

FOUNDATION WRITING WITH SHORT STORIES

Using short stories to practice effective paragraph/mini-essay writing with quotations

Overview: When writing a literary response (where you've read a story, play, novel, essay, or online journal, and have been asked to write a paragraph or essay), you can follow various formulas to help you write more effectively.

Process: After you have read a story you can take *two approaches to develop a thesis* (the statement that you declare that you are going to prove through your writing).

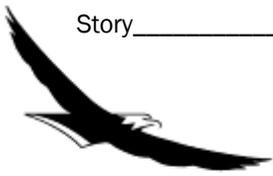
Option 1: Question & Answer Approach: Answer each of the following questions.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are the characters? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's their problem? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do they solve it? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does that say about people? (Thesis Idea) 	<h1 style="margin: 0; opacity: 0.5;">THESIS IDEA</h1>

Option 2: Topic & Theme Approach: Circle any topics that are a primary focus in the story

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|------------------|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Abandonment | Ethics | Identity | Nationalism | Science & |
| Alienation | Experience | Illness | Nature | Technology |
| Ambition | Fall from Grace | Individual & | Oppression | Sex & Sensuality |
| American Dream | Family | Nature | Parenthood | Social Class |
| Birth/ Childhood | Fate | Individual & | People relations | Spirituality |
| Coming of Age | Freedom | Society | Pride | Stages of Life |
| Commoditization | Futility | Individual & God | Race | Success |
| Commercialism | Gender | Innocence | Regret | Suffering |
| Commerce | Grief | Isolation | Rejection | Survival |
| Community | Growth & Initiation | Journey & Struggle | Religion | Time |
| Cruelty | Guilt | Justice | Responsibility | Tradition |
| Death | Heroism | Love & Friendship | Revenge | Violence |
| Education | Hope | Memory | Sacrifice | Work |

<p>Pick the one topic you are most interested in, and how is this topic shown in the story and what does that say about people? (Thesis Idea)</p>	<h1 style="margin: 0; opacity: 0.5;">THESIS IDEA</h1>
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Thesis Creation: Using your thesis idea, create a single statement that clearly explains what you intend to prove in your essay (your *thesis statement* is usually connected to a theme statement)

THESIS STATEMENT

Now Prove It: Using your source material, provide 2-3 excellent quotes that help prove your thesis.

Quotation	How does this quote prove your thesis? (Proof Statement)
	PROOF STATEMENT
	PROOF STATEMENT
	PROOF STATEMENT

Now Write it: Using your thesis and quotations, write your response with an introductory sentence, your thesis, supporting body, and a conclusion. Remember that you should be incorporating quotations and following these guidelines.

1. The reader should only hear one voice, which is that of the writer only (YOU!)
2. Avoid introducing quotations with “He said/She said” or “In this quotation...”.
3. Take only the segment of the sentence that you need; you do not need to take the whole sentence.
4. If you need to make changes for the sake of grammar, verb tense, or clarification of noun/speaker, mark these with [].
5. Remember always to indicate the significance of the quote within the same sentence or directly afterwards.

Incorrect	Correct
In <u>Ashes for the Wind</u> , Juan is under a great deal of stress. On page 17, Simon Arevalo says, “You’d better clear out.”	In “Ashes for the Wind” Juan is under a great deal of stress when the son of Simon Arevalo instructs him to “clear out” or else face the consequences from the authorities (17).
The sheriff informs the mayor about Juan. He says, “We had no choice, the fool locked the door.” (page 17)	The sheriff informs the mayor that they “had no choice” to break into the house as “[Juan had] locked the door” (17).