence.
 - b. Explain meaning/relevance in supporting you.
- III. Topic sentence: Character B & Theme
 - A. Example 1
 - 1. Quote or paraphrase from the reading as evidence.
 - 2. Explain meaning/relevance in supporting your thesis.
 - a. Quote or paraphrase secondary source as evidence.
 - b. Explain meaning/relevance in supporting you.
 - B. Example 2
 - 1. Quote or paraphrase from the reading as evidence.
 - 2. Explain meaning/relevance in supporting your thesis.
 - a. Quote or paraphrase secondary source as evidence.
 - b. Explain meaning/relevance in supporting you.

- IV. Topic sentence: Character C & Theme
 - A. Example 1
 - 1. Quote or paraphrase from the reading as evidence.
 - 2. Explain meaning/relevance in supporting your thesis.
 - a. Quote or paraphrase secondary source as evidence.
 - b. Explain meaning/relevance in supporting you.
 - B. Example 2
 - 1. Quote or paraphrase from the reading as evidence.
 - 2. Explain meaning/relevance in supporting your thesis.
 - a. Quote or paraphrase secondary source as evidence.
 - b. Explain meaning/relevance in supporting you.
- V. Topic sentence: Symbols & Theme
 - A. Example 1
 - 1. Quote or paraphrase from the reading as evidence.
 - 2. Explain meaning/relevance in supporting your thesis.
 - a. Quote or paraphrase secondary source as evidence.
 - b. Explain meaning/relevance in supporting you.
 - B. Example 2
 - 1. Quote or paraphrase from the reading as evidence.
 - 2. Explain meaning/relevance in supporting your thesis.
 - a. Quote or paraphrase secondary source as evidence.
 - b. Explain meaning/relevance in supporting you.
- VI. Topic sentence: Setting & Theme
 - A. Example 1
 - 1. Quote or paraphrase from the reading as evidence.
 - 2. Explain meaning/relevance in supporting your thesis.
 - a. Quote or paraphrase secondary source as evidence.
 - b. Explain meaning/relevance in supporting you.
 - B. Example 2
 - 1. Quote or paraphrase from the reading as evidence.
 - 2. Explain meaning/relevance in supporting your thesis.
 - a. Quote or paraphrase secondary source as evidence.
 - b. Explain meaning/relevance in supporting you.
- VII. Conclusion: Reiterate the main points of your essay. (DO NOT JUST RESTATE THE THESIS! You should recap the main points of your essay in separate sentences as well as offer some provocative insight on your topic. If you have less than three sentences, you have a weak conclusion and need to strengthen it.)

(NOTE: The lower case a & b in the outline does not necessarily mean that you must always include a secondary source for each example, but this example outline should help give you an idea on how to approach your own outline and organize your thoughts.)