

## Honors Literature and Short Stories

### Week 5

This week we will continue learning about writing the 5-paragraph literature essay.

We have learned to:

1. Determine the topic
2. Determine the three main ideas about the topic
3. Write a thesis statement
4. Write the topic sentences for your main ideas

**This week we will learn to:**

5. Write the three supporting paragraphs

### Writing the three supporting paragraphs

Each of your supporting paragraphs will **begin with one of your topic sentences**. All details in each paragraph will relate directly to your topic sentence, which in turn, is related to your thesis statement.

In this essay, you will be writing about the allegory shown in the book you read. Each paragraph will be written using your observations of actions or behaviors or people that support your subtopics. You will integrate quotes that demonstrate examples to support your subtopics. I have included a sample essay on theme in *Of Mice and Men* so that you may see how this is done.

Sometimes when we are told that we must analyze or write about literature, we jump right in and just start writing. Instead, a good method is to sit down and think in your own mind, in your own words, why your subtopic (represented by your topic sentence) is true. What happens in the story to make you think this? What events occur? Who is involved to make this true? How do the characters interact with each other or the events to make the topic sentence true? Jot down your ideas on this. Once that is complete, look at your quotes you have chosen. Do they provide good examples of what you have written down? Perhaps you need some different ones now.

Once all of this brainstorming is complete, you are ready to do your writing of your supporting paragraphs.

- ❑ You will need to write in the third person (no you, I, me, us, we).
- ❑ No contractions (unless part of a direct quote from the book).
- ❑ You will write in the present tense.
  - If your quote is written in the past tense, that is fine – but you still introduce it in the present tense:
    - When Sam catches the thief crawling through the window, he hid in plain sight because he thought he was safe” (16).
    - Notice that in the commentary part (the student writing) “catches” is in the present tense to introduce a quote from the book. The words “hid”,

“thought”, and “was” are in the past tense, but that is fine since it is a direct quote. If this were written: When Sam caught the thief... it would be incorrect.

- ❑ When you cite a quote from your book, you will use only the page number after the end quote, but before the period.
- ❑ Your quotes must blend in with your sentences and paragraph. Do **not** introduce them by announcing: In this quote....

So how many quotes should you have in your paragraph? At least two – more if you can work them in well. Usually these will be phrases, rather than complete sentences, and they will be worked into the sentences of your paragraph.

How many concrete details or examples should you have in your paragraph? At least three, however I expect more.

### Essay Points:

*Note: the points for the drafts (10 points each) are progress points only. These are in addition to the final point value for the essay. However, if you do not turn in the drafts, you will not only not receive the **draft progress** points, but you will also have these points **deducted** from the final draft of the essay – so this is a big hit. Keep up with the weekly drafts.*

**Week 5 -- First draft of three supporting paragraphs: 10 pts.**

**Week 6 -- Second draft of three supporting paragraphs: 10 pts.**

**Week 7 -- First draft of opening and closing paragraphs: 10 pts.**

**Week 8 -- Final draft of essay: 150 pts.**

### Assignments

1. Write the *first* draft of your three supporting paragraphs, including transition sentences.  
**Due this week 10 points**
2. **Weekly Shorts: 5 points**
3. **Journal: 10 points** Read the short story “Thank You Ma’am” by Langston Hughes on page 194 of *A Book of Short Stories 1*.
  - ❑ Briefly discuss the method used (mainly dialogue) and its effectiveness, as well as the language (non-standard English).
  - ❑ Also describe one conflict in the story (other than the physical conflict in the beginning).

(If you do not have *A Book of Short Stories 1*, this story is available next to this lesson at the lessons site.)