

## Templates:

### Thesis Template:

In the \_\_\_\_ (Genre) \_\_\_\_ (Title) \_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_ (Author's Name) \_\_\_\_ presents \_\_\_\_ (Literary element(s) 2X-4X) \_\_\_\_ in order to \_\_\_\_ (Answer to prompt as seen in text), ultimately illustrating that (universal idea) (specific insight about the idea based on the literary elements).

### Body Paragraphing Template:

*TS (What and Why):* (Chronological phrasing), (Last Name) (lit element/technique 1) in order to (textual understanding).

*Textual Evidence (Where):* ~~Take, for example, how~~ (insert context and textual evidence that shows the verb/device from the topic sentence).

*Analysis (How):* (This/Or mention the language from the text you will focus on) (verb from topic sentence) (answer to the textual understanding also found in the topic sentence) **because** (explain **how** the textual evidence reveals the effect; this is usually done in at least two sentences. This is also done by focusing on explaining word connotations and stereotypical assumptions. Make sure to use **purposeful verbs** and **cause/effect language** in this section of your text: because, due to, since, so, consequently, etc.).

### Constructing Conclusion Paragraphs:

1. Identify 2-3 key ideas—singular abstract words—to which the essay relates. (Don't write these down.)
2. Generating a sentence that establishes the relationship between the ideas considered in step 1; this will be the first sentence of your conclusion.
3. After highlighting the ideas that the paper explores, write them into a universally applicable model and/or make the audience respond to said ideas in some way, but never by asking a question. This works best for students if they synthesize a remarkably pertinent piece of textual evidence as they display the story or poem's universal understands. See my examples below. (Channel your inner Cinderella and leave your glass slipper! Audience response is the Glass Slipper.)

*In other words:* Write two to three sentences that clearly link the ideas in the prompt to an extension of your thesis. Do this by explaining what the author's message is in a fully universal sense. In other words, explain the universal insight the author is presenting to the reader without mentioning anything about the plot; however, one thing you may want to consider doing is finding a "sexy quote" that thematically summarizes a universal insight and include that in your last sentence of your conclusion. This leaves a "**BAM!!!**" factor that is undeniable.

*Note 1: To write a universally excellent glass slipper, consider generating a hypothetical "if this didn't happen..." statement. Change all literary elements to universal terms, and then use the sentence that comes from such.*

*e.g., "If..." statement: If Romeo had only waited a few moments longer, he'd have been able to live happily with Juliet.*

*Revised Universal: If individuals were only willing to act with a bit more patience and prudence, they would be much more likely to see the "honey of [life's] breath" (V.iii.92).*

*Note 2: Try not to mention the author's last name until the second sentence if you are to use it at all in your conclusion.*

Q1:

**Prompt:**

*The following poem is by the contemporary poet Li-Young Lee. Read the poem carefully. Then write a well-developed essay in which you analyze how the poet conveys the complex relationship of the father and the son through the use of literary devices such as point of view and structure. © 2011 The College Board.*

**Thesis:**

Throughout the poem, “The Story,” Lee contrasts a father’s yearning to appease with his apparent failure, while shifting points of view and repeatedly exposing a son’s simple request in order to expose the loving misunderstanding that dictates their interaction, ultimately illustrating that intense anxiety often causes individuals to be disconnected from reality.

**Topic Sentence:**

Lee begins by detailing a father’s thought process in attempting to come up with a story in order to **expose** the man’s yearning to appease his son.

**Evidence:**

~~Take, for example, how~~ after the boy **implores** his father for a story, the father “rubs his chin, [and] scratches his ear” (5) as he **attempts** to satisfy his young son’s desire.

**Analysis:**

The hand gesture **expresses** the father’s want to please his son **because** it depicts the father conspicuously forcing himself to thoughtfully **consider** coming up with “A new [story]” (4). Consequently, however, this moment of pondering **leads** the father **to reflect** on the fact that he is “in a room full of books in a world of stories,” (6-7), yet he can “recall not one” (7-8). The father’s inability to satisfy his son’s request then **prompts** him **to imagine** that his son “will give up on his father” (9) **because** he is unable to tell a story. The father then focuses on this present disappointment and then **anxiously speculates** future outcomes of this instance.

**Conclusion:**

It’s human to desire to please others; this is especially true for guardians as they are eager to create fond memories for their children, knowing such will affect their relationships in the future. Lee—understanding this—moves to explore the contrast of a child’s naiveté with a father’s desperation, highlighting the innocence of youth and its inability to comprehend the ironic burdens of the adult world: something so simple can seem so hard. And yet, it’s important that parental figures strive to overcome their over-contemplative concerns because the greater tragedy would manifest itself in a grown child being able to “recall not one” (Lee 7-8) of the enriching moments that s/he has shared with a loving family member.

Q2:

**Prompt:**

*The following short play, “Naked Lunch,” by Michael Hollinger, details an interaction between two people who have been romantically involved in the past. Read the piece carefully. Then, write a well-developed essay that analyzes how Hollinger uses literary elements and techniques to convey the complex relationship between the characters.*

**Thesis:**

In the play, “Naked Lunch,” Hollinger presents a symbolic setting, develops an aggressive and tense interaction, and repeatedly showcases submissive responses in order to highlight the consistently incompatible and toxic nature of the couple’s relationship, ultimately illustrating that when passive personalities are overpowered and pressured, they often succumb to their familiar ways and sacrifice their true desires.

**Topic Sentence:**

As Hollinger **begins the play**, he focuses on a romantic, yet flawed, symbol in order to visualize the power struggle that underlies the issues within Vernon and Lucy’s relationship.

**Evidence:**

Take, for example, how he introduces “a **small** dining room **table**” (Hollinger 1) where “there’s a **small vase** with **too many flowers**” (Hollinger 1-2) or a “**large vase** with **too few**” (Hollinger 2).

**Analysis:**

Having a small table with flowers in a vase be a center point first **highlights** the seemingly romantic nature of scene **due to the fact** that the smallness of the table **suggests** an intimate closeness, and flowers are commonly associated with amorous endeavors. By noting that there are either too many or two few flowers in relation to the size of the vase, Hollinger **symbolizes** the couple’s issues **because** one item is clearly more dominant than the other, much like what is seen when observing Vernon and Lucy’s conversation. **Due to the fact** that there is one domineering element, the other element conspicuously **appears** to be shamefully and awkwardly out of place. In drawing the attention to the vase, or the flowers, from the onset, Hollinger also **foreshadows** the future conflict which **begins to come to fruition** even before the first lines are delivered as “Vernon [...] vigorously devours a steak” (3) while “Lucy discreetly nibbles [...] her corn” (4).

**Topic Sentence 2:**

Hollinger **then** pairs this initial symbol with Vernon’s predatory monologue which works to further characterize him as the overtly aggressive problem in the relationship... (I would then move to add some evidence of him talking about the show and crocodiles and explain how that relates to him being the problem in the one-sided power struggle.)

**Conclusion:**

Domestic and psychological abuse is an all too common, disturbing reality, yet hypocritical, masochist human tendencies perpetuate the problem. Hollinger, although relying heavily on humor, highlights this harsh fact and reminds people that changing human nature is much like trying to “train a crocodile” (Hollinger 54); however, that doesn’t mean change shouldn’t be attempted, especially for the sake—and safety—of those who are consistently devalued and preyed upon.

Q3:

**Prompt:**

*In great literature, no scene of violence exists for its own sake. Either from your own reading or from the list below, choose a work of fiction in which the reader is confronted with a scene or scenes of violence. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how the scene or scenes contributes to an interpretation of the work as a whole. Do not merely summarize plot.* © 1982 The College Board.

**Thesis:**

In the novella, Of Mice and Men, Steinbeck presents two mercy killings in order to showcase the deep care that the characters involved shared for one another, ultimately illustrating that companionship often requires immense sacrifice.

**(Topic Sentence):** At the beginning of the story—once the main characters arrive at their new jobs—Steinbeck introduces Candy—a crippled old man—reluctantly allowing Carlson—another worker—to euthanize his geriatric sheep dog in order to showcase how difficult it is to sacrifice the deep, caring bond he has built with his pet.

**(Evidence):** ~~Take, for example, how~~ when George and Lennie originally meet Candy, he's followed by a decrepit k9 who not only moves slow, but has no teeth and smells foul. In fact, the dog is consistently criticized by the other bunkmates due to his tangible stench and failing health, to the point where many of them petition Candy to put it out of its misery. Upon such a suggestion, Candy reminds his colleagues that the dog was such a great sheep dog in its prime; however, they challenge him to notice how the dog's current quality of life is only getting worse than it already is. Upon deep consideration, and the offer of Carlson, Candy reservingly allows Carlson to shoot the dog in the back of the head so that it, as Carlson suggests, won't even feel it. As this happens, Candy slumps into his bed—devastated—and even later reflects that he should have been the one to mercifully put down his own dog.

**(Analysis):** Candy mentioning the recollective merits of his sheep dog highlights the bond he has to his pet because, though the pet's best days are behind him, Candy is willing to overlook his offensive faults due to the positive circumstances they had shared. In this case, it has been all of the good that they have shared in the past that makes the dog worth having around in the present. Although the dog would never have been able to relive such "glory days," Candy has seemingly kept it around as long as he has due to the fact that if the dog were gone, perhaps those memories die with it. Furthermore, the consistent relationship with the dog, in the midst of a transient lifestyle he has, would have moved Candy to keep him around since individuals typically find comfort in the familiar, and caring for this dog has been an emotional constant for Candy for many years; it has given him a sense of purpose and a relationship to rely on. The violent and sudden end of such would have the potential to shock his sense of purpose, which Candy most likely questions anyway, seeing as though his handicap already limits his actual ability to be a productive member of the farm. However, in the midst of all of these thoughts, Candy is forced to realize that his aforementioned contemplations are selfish in nature, particularly because the dog is suffering (and forcing bunkmates to suffer—those who are not as willing to overlook his terrible stench). Consequently, as Candy considers his loving relationship, he realizes that what is best for the dog's well-being relies heavily on him—Candy—sacrificing his desire for comfort and defined purpose; this sacrifice is hard for Candy, but knowing it's for the best, and that he loves his dog, he agrees. Though, he does recount later his regret of not shooting his own dog, as he would have had closure—something all individuals desire—knowing that he not only made, but enacted, the final caring, purposeful moment of their relationship.

**Conclusion:**

Although immense sacrifice has the ability to physically tear apart the lives of those in a relationship, it also cements the reality of the bond they share. The immense pain that is often tied to difficult relational decisions, allows those who make them to reflect on the true value and worth of the other party. Only when an individual understands his/her own esteem of another individual will s/he finally see that the authentic value of a relationship is not found in one's personal comfort, but rather in what s/he is willing to bear to provide comfort for another.