

To Kill a Mockingbird Rhetorical Analysis Essay

Honors English 9

Ms. Finberg

ASSIGNMENT

For your *TKAM* final essay you will be asked to respond to the following prompt in a well-organized essay.

Prompt: Choose an impactful rhetorical choice made by a character during Tom Robinson's trial and write an essay that analyzes its purpose and evaluates its effectiveness.

FORMAT + REQUIREMENTS

Your essay should:

- Adhere to MLA formatting standards and guidelines
- Include at least three well-integrated, direct quotations from *To Kill a Mockingbird*
- Properly cite all supporting evidence
- Follow a clear organizational structure (five-paragraph format recommended but not required)

PROCESS

- Complete an outline with a thesis statement draft by Sunday, 12/3.
- Participate in a thesis writing workshop on Monday, 12/4.
- Complete a first draft by Wednesday, 12/6.
- Participate in a revision session with the Writing Coaches of Montana on Thursday, 12/7.
- Submit a final draft by Sunday, 12/10.

RUBRIC

*derived from the College Board AP Literature Scoring Rubric for Question 3: Literary Argument

	A (Advanced)	B (Proficient)	C (Developing)	D/F (Incomplete)
THESIS STATEMENT (20 pts)	Responds to the prompt with a complex thesis that presents a defensible, insightful interpretation of the selected work.	Responds to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation of the selected work.	The intended thesis restates (instead of responds to) the prompt, making a generalized comment about the selected work; the intended thesis provides a summary of the issue with no apparent or coherent defensible interpretation.	There is no defensible thesis; there is a thesis present that does not respond to the prompt.
EVIDENCE (25 pts)	The essay includes intentionally-selected, specific evidence (direct <i>and</i> indirect) to support all claims in a line of reasoning; focuses on the importance of specific details from the play to build an interpretation. Evidence is naturally	The essay includes specific evidence (direct <i>and</i> indirect) to support claims in a line of reasoning. Evidence is integrated.	The essay consists of a mix of relevant evidence and broad generalities; evidence primarily focuses on overarching narrative developments rather than specific details. Evidence is not naturally integrated and/or is included as a	The essay does not include textual references or evidence; included references or evidence are irrelevant to the prompt/claim.

	integrated.		stand-alone sentence.	
COMMENTARY/ ANALYSIS (25 pts)	Commentary consistently and clearly explains how the evidence supports a line of reasoning; all commentary is directly connected to the claim; summary/context is only included when necessary.	Commentary explains how most of the evidence supports a line of reasoning in a clear (but not necessarily complex) way; most commentary is connected to the claim; commentary exceeds summary.	Commentary primarily summarizes the evidence but does not clarify how the evidence connects to the argument; commentary lacks depth and complexity	Commentary is absent or incoherent.
ORGANIZATION/ STRUCTURE (20 pts)	The essay utilizes a sophisticated structure and includes all necessary organizational components, including a captivating hook, clear topic sentences, pertinent (but not extraneous) context, and effective transitions.	The essay is well organized and includes all necessary structural components, including a relevant hook, topic sentences, sufficient context, and clear transitions.	The essay's organization is inconsistent and may be missing necessary components such as a hook, topic sentences, context, or transitions; structural deficiencies impact the reader's ability to follow or understand the argument.	The essay does not attempt organization and is missing numerous necessary components; the argument is impossible to follow or understand.
CONVENTIONS + FORMATTING (10 pts)	A strong grasp of standard writing conventions is apparent: capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and grammar are accurate. The essay correctly adheres to MLA format and properly cites all evidence.	A grasp of standard writing conventions is apparent: capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and grammar are generally accurate. The essay adheres to MLA format and properly cites all evidence.	A basic grasp of standard writing conventions are apparent. Errors in conventions may affect readability. The essay attempts proper MLA formatting and citations but does so incorrectly.	The essay is clearly not proofread, and conventional errors may confuse the reader. There is no attempt at proper MLA formatting or citation.