

Literature Based Expository Essay

In a literature based essay, you as the writer are shedding light on what you think the author's intended purpose or meaning was in a piece of literature. You explain your thesis systematically by providing evidence from the text that backs up your thesis. This kind of writing is different from a book report in that you assume that the reader has read the book and it's focused on very specific scenes or examples from the text. Do not spend 5 paragraphs summarizing the story. Follow the outline below.

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. **Hook:** Use some unique way of getting the reader's attention and introducing the focus of your paper.
- B. **Background Information:** The first few sentences of the introduction briefly summarize the content, meaning, or focus of the text. Provide the author's name and the title of the text somewhere in the introduction.
- C. **Thesis & Subtopics:** The thesis is where you state the focus or purpose of your essay. It's usually the last sentence in your first paragraph, but not always. The subtopics of your paper are the focus of each of the body paragraphs. You can list these separately, using a sentence or so for each one, or combine them with the thesis. The order in which you list them is the order in which you'll discuss them. A thesis for an essay on the theme of pride in the novel *The Glory Field* might look like this: *In The Glory Field there are several examples of pride shown through the actions and lives of the characters of Muhammad, Bilal, Lizzy, and Tommy.* This sentence combines the listing of the subtopics with the thesis.

II. BODY PARAGRAPHS (3 of these)

- A. **Topic Sentence:** The first sentence in your first body paragraph should include a word or phrase that helps the reader transition to this new idea. State the subtopic and a specific idea or attitude about that topic that shows connection to the thesis.
- B. **Quote Set Up:** Text quotes will introduce evidence from the text that supports your thesis. Before you do that, it's helpful to set up the quote you've chosen by describing the events leading up to the scene where the quote takes place.
- C. **Text Quote:** Select evidence from the text that supports your thesis. The evidence can be character dialogue or actions as described by the author. The evidence should be directly quoted, using quotation marks. Then, include a parenthetical reference to the page number of the quote. This is done so the reader can refer back to the text if he or she has questions about the wording or the context of the quote. Quoting an action: "He stalked the bunny rabbit down the worn forest path" (256). Quoting dialogue: "I saw him stalk the bunny down the path," Jane said" (256). Notice the placement of the period after the parentheses, not before.
- D. **Analysis:** After the text quote, use two or three sentences to explain how this quote supports your thesis.
- E. **Conclusion:** At the end of the paragraph, make an inference or connection about the overall significance as it relates to the text.

III. CONCLUSION

- A. **Restate Thesis:** Use a transitional phrase to begin your concluding paragraph. The first sentence restates your thesis from the introductory paragraph. Avoid using the same wording you used in your introduction.
- B. **Review Subtopics:** Write one to three sentences that summarize the three main points from your body paragraphs.
- C. **Concluding Thoughts:** The final part of your conclusion states the larger significance of your thesis. For example: How does what you've examined in the essay and the text relate to the larger context of the world we live in? What's the universal significance or larger lesson to be learned from the text and your essay.

Name _____

Date _____

Per _____

Literature Based Expository Essay Outline

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Hook:

B. Background:

C. Thesis & Subtopics:

Thesis: _____

Subtopics: 1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

II. BODY PARAGRAPH 1

A. Topic Sentence:

B. Quote Set Up:

C. Text Quote:

D. Analysis:

E. Conclusion:

BODY PARAGRAPH 2

A. Topic Sentence:

B. Quote Set Up:

C. Text Quote:

D. Analysis:

E. Conclusion:

BODY PARAGRAPH 3

A. Topic Sentence:

B. Quote Set Up:

C. Text Quote:

D. Analysis:

E. Conclusion:

III. CONCLUSION

A. Restate Thesis:

B. Review Subtopics:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

C. Concluding Thoughts:
