

Analyzing a Short Story

Primary Goal: To practice writing an MLA formatted Essay that effectively analyzes an element of a short story -in other words write an essay that explains what you think the story means by looking closely at a specific element of the story.

What are you required to do to complete this assignment successfully?

Read the short story assigned in the Lessons. **Choose** an element of the story to analyze. **Write** a 2-3 page essay + a Works Cited sheet explaining what you analyzed and what it means.

What do you need to do to complete this assignment?

1. **Read** the short story. Read it again and look for patterns.
2. **Freewrite** for 10 minutes about the story. Consider how the story is written – meaning what decisions did the author make while writing this story. And/or consider what the story means and how the author communicates the meaning – do they use symbols? Or characterization? Or dialogue? Metaphor? What patterns did you notice?
3. **Format** the assignment in MLA style. Times New Roman size 12 font, correct heading, with one-inch margins.
4. **Choose** one of the elements we went over in class to analyze. [For review, check out the website linked below.]
5. **Write** your essay. In the first paragraph include the title of the short story within double quotation marks plus the author’s name. Include a thesis statement. I’m working on writing a few literary analysis thesis statement templates – I will put them in the Lessons and also the Resources, as soon as they are completed.
6. Finally **proofread** for any typos or errors.
7. **Upload** to the dropbox.

Literary Technique:

Symbolism / Imagery / Metaphor / Characterization / Structure / Allusion / Repetition
Juxtaposition / Irony

Here is a helpful resource: <https://writers.com/common-literary-devices>

Questions to ask yourself before submitting this assignment:

1. Is the assignment formatted properly in MLA style?
2. Is your thesis statement clear?
3. Have you written your body paragraphs to explain & support your thesis statement?
4. Did you include a properly formatted MLA Works Cited sheet?

