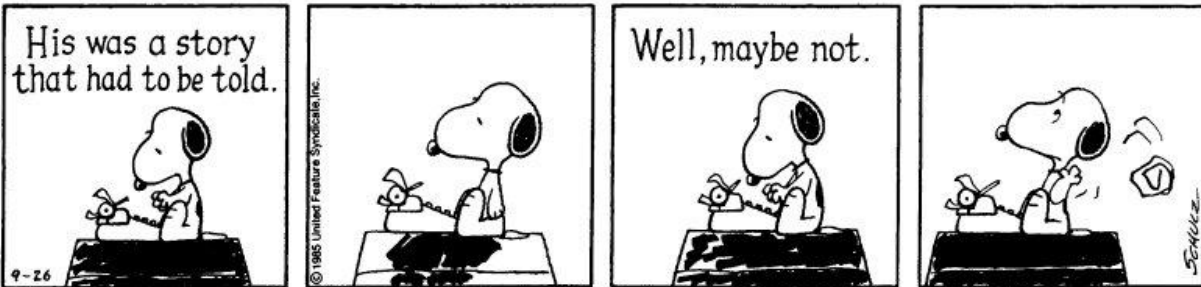


Name:  
How to Write a Critical Lens Essay

Date:  
Mrs. Seemayer

# Writing the Critical Lens Essay



## Unit Objectives

Know

- Students will know the elements that make up a Critical Lens Essay.
- Students will know the literary devices to reference in a CLE.
- Students will know what NYS expects to see on a passing CLE.

Understand

- Students will understand how analyze and interpret a quotation.
- Students will understand the expectations of a write for a CLE.

Do

- Students will be able to analyze and interpret a quotation.
- Students will be able to compose a CLE.

# How to Write a Critical Lens Essay

## Introduction

- Introduce the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ said it
- \_\_\_\_\_ the meaning of the quotation in your \_\_\_\_\_ words
- Is this **quote** \_\_\_\_\_? (Do NOT use “\_\_\_”!)
- List \_\_\_\_\_ (high school level) that prove whether the quotation is true or untrue  
(include titles and authors)

## Body Paragraphs 1 and 2

- Claim-** How does your chosen text \_\_\_\_\_ the quotation true or untrue?
- Text Evidence-** Evidence from the text that supports the topic sentence of this paragraph.
- Prove it!-** Explain the evidence in your own words and how the evidence proves your claim.
- Text Evidence-** Evidence from the text that supports the topic sentence of this paragraph.
- Prove it!-** Explain the evidence in your own words and how the evidence proves your claim.
- Transition sentence-** A sentence that connects the topic of the paragraph to the next.

## Conclusion

- \_\_\_\_\_ of your argument
- Statement on the **broader implications/**\_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_

Literary Terms to Use		
-Characterization	-Narrator	-Foil
-Theme	-Allusion	-Foreshadowing
-Setting	-Parallelism	-Flashback
-Point of View	-Dialogue	-Irony
-Conflict	-Motif	-Plot Structure
-Symbolism	-Antagonist	-Tone
	-Protagonist	-Mood

## Tips for writing a Critical Lens Essay

\*Choose to write about something you \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_ take \_\_\_\_\_ on a test.

\*\*Make sure you are always \_\_\_\_\_ which \_\_\_\_\_ you are \_\_\_\_\_ to.

\*\*\* \_\_\_\_\_ your work when you are finished.

## Critical Lens Rubric

Quality	6 Responses at this level:	5 Responses at this level:	4 Responses at this level:	3 Responses at this level:	2 Responses at this level:	1 Responses at this level:
<b>_____:</b> <b>the extent to which the response exhibits sound understanding, interpretation, and analysis of the task and text(s)</b>	-provide an interpretation of the "critical lens" that is faithful to the complexity of the statement and clearly establishes the criteria for analysis -make insightful connections between the criteria for analysis and the chosen texts	-provide an interpretation of the "critical lens" that clearly establishes the criteria for analysis  -make clear and explicit connections between the criteria for analysis and the chosen texts	-provide an interpretation of the "critical lens" that establishes the criteria for analysis  -make implicit connections between the criteria and the chosen texts	-provide an interpretation of the "critical lens" that suggests the criteria for analysis  -make few or superficial connections between the criteria and the chosen text*	-provide a vague or confusing interpretation of the "critical lens"  -may allude to the "critical lens" but do not use it to analyze the chosen texts	-do not refer to the "critical lens"  -reflect minimal analysis of the chosen texts
<b>_____:</b> <b>the extent to which ideas are elaborated using specific and relevant evidence from the text(s)</b>	-develop ideas clearly and fully, making effective use of appropriate literary elements and techniques in both texts	-develop ideas clearly and consistently, using relevant and specific references to appropriate literary elements and techniques in both texts	-develop ideas inconsistently, using relevant details from both text	-develop ideas simply, using some details from the texts	-are incomplete or largely undeveloped, hinting at ideas that are sketchy, vague, irrelevant, or unjustified	-are minimal, with no evidence of development
<b>_____:</b> <b>the extent to which the response exhibits direction, shape, and coherence</b>	-maintain focus established by the critical lens  -exhibit a logical and coherent structure through effective use of appropriate devices and transitions	-maintain the focus established by the critical lens  -exhibit a logical sequence of ideas through the use of appropriate devices and transitions	-maintain a clear and appropriate focus  -exhibit a rudimentary structure but may include some inconsistencies or irrelevancies	-establish, but fail to maintain, an appropriate focus  -exhibit uneven organization	-lack an appropriate focus, but suggest some organization	-show no focus or organization
<b>_____:</b> <b>the extent to which the response reveals an awareness of audience and purpose through effective use of words, sentence structure, and sentence variety</b>	-are stylistically sophisticated, using original and precise language with a notable sense of voice and awareness of audience and purpose  -vary structure and length of sentences for effect	use language that is fluent and engaging, with some awareness of audience and purpose  -show consistent use of sentences that are varied in length and structure	-use appropriate language, with some awareness of audience and purpose  -occasionally vary length and structure of sentences	-use basic vocabulary  -rely on sentences that are unvaried in length and structure	-use language that is imprecise or unsuitable for the audience or purpose  -rely on sentences that lack variety and may be constructed incorrectly	-are minimal  -use language that is incoherent or inappropriate  -violate basic rules of sentence structure
<b>_____:</b> <b>the extent to which the response exhibits conventional spelling, punctuation, paragraphing, capitalization, grammar, and usage</b>	-demonstrate control of the conventions	-demonstrate control of the conventions, with very few minor errors that have no effect on comprehension	-demonstrate partial control, exhibiting some sentence-level errors that do not hinder comprehension	-demonstrate partial control, exhibiting errors that occasionally hinder comprehension	-demonstrate a lack of control, exhibiting many errors that make comprehension difficult	-are minimal  -may be illegible or not recognizable as English

## Sample Essay #1

Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, "...only when it is dark enough can you see the stars." His assertion is true because only in the face of great adversity can true virtue and hope be displayed. Good people shine the brightest when they are surrounded by a society of malice and oppression. The most noble and heroic traits of some are repressed until necessity brings them to the surface. This necessity is most effective when in the form of hardship or intense suffering. In the midst of this suffering and darkness, the great stars are able to shine brightly, and those capable of maintaining hope and virtuous qualities gain prominence. Compelling examples on this quality exist in the novels To Kill a Mockingbird, by Harper Lee and The Grapes of Wrath, by John Steinbeck.

In Harper Lee's To Kill a Mockingbird, Atticus Finch is a noble character whose perspective contrasts greatly with that of other denizens of his community in Maycomb, Alabama. Lee makes great use of conflicting perspectives to highlight the virtues of one man in the face of overwhelming obstacles. When Atticus, a lawyer, is chosen to defend a black man charged with the rape of a white woman, the true colors of the townsfolk are shown. Filled with bitter racism and prejudice, they put every obstacle in the way of the black man's receiving a fair trial. The racist townspeople threaten Atticus, frighten his children, and cause vicious unrest

throughout Maycomb. However, it is in this state of unrest and hardship that the calm and mild-mannered Atticus is able to shine brightest and prove his moral superiority. Atticus defends the black man to the best of his ability, treating him as equal to a white, all the while expanding ideas of racial equality and justice. Thus, highlighting the staunchly contrasting perspectives of the town, Lee shows how the virtue of a man thrown into the adversity of racial discrimination shines brightly.

Using conflict and imagery, John Steinbeck, in his classic novel, The Grapes of Wrath, shows the ability as a few migrants to maintain their humanity and a sense of hope in spite of the incessant hospitality of their society. The main characters, the Joad family, are thrown off their land at the start of the novel and struggle to make a subsistent living as they travel the country. The Joads are deceived but the outward prosperity California offers and are victims of extreme injustice and exploitation. By the end of the novel, the family of thirteen is comprised of only six. Despite this suffering, the Joads are able to display compassion toward their fellow migrants. Tom Joad begins to preach ideals of the Bible, advocating unity, brotherhood, and generosity among the migrants. He vows to embark on a journey to spread this word and concept to as many as he can. Steinbeck highlights the compassion of another character, Rose of Sharon, by

using imagery to describe her eyes. Throughout the novel, Steinbeck never described the eyes of the aggressors, for it would give them emotion and humanity; however, Steinbeck gives Rose of Sharon's eyes traits of passion, suffering, and understanding. The emotion and humanity displayed in Rose of Sharon's eyes are shown when she feeds one starving man. Therefore, Steinbeck successfully uses literary elements and techniques to demonstrate how, in the face of hostility and intense hardship, a select few are able to express their dignity and dedication to preserving mankind.

The exceptional literary strategies used in both Steinbeck's and Lee's novels support Martin Luther King, Jr.'s claim that "only when it is dark enough can you see the stars." Using contrasting perspectives and imagery, these two authors brilliantly depict the brutality and darkness of society and portray how noble man and women of an ignoble world can shine when necessity calls on them.

Using the rubric, what would you rate this essay? \_\_\_\_\_

Why?

## Sample Essay #2

Though there may come many times in your life where you feel like you lose all hope, you should never let go of faith. There are times in a persons life where they may think that nothing is going write, but as Martin Luther King Jr said "...only when it is dark enough can you see the start." This quote means only when times get a little tough do you notice those who are true heroes stand out. I completely agree with this quote.

In the novel The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne, there is the main character, Hester Prynne whom has gone through many hardships at this certain moment in her life. In the era of which this novel takes place, adultery was considered not only a dangerous sin but also the breaking of a law. One should be executed and/or basically shunned by society. Hester had committed adultery and had already had her baby, Pearl. Because no one knew who the husband was, she was not executed but rather wore an 'A' on her chest. Many shunned her and she was considered an outcast in society. Hester had gone through a terrible phase in her life that most people would not be able to handle. From her point of view, she had been going through the worst struggles. Yet she still made it through against all odds and was eventually accepted back into society. Based on her point of view of this situation was she in the darkness, yet she still shone so brightly in this dark. The theme of this novel was based around honesty and courageousness. Hester was so courogeous to not give



the name of her lover to anyone even if it meant saving herself. She truly was a shining star in this darkness.

In the book, *The Crucible*, the plot consists of a man named John Proctor who lives in a time of witchcraft and conspiracy going around about it. There were a group of teenage girls. One specific girl was Abigail Williams, who enjoyed witchcraft. Once they were spotted playing in the forest, they blamed this fact that they were controlled on some sort of witchcraft. All in all, the girls, especially Abigail, began accusing other women of the town of being a witch. Before all of this, Proctor and Abigail had an affair and his wife kicked her out as a maid because of it. Abigail was still madly in love with him so she did what she had to do and accused his wife of being a witch. From John's point of view, he felt as though that chaos was arising from these girls' accusations/lies, so he felt it was his job to reveal to the town what they'd been doing. He needed to be the shining star in this case scenario. However, then he was blamed for being a witch and was then executed because he refused to confess and was too scared to who he was. His character was very noble and strong, he'd never let go of his faiths/beliefs. He stood up for what was right even if it meant it cost his life. Proctor really did show he was the only star shining in this darkness.

Every person has their own time of shining, but only when there's a time of true darkness around them. Hester Prynne and John Proctor were shining stars in their darkness and sacrificed so much to be these stars. Though one does get their

recognition, there is so much that a person goes through to be the star. It really does take darkness for a star to shine.

Using the rubric, what would you rate this essay? \_\_\_\_\_

Why?

## Analyzing a Quotation

-The Context (Who? Where? When?):

-The Gist (What?):

-The Purpose(Why?):

-The Application (Give the quotation a greater context):

## Sample Quotations

**"Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." George Orwell**

-The Context (Who? Where? When?):

-The Gist (What?):

-The Purpose(Why?):

-The Application (Give the quotation a greater context):

**“The purpose of the writer is to keep civilization from destroying itself.” Bernard Malamud**

-The Context (Who? Where? When?):

-The Gist (What?):

-The Purpose(Why?):

-The Application (Give the quotation a greater context):

**“The real hero is always a hero by mistake...” ~Umberto Eco**

-The Context (Who? Where? When?):

-The Gist (What?):

-The Purpose(Why?):

-The Application (Give the quotation a greater context):

**“To gain that which is worth having, it may be necessary to lose everything else.” Bernadette Devlin**

-The Context (Who? Where? When?):

-The Gist (What?):

-The Purpose(Why?):

-The Application (Give the quotation a greater context):

**“The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.” Martin Luther King, Jr.**

-The Context (Who? Where? When?):

-The Gist (What?):

-The Purpose(Why?):

-The Application (Give the quotation a greater context):