LITERARY ANALYSIS RUBRIC

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| **GRADE/**  **POINTS** | **Intro Paragraph / Thesis** | **Body Paragraphs / Organization** | **Literary Analysis** | **Language Style / Voice** | **Mechanics** |
| **A**  **(10 points)** | Engaging opening introduces the essay’s general topic and inspires thinking about that topic; logically proceeds to thesis; thesis is an easily identifiable, well-phrased argument that assesses the text and addresses a specific idea to be analyzed and proven in the essay; the idea offered in the thesis reflects sound critical, analytical thinking; title and author of work are appropriately referenced | Each topic sentence clearly connects to the thesis and offers an identifiable, well-phrased idea to be proven in the paragraph; concrete details are well-chosen and incorporated; paragraphs are well-organized to create a coherent, carefully developed and supported argument; transitions between ideas are logical and each idea builds on the preceding; writer maintains focus and control of argument so that the point of each paragraph is always clear | Writing reflects a critical, analytical understanding of the text; through clear reasoning, writer draws sophisticated, insightful inferences from concrete details to support the connected ideas of the TS and thesis; inferences are developed so that all claims and points made are well-supported and persuasive; analysis focuses on both thematic and stylistic elements of the text, demonstrating writer’s ability to interpret the function of literary devices in the service of thematic meaning; appropriate balance of quotes & writer's analysis; writer is clearly engaged with and moved by his/her thinking process | Writing is academic in tone, demonstrating a clear sense of purpose and audience; writer's voice is evident -- confident and sophisticated; vocabulary and phrasing are academically appropriate, persuasive, and sophisticated without being pretentious | Essay includes a variety of sentences marked by varying opening words and structure; effective syntax and grammar demonstrate a mastery of writing conventions and serve the author’s purpose; consistent adherence to MLA guidelines; accurate Work Cited page; absence of misspellings, punctuation errors |
| **B**  **(8 points)** | Generally engaging opening; areas to be strengthened may include: presentation of general topic; development of transition between general opening and specific thesis statement; thesis statement is phrased as an argument but may be strengthened through clarification of the main idea being offered | Each topic sentence generally connects to the thesis but in one or more TS  the main idea may need to be clarified; concrete details are generally well-chosen though some may be irrelevant or insufficient as evidence to effectively support the thesis and/or TS; paragraphs are generally well-organized, although some transitions may be awkward and there may be gaps in the development of ideas; focus and control of argument may need improvement because the point of a paragraph may not always be clear | Writing generally reflects a critical, analytical understanding of the text but is uneven; inferences demonstrate interpretive ability but could be developed further to better explain significance of detail and support thesis and/or TS; some claims may be vague, generalized, or lacking in support; analysis could be stronger through focus on stylistic elements that create thematic meaning; some imbalance of quotes and writer's analysis | Writing is generally academic in tone; writer’s voice may not be consistently persuasive but is discernible; writing demonstrates an awareness of the purpose to persuade; vocabulary in some places may be simplistic or ineffective | Essay’s sentences generally effective but may lack appropriate variety (some repeated opening words and structure); syntax and grammar may be awkward in places (but not distracting); a few misspellings (but not distracting); consistent adherence to MLA guidelines; accurate Work Cited page |
| **C**  **(6 points)** | Opening is functional but too brief and/or simplistic, essay’s topic is apparent but needs to be developed to engage the reader; abrupt transition from first sentences to thesis statement; paragraph may be incoherent, jumping from one point to the next without developing a smooth progression of ideas; thesis may be too general, vague, or imprecisely phrased; thesis may not directly address the prompt (though still an argument that assesses the text) | Topic sentences are present but more than one is weak in the following areas: main idea not discernible; a fact about the text is summarized; unclear connection to thesis.  Concrete details are present but weak because they provide insufficient evidence to support TS and/or are irrelevant because they do not support an insightful inference.  Lack of coherent organization of ideas within individual paragraphs or from one paragraph to the next; abrupt transitions impede smooth flow of ideas; essay lacks consistent focus and control of argument; paragraph(s) may lack clear point(s); content of paragraphs does not consistently support or connect with thesis and/orTS | Writing demonstrates basic comprehension of the text but not a critical, analytical understanding of it, as reflected by one or more of the following: lack of focused, developed idea guiding essay; interpretive analysis inconsistent or unsubstantiated; frequent summary of plot details that retell the story; writer restates the content of cited concrete details rather than draws significant inferences about sub-textual meaning; little or no analysis of how stylistic elements of the text create meaning.  Writing marked and weakened by frequent generalizations, unsupported claims, assumptions, vague statements. | Writing tends to be mechanical in tone; writer’s voice is not discernible in the essay; writing demonstrates inconsistent awareness of the purpose to persuade; vocabulary tends to be simplistic, marked by instances of informal or imprecise diction | Essay sentences lack variety (frequently repeated opening words and sentence structure); awkward syntax and grammar confuse writer’s point and distract reader; misspellings, contractions, fragments, referring to “you” diminish academic nature of the writing and distract reader; inconsistent adherence to MLA guidelines (but does not compromise integrity of essay); Work Cited page may contain inaccuracies (but does not compromise the integrity of essay) |
| **D**  **(4 points)** | Opening is ineffective, poorly organized, and undeveloped (inappropriately brief); thesis may summarize plot point rather than present argument about text; thesis may not address the prompt at all; author and/or title of text may not be referenced properly (i.e. only author's last name, title incorrectly formatted) | Topic sentences absent or consistently lack focused ideas, either offering general, irrelevant comments or stating facts about the text; there is no discernible argument or point guiding essay; concrete details are absent or ineffective/ insufficient; consistent lack of coherent organization of ideas within paragraphs and from one paragraph to the next;  points of paragraphs are unclear | Writing demonstrates some awareness of text details but not a critical, analytical understanding of the text; points made are vague and unsubstantiated; essay lacks focus; no literary analysis present | Writing is mechanical in tone; writer’s voice is not discernible in essay; writing demonstrates no awareness of purpose to persuade; vocabulary is simplistic and/or inappropriate | Frequent syntax, grammar, misspelling errors that distract the reader; lack of adherence to MLA guidelines undermines integrity of essay; inaccurate Work Cited page compromises integrity of essay |
| **F**  **(unacceptable)** | Fails to fulfill the requirements of the assignment | Fails to fulfill the requirements of the assignment | Fails to fulfill the requirements of the assignment | Fails to fulfill the requirements of the assignment | No adherence to MLA guidelines (missing citations, lack of proper format); No Work Cited page |