Writing the Literary Analysis
Why Write One?

- A literary analysis broadens understanding and appreciation of a piece of literature.
Analysis PUMPS YOU UP!

- Both writing and analysis form new synapses in your brains. Two benefits for the price of one!

- Remember, your brain is like a muscle. The more you use it, the stronger it becomes, and “weight training” is essential to meet one’s potential.
THINK

1. The author attempts to convey what themes?
2. The author employs which techniques to convey the theme, mood, characterization, and etc.?
3. What ideas lie beneath the text?
4. What significance/importance does the reader find in the work?
An Author’s Purpose

- When writing a literary analysis, you can go beyond the basic literary elements and apply them to other issues/categories. (psychology, politics, history, and etc.)
A literary analysis should focus on one or a combination of the following elements to convey your investigation of the author’s purpose.
Never analyze theme alone. Instead, analyze how the author conveys theme through the use of other techniques.
Conflict

Human vs. self?

Human vs. Society?

Human vs. Nature?

Internal?

External?

Author's Purpose
Characterization

How Author’s Reveal Characterization

Thoughts

Dialogue

Actions

Thoughts of others

Emotional Development

Theme or Author’s Purpose

Character’s “Place” In Setting

Personality Elements

How Author’s Reveal Characterization

Thoughts

Dialogue

Actions

Thoughts of others
The Process

- Read the piece of literature a plethora of times, noting important passages.
- Decide upon the literature’s theme and author’s purpose. Then explore the means by which he/she reveals the purpose.
- Keep collecting information until you have enough to develop your topic thoroughly.
Organize your information.

- If you are going to discuss how a character is revealed through dialogue, setting, and symbolism (all literary categories), you would group information under “dialogue,” “setting,” and “symbolism.”
If you are going to explore how a story’s setting (literary category) portrays a climate of fear (psychological category) that turns into anarchy (political category), you would group information under “setting,” “fear,” and “anarchy.”

If you are going to explore how characterization (literary category), diction (literary category), and conflict reveal discrimination (social category), you would group information under “characterization,” “diction,” “conflict,” and discrimination.
Continue organization

- Study the categories that you decide upon and look for relationships amongst them.
Determine what these relationships reveal about the work and what will increase the audience’s knowledge and appreciation of the work. This insight, which should be stated in one sentence, becomes the essay’s thesis statement.

IF THE SENTENCE MERELY SUMMARIZES, BUT DOES NOT ANALYZE THE WORK, REEVALUATE YOUR INFORMATION.
DRAFTING

- Use a funnel introduction
- Be sure to include a brief summary of the story in either your introduction or its own paragraph.
- In each body paragraph, take a different approach to proving your thesis. Use concrete examples from the text, including direct, cited quotations, for support. Explain how the choices prove the thesis.
- Upside down funnel conclusion expression further implications of the work.