

Questions/Ideas for Literary Analyses

Theme:

1. What does the author seem to be saying about ambition? Courage? Greed? Jealousy? Pride? Happiness?
2. Does the selection show you what it is like to experience racism, loneliness, and so on?
3. Does the author have a point to make about a specific historical event?

Characters:

1. How does the main character change from beginning to end?
2. What forces or circumstances make one of the characters act in a certain way? Consider the setting, conflict, other characters, etc.
3. What are the most revealing aspects of one of the characters? Consider the character's thoughts, words, actions, etc.
4. Do the character's actions seem believable within the story?
5. Does the main character have a confidant, someone he or she relies on? How important or reliable is this person?
6. Character Sketch – How do the following affect the character and his development throughout the piece of text – Person's action or speech, mannerisms, surroundings other people's reactions, writers' feelings about the person, physical description.

Plot

1. What external or internal conflicts affect the main character?
2. How is suspense built into the story?
3. How does the climax change the story?
4. Are there any twists in the plot? What do they add to or take away from the story?
5. Does this plot follow the basic plot pattern (exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution)

Setting

1. What effect does the setting have on the characters?
2. Does the setting expand your knowledge and understanding of a specific historical time and place?
3. Is the setting new and thought provoking?

Style

1. How does the writing – descriptive phrases, images, and other figurative language – create an overall feeling or tone in the selection?
2. Is the dialogue and description used effectively? How could it improve?
3. Are there any key similes, metaphors, or other techniques used that add to or take away from the writing?

Symbol

1. Is there an important symbol or motif used that adds meaning to the selection?