**How to Write a Character Analysis Essay**

Character analysis requires a holistic approach to identifying traits.

**Requirements:**

* Five Paragraph essay.
* Provide a thesis statement that does more than merely list traits – establish position AND character traits AND an argument
* Each body paragraph must have no less than 2, no more than 3 embedded quotes/cited.
* Submit to turnitin.com by: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Under your heading, name the character. (yes, you must have a heading on your paper)
* Paragraphs must contain at least 7 sentences.
* Write about literature in present tense.
* Remember to use your Plague List

**Character suggestions:**

* + Actions – wise or unwise – a conflict
  + Motivation
  + Effect of their actions on other characters
  + Read between the lines
  + Archetype
  + Author’s purpose

Character analysis essays outline the traits that influence the character's persona. A character analysis must supply context, and evidence. For instance, stating that a character has a moral dilemma that compels him to make bad decisions doesn't provide enough information.

**Thesis**

Place the thesis statement in the opening paragraph. Spend time developing your thesis until it succinctly summarizes the reason for writing the essay. A good thesis gives the essay context and provides clues about the essay's purpose. From a technical standpoint, a thesis usually comes at the end of a paragraph and uses a **semicolon** to differentiate between two aspects -- the reasoning and the result of that reasoning. For example, a thesis statement that describes the character's situation **and** how it affected his mindset might read: "The character was abused as a child and an adult; he learned that people can't be trusted”, and also include an argument.

**Introduction**

The introduction provides a general overview of the character. As the introduction develops, focus on how it lines up with the thesis of your paper. Provide general comments and pertinent information about the author's life or give a brief description of the story to support the thesis' subject matter. Using the thesis that an abused person grows up to be mistrustful. You don't need to introduce the character in the opening sentence. **Remember to include the title, author, and genre.**

**Main Ideas**

Reinforce the main ideas that you must cover in your essay. In an essay dealing with a mistrustful woman, ask yourself with each main idea you create if the idea reinforces and provides concrete evidence for the woman's mistrust. Create a one- or two-word concept that encapsulates each idea and then turn those ideas into paragraphs. Paragraphs that deal with statements made by, about and to the character are all appropriate. Discuss the character's actions in the story and how the actions reinforce your thesis. Look for interviews or statements from the author to reinforce your opinion. Start each paragraph with a topic sentence and focus on one idea without branching off into other topics. Give examples and be specific when providing evidence.

**Body – 3 paragraphs**

The body of your essay must accomplish three things -- **identify the character type, provide a character** **description, and discuss the conflict.** Characters can be protagonists or antagonists, major or minor, stereotypical, contrasting with the main character, narrow-minded, multifaceted or some combination of traits. Provide an accurate description of the character's opinions and habits. Discuss how the character changed if he changed at all. Look for details that might not be obvious, such as whether the name of the character bears any significance to the story. Also, provide an overview of the conflict and how that affects the outcome.

**Conclusion**

The conclusion **does not bring in new information**, since typically you can't provide additional arguments to support the information. The conclusion serves as your last chance to convince the validity of your analysis. For example, dealing with the topic of abuse, if you discussed the character's childhood in the first paragraph of the body, create a sentence or two reminding that the character grew with a certain skewed viewpoint of relationships. Build your conclusion by reminding the main points of your essay. Finally, end strongly by providing a more worked-out version of your thesis **– but do not merely repeat it in different words – the bigger picture.**

**Title**

An effective title helps to put your essay in context much like the thesis. One technique for developing a title involves looking at your thesis or concluding statement. If your conclusion states that the character died without knowing what it meant to love another person, use a title such as: "The Meaning of Love" or "Living Without Love." Both titles use information from your conclusion, reinforce the point of your character analysis and create a sense of mystery about the contents of the essay. “Essay”, “Character Anaylsis” is NOT a title.