

Critical Analysis Essay

Be sure to consult your copy of *SF Writer* or *A Writer's Reference* from English 1301 for any documentation or research questions.

ITEMS OF IMPORTANCE

1. Be sure to use signal phrases and proper in-text notes. In this assignment's case, the *names of authors are less important* to mention in parenthetical notations. *Page numbers are more important*. See appropriate models for book entries in the *SFW* pages 302 or in *A Writer's Reference* on pages 382-385.

example (signal phrase is underlined):

In the fairy tale "Godfather Death," the Grimm Brothers establish a personified figure of death, who is often described with human features. He is shown walking "with withered legs" (209).

2. When quoting dialogue, be sure to punctuate details correctly.

example:

The Grimm Brothers show the mother-figure giving her daughter a bloody cloth: "The old queen said, 'Dear child, preserve this carefully, it will be of service to you on your way' " (405).

3. If quoting more than four lines of text in your paper, use an indented block quote.

See examples on page 337 of SFW or page 382 in AWR.

4. All work cited entries must follow proper MLA guidelines, alpha-order by last name of author.

example:

Smith, Robert and Dr. Jean Warhol Smith. "Complexities." *The Complete Story*. Trans. James Stern. New York: Random House, 1972. Print.

Critical Analysis Essay

A portion of literary analysis requires the critic to break down components of elements which exist in a story or historical document. Some of these issues include:

- characterization of protagonist or antagonist
- relationships between protagonist and antagonist
- types of conflict
- symbolisms of major images
- types of narration / reliability of narrator

I. For reference materials select a Literary or Historical Critical Analysis from the on-line Library Database (*for ex:* Academic Search Complete).

- Christopher Columbus: “Letter to Luis de Santangel—,” “The Journal of—”
- John Smith: “A Description of New England”
- Roger Williams: *A Key into the Language of America*
- Bartolome de las Casas: *The Very Brief Relation of the Devastation of the Indies*
- *etc.*

- A. Do not select material which states the article is a *review* or an *overview* of plot synopsis.
- B. Do not select *basic biographical* articles on the author.
- C. Do not select material which simply reviews a historical figure’s life.

II. Objectives

1. *Confirm subject matter and comprehension of material.*
2. Always read the full chosen article, highlighting key phrases and points discussed by the critic or historian.
3. In your papers you will want to:
 - Introduce the critic by full name and applicable title (editor, author, historian)
 - Explain the author’s main points and show his/her major defenses.
 - State what evidence is used as defense; label as primary or secondary resources.
(In other words: sum up the basic idea of article.)
 - What does the author resolve in the conclusion of his/her piece?
 - Based on your own reading of the material, do you agree/disagree with the opinions expressed in the essay?
 - Be sure to show proper citation of quoted/paraphrased material.
 - Follow the standards of an academic paper; utilize proper tone and grammar.

III. Print out your reply in MLA format.