

# PEER REVIEWING LITERARY ANALYSIS DRAFTS!

Keep in mind that Peer Reviewing is not merely Peer Proofreading. Your job as Peer Reviewer is not to correct misspellings and punctuation errors; your job is to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the draft and to suggest improvements.

You should submit to your drafters a response in which you state additions, deletions, and modifications that might improve the draft, and your very carefully considered reasons for these changes. You should be as specific as possible, citing text from the draft where necessary or helpful. You should also ask specific questions, where appropriate, in order to elicit greater clarity from your drafters.

To indicate your respect for the texts and authors you have considered, your response should provide your assessments in well-made sentences that appear in unified paragraphs.

N.B. It is important that you attempt to provide criticism that is both candid and tactful. In other words, you must tell the truth, but tell the truth in a kind manner. Few writers will be offended by criticism that is well-supported and thoughtful. Break the news to others as you would have them break it to you.

It is also important to provide encouragement and to note those things your authors have done well. In order to present your criticism clearly, you might decide to offer your suggestions for improvement and your praises in separate sections of your peer review.

As you evaluate literary analysis essay drafts, the following questions might help you get started. Do not feel bound to answer each question, but do feel bound to offer a suggestion with every criticism.

- **Manuscript Format:** Is the draft presented in compliance with MLA manuscript conventions?
- **Rhetorical Mode:** Does the draft present an essay that considers the relationship between an element of the primary text and its causes, significance, or both? In other words, does the draft meet the definition of literary analysis essay?
- **Title:** Does the title of the draft introduce the topic in an intriguing manner? Does the draft employ the title-within-title convention? Could the title serve as the title of any other essay?

- **Introduction:** Does the lead sentence entice the reader to want to read the next sentence? Does the lead sentence provide a complete textual identification (author + title + genre) for the primary text? Does the introduction move efficiently from lead sentence to thesis? Does the introduction present an Opposing Point of View to establish the arguability of the thesis?
- **Thesis:** Does the thesis
  - provide a specific arguable claim about the ways in which the elements of the text produce its meaning?
  - reveal cause and effect relationships in the same order in which they appear in the body paragraphs?
- **Structure:** Are the analytical points presented in emphatic order, from least persuasive to most persuasive?
- **Support Paragraphs:**
  - Are the ¶TSs complete (transition + claim)? Be sure to check all the transitions!
  - Do the body paragraph topic sentences (¶TSs) offer specific claims to support the thesis? Are the links to the thesis clear?
  - Do the body paragraphs offer specific, concrete examples (textual evidence) and details for effective support?
  - Do the body paragraphs include sufficient narrative context from the primary text to “frame” the quotations?
  - Is the textual evidence cited in the text according to MLA manuscript requirements? The source of a quotation or an outside idea must be identified either in the sentence or in a parenthetical citation.
  - Do the body paragraphs include sufficient reasoning to explain how the textual evidence supports the claims presented in the paragraph topic sentences?
  - Does the reasoning employ the vocabulary of literary analysis?
  - Do body paragraphs anticipate and rebut opposing points of view effectively?
- **Transitions:** Does the draft present clear and careful transitions between paragraphs? Be sure to check all the transitions!
- **Style:** Does the draft reveal careful attention to vocabulary and syntax variety? Formal language? Verb strength in key sentences?
- **Rhetorical Purpose:** Does the writer convey a clear sense of purpose? What is the writer’s purpose?
- **Audience:** Does the writer have a clear sense of audience? For whom has the draft been written?
- **Credit:** Does the draft offer a complete Works Cited page, if required by the assignment?
- **Enjoyment:** What did you just plain enjoy about the literary analysis essay? Why? What did you dislike? Why?