***(125 points)***

**Assignment Overview:** You will be expected to:

* Analyze a short story
* Create a strong thesis and develop your essay with supporting paragraphs
* Use evidence from the text to support the thesis
* Include citations
* Draft, revise and edit your two-page paper

**The Purpose of a Literary Analysis**

A literary analysis is not a summary, but an argument about the work that expresses your personal evaluation of the work. The purpose of a literary analysis is to demonstrate how and why you think the author used specific ideas and techniques to convey his message.

**1) How to start**

You have already read and marked up your story and understand what’s going on with the piece. What is interesting, unusual, or important? You’re ready to start now.

**2)**  **Think of a thesis**

Brainstorm a list of potential topics. Use your annotations.Here are some things to think about when brainstorming:

* Setting: Is there a relationship between the work’s setting and its theme?
* Theme: What is the major idea or theme of the work? How does the author show this theme? Is there a greater meaning to the details given? Are there repeating patterns or symbols?

Think about what the author is trying to say. Select a topic that has sufficient supporting evidence. In your essay, you will have to include specific details to support the topic.

**3)**  **Write your thesis**

The analysis will need a strong thesis that states your idea but allows it to be debated and allows readers to form their own conclusions.

* Avoid a **non-debatable** thesis:

***…”Titanic” is about two young people and their journey to find love.***

(This thesis is non-debatable. This paper would be a summary rather than an analysis.)

* Example of a **debatable** thesis:

***…”Titanic” is about Rose and Jack’s efforts to overcome her social differences, discrimination, and prejudice of the society around them—in addition to trying to survive a disaster.***

(This is a debatable thesis because it asks the reader, “Does Rose’s family actually exhibit preconceptions? Is this why Rose doesn’t get along with her fiancé? How is Rose and Jack’s relationship affected by the prejudice of the society around them? How does the mood affect the story?”) You have to be able to prove your thesis with example from the story.

**4) Organize**

Create an outline to help you organize your thoughts and ideas. **Use the outline document I gave you to organize your thesis.**

Make a list of evidence from the text to support your thesis. Then select the evidence that will be used in your paper. Prove your thesis with quotations from the chapter. Make sure to include quotation marks and page numbers, as discussed in your book.

**5) Analyze and interpret**

Match the evidence to the order of the thesis outline. Delete anything that may no longer follow the thesis, and gather new evidence if needed.

Interpret the evidence. When writing a literary analysis, it is very important for you to express your own personal interpretation of the work.

**6) How does it sound? Are you being fluent?**

Revise your analysis after completing the first draft. Consider the following questions:

* + - * Did you state the thesis clearly in the first paragraph?
      * Is the sentence structure varied?
      * Will you make you reader look at this story in a new way (your interpretation)?
      * Have you used quotation marks around direct quotations? Cited the page?
      * Have you used clear transitions between sentences and paragraphs?

**7) What about accuracy?**

Proofread. Once the content is well developed, proofread it for grammar, punctuation, and spelling. See a tutor. Be alert to common grammatical errors such as sentence fragments, comma splices, or run-on sentences. Consult your book for grammatical or citation questions.