

Summer Reading Essay Accelerated ELA 8

Due Date: On or Before the First Day of School

ESSAY PROMPT:

The theme of a literary work is its underlying central idea, or the generalization it communicates about life. As you read, think about the comment the author is making about his subject matter. What revelation about the behavior of human beings or the conduct of society, or insight into the human condition is the author attempting to convey throughout the novel? At times, the author's theme may not confirm or agree with your own beliefs, but even then, if it is skillfully written, the work will still have a theme that illuminates some aspects of true human experience.

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Write a well-organized essay that identifies the theme you believe the author conveys through the novel. How does the author use characters, events and literary devices to illustrate the theme? Use evidence from the text to support your analysis.

Youtube link to a short video about theme:

https://youtu.be/j1jy_K7oJ2M?list=PLwsmztXyXbpR-wrwoOfExWInl8qgQiiKq

Guiding Questions

1. What important idea or theme does this literary work convey?
2. What do characters *do* that helps illustrate this idea?
3. What do characters *say* that helps to illustrate this idea?
4. What *events* take place in the work that help to illustrate this idea?
5. Are there any recurrent images or clusters of images? Do these images support the idea or theme that you find in the work?
6. What does the narrator say that helps to illustrate this idea?

Writing your Essay

1. **Read the grading rubric for this essay so you know what is expected.**
2. **Determine the theme.**
3. **Form a thesis statement.**
4. **Use the outline below to organize your thinking and your writing.**
5. **Use a minimum of two direct quotes from the text to support the main idea of each body paragraph in your essay. Don't rely on the quotes to explain themselves. Lead your reader into the quote, comment on the quote, and show how the quote supports your main idea.**

OUTLINE FOR LITERARY ANALYSIS: THEME

- Introduction
 - Introduce the book you read. Include the title (underlined or in italics) and the author.
- Use one or two sentences to express your personal opinions on the subject of the book
- State the theme you conclude from the book(thesis)
- Describe in general, how the author expresses such theme, i.e. by using characterization, symbolism, setting or conflicts, etc. (this will be where you lead in to your body paragraphs)

- Body
 - Write three paragraphs to explain how the author expresses the theme in his book. Include the following information:
 - What literary devices did the author use to illustrate the theme? (i.e. characterization, setting, conflicts, symbolism, setting, imagery)

- Conclusion
 - Restate your theme
 - What did you think of the theme? How has it affected you? (Has it confirmed or changed your opinions or thoughts?)

After you complete your final essay, you need to CAREFULLY proofread it, or have someone else proofread it.

Re-read your essay to look for:

- **Spelling**
- **Complete sentences**
- **Punctuation (direct quotes from the text should be in quotation marks with the page number in parentheses afterwards). Ex: When Maggie wanted to leave the party she stated, “I’m not feeling well, I think we should go.” (p. 63) This illustrates Maggie’s ...**
- **Essay should be typed in Times New Roman 12 pt. font and double spaced.**
- **Include a title page with the following information: Name, Title of Essay, Date**

