

Literary Analysis Essay

Write a five paragraph essay **analyzing literary devices the author uses to develop the theme** in one of the following short stories: *Harrison Bergeron*, *The Getaway*, *The Interlopers*, *There Will Come Soft Rains*, *The Veldt*, or *The Lottery*.

Focus on **three** of the following literary devices that you feel helps support the theme:

- Setting
- Conflict
- Characterization (characters speech, inner thoughts, effect on others, actions, motivations and characters development: round, flat, dynamic or static).
- Foreshadowing or Flashback
- Irony
- Point of View
- Symbolism

You must go in detail about how this element supports the theme giving examples and making connections between the examples and the theme

Introduction: Grab the **reader's attention** by choosing a quote that relates to the theme. Include a brief description of the story by stating the **title**, **author**, and **summary** that identifies key literary elements including: **protagonist**, **antagonist**, **conflict** and **key plot points** (*exposition, inciting incident, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution*). **The last sentence of your introduction should state your thesis statement.**

Italicize and bold your thesis statement:

A major theme in _____ is

which is demonstrated through the author's use of

Body 1: Analyze literary element and how it supports theme

Body 2: Analyze literary element and how it supports theme

Body 3: Analyze literary element and how it supports theme

Conclusion: Review thesis and explain the importance of the theme as a whole.

This should be typed, 12 point Times New Roman, 1.5 lines spaced

Due: _____

The Necklace Literary Essay

The French novelist, Alphonse Karr said, “Some people are always grumbling because roses have thorns; I am thankful that thorns have roses.” *The Necklace* by Guy de Maupassant is a short story about the bitterness of being discontent and the lesson that one should be thankful for what they have and who they are. Set in Paris France in the late 1800’s, people were divided into upper, middle, and lower classes. The protagonist, Madame Loisel is unhappy with her life. She dreams of lavish clothing, furniture, and more specifically, to be envied. She feels that she was to be born with every delicacy and luxury, but instead had been born into a family of *clerks*. Madame Loisel’s husband, Monsieur Loisel, works as a clerk and the couple live a modest middle class lifestyle. She agonizes over the shabbiness of her apartment and the meagerness of her clothing. When her husband brings an invitation to an exclusive party, one he felt would make her happy and excited, it instead fills her with dread and anxiety about what she will wear to such an exclusive party. After her husband sacrifices his own happiness so that she may find a dress that she finds suitable, she is still unhappy when she realizes that she has no jewelry to go with her dress. When her husband suggests she visit her friend, Madame Forestier and borrow some jewelry, she finds a beautiful necklace that she’s sure will bring the affection and reaction she’s hoping for. At the party, she’s the most sought after person and for a moment she forgets her feelings of inadequacy, but when she loses the necklace their life is turned upside down in an instant. In order to replace the necklace, they must spend 40,000 francs. Not only do they have to borrow the money, they must give up their lifestyle and learn to live as the lower class, so they can payback their debt. In a change of character, Madame Loisel plays her part, learning to do heavy housework, bargaining with fruit dealers, and losing any ounce of the life she once lived, or the person she once was. After ten years, she runs into her old friend, Madame Forestier, only to find out that the original necklace had been a fake. ***A major theme of The Necklace is that one should be happy with what they have and who they are, which is demonstrated by the author’s characterization of Madame Loisel, the use of situational irony, and the symbol of the necklace.***

“She was one of those pretty and charming girls, born, as if by accident to a family of clerks.” Madame Loisel longs for more, better, and the envy of others. She dreams of Oriental tapestries, butlers in knee breeches, great reception halls, fine furniture, and stylish, scented

sitting rooms where she can sit with friends whose husbands are distinguished and sought after. While other women, who live below her status, could only dream of what she has, Madame Loisel is characterized as someone who is ungrateful, difficult, and hard to please. Her speech is one of a child who doesn't get everything they want. Even after her husband is able to acquire an invitation to an exclusive party, she wines about not having a dress and suggests giving it to someone whose wife can dress better than she. Subsequently her husband gives her the money for a dress, yet is still ungrateful due to the fact that she doesn't have the "right" accessory. Only after borrowing a beautiful diamond necklace is she happy with her appearance. At the party she is described as being one of the most beautiful women; she's not only fashionable, but gracious, smiling, and filled with joy. What Madame Loisel fails to realize is that it isn't what she's wearing that's making her so sought after but rather the confidence she is exhibiting because of what she is wearing. This reinforces the theme that one should be happy with what they have and who they are because Madame Loisel already has the looks and the charm to be well liked but it's her attitude that makes her seem less than. If she had only realized this and been happy with what she had, she wouldn't have needed to borrow the necklace in the first place. Additionally, when Madame Loisel loses the necklace she must learn what it's like to truly have nothing. The necklace is expensive and the debt they must repay strips them of their lifestyle and forces them to live a life of need and hard work. She loses ten years because of her inability to be content, she must withstand real hardship, and the life she once loathed is a life that she now could only dream of. This new lifestyle shows the importance of being thankful for what one has. Had Madame Loisel been thankful for the lifestyle she was initially afforded and had been confident enough to find worth in herself, she would not have felt the need to give the impression of wealth, nor the need to fit into a status quo that doesn't value true characters of importance.

Another literary element that strengthens the theme that one should be happy with what they have and who they are is the author's use of situational irony. The author uses situational irony by creating a character who is so unhappy with their own life that they feel they need to acquire an accessory that fills them with joy, which the irony is that same source of joy becomes her downfall. When she loses the necklace and must give up everything in her life to replace it, she not only loses her middle class status but falls into a life of poverty and struggle. This use of irony exhibits the theme that one should be happy with what they have and who they are because if Madame Loisel hadn't felt the need to have the necklace to feel self-worth and rather found it

in herself, she would not have been in the predicament she finds herself in. Another use of situational irony is at the end of the novel when after ten years of struggle and paying off the debt to pay off the necklace, she finds out that the necklace all along had been merely made of paste and not worth the 40,000 dollars her husband and her paid to replace it. This use of irony supports the theme because it shows that even Madame Foreister, who Madame Loisel borrows the necklace from, is someone who gives the appearance of having more than they have. If Madame Loisel had known this maybe she wouldn't have envied her friend so much and wouldn't have felt such shame in telling her that she lost the necklace. If only they both were honest about their circumstances, and happy with what they do have and who they are, they wouldn't need a fake piece of jewelry to give the impression that they have more than they do.

Lastly, the necklace symbolizes the theme that one should be happy with what they have and who they are because this necklace, which originally seems like the ultimate accessory, that brings our protagonist pleasure and the feeling of pride, is ultimately a fake. This goes to symbolize that if you are happy with what you have and who you are, you won't need an object to make you feel like you are. The necklace might have helped give her confidence to change her social acceptance, however it was also the thing that changed her social standing. What Madame Loisel needed to realize is that without the necklace she was still as pretty and charming, all she needed was to have confidence in herself and been grateful for all she had. The necklace was as fake as the impression she was giving, and because of the false sense of importance it afforded her, it became a source of contention and ultimately the source of her downfall.

Jeff Moore once said, "Being yourself means shedding all the layers of looking good, wanting to be liked, being scared to stand out, and trying to be who you think people want you to be. Being yourself means being naked, raw, and vulnerable." One of the major factors of being yourself is accepting who you are; as you are. In *The Necklace* by Guy de Maupassant, the theme that one should be happy with what they have and who they are is demonstrated by the author's characterization of its main character, Madame Loisel. Madame Loisel is a flawed character, a round character, whose idea of what is important is skewed. She longs for things, status, and envy but fails to realize that those things tell you little about who a person truly is, or their worth. She lacks confidence in herself and her circumstances. She has to learn a hard lesson that one should be grateful for what they have and who they are because ultimately, everything else is just

an accessory. The author's use of situational irony also reinforces the theme of being happy with oneself because you wouldn't expect the thing you thought would bring you joy, would be the same thing that killed any prospect of having anymore. You also wouldn't expect that same object that you sacrificed your joy for to be something of little value, which goes to show that there's nothing that will bring you happiness if you're not happy with yourself to begin with. Lastly, the necklace itself is a symbol of the unreal expectations we put on ourselves to fit in with society's perception of importance or value. Rather than finding happiness or value in things, we should find happiness and value in ourselves and the blessings we do have. Quentin Crisp said, "Fashion is what you adopt when you don't know who you are," if only Madame Loisel had found happiness in her life and herself, she wouldn't have had to learn that *fashion* is merely as important as the value you give it.

Literary Analysis Essay Rubric

Due Date:

Point Value: 50 pt.

This is the grade sheet that will be used to grade the essay.

Use this as a guide after writing the essay to ensure you've accomplished all the needed components.

Intro Paragraph: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Contains strong attention-getter<input type="checkbox"/> States author and title of piece of literature<input type="checkbox"/> Summary of short story<input type="checkbox"/> States thesis statement containing the theme you will prove and the author's use of literary elements that support this theme	/10 pt.
Body Paragraphs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Contain transition<input type="checkbox"/> Contain main point<input type="checkbox"/> Use strong contextual evidence to prove main point<input type="checkbox"/> Use quotes from the text to prove main point<input type="checkbox"/> Cite quotes correctly<input type="checkbox"/> Body paragraphs use main points to successfully prove thesis statement while tying back to the thesis.	/10 pt.
Conclusion Paragraph: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Contains transition<input type="checkbox"/> Restates thesis statement<input type="checkbox"/> Restates main points<input type="checkbox"/> Provides logical conclusion statement	/10 pt.
Structure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Written in Times New Roman,<input type="checkbox"/> 12 point font<input type="checkbox"/> 1.5 Line Spaced<input type="checkbox"/> 2 to 4 pages	/10 pt.
Writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Does not use slang or casual language<input type="checkbox"/> Does not use "I think" statements<input type="checkbox"/> Does not use personal pronouns such as you, me, I, we, etc	/5 pt.
Grammar: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Does not use fragments and run-ons<input type="checkbox"/> Uses strong word choice<input type="checkbox"/> Correctly punctuates<input type="checkbox"/> Present tense!	/5 pt.
Total	/50 pt.