***The Great Gatsby* Character Analysis Essay**

English III/Honors English III

**Assignment**: Your task is to write a five-paragraph character analysis essay about a character from *The Great Gatsby*. Once you have chosen a character to analyze, choose three adjectives or descriptive phrases which you can apply to the character – these are traits the character possesses. You will organize the body of your essay around these three traits.

**Introduction**: In this first paragraph, you will introduce your character. Be creative. Use an anecdote, a telling quote or incident from the novel, or a summary of how the character changes throughout the novel to engage your reader. Remember: your first line must be interesting! Your introduction should be roughly 5-6 good sentences.

**Thesis Statement:** This sentence is the last sentence of your introductory paragraph. This sentence will inform the reader what he or she will read in your essay. The thesis should include the character’s name and the three adjectives you selected.

**MODEL THESIS: Throughout the novel *To Kill a Mockingbird,* Jem Finch evolves from a child to an adolescent by becoming more mature socially, more enlightened about the world around him, and more courageous from personal experiences.** This is a good thesis because the reader knows the first body paragraph will show how Jem is becomes more mature based on his social interactions, the second will demonstrate how he becomes enlightened based what is happening in his “world”, and the third will demonstrate the courage he gains from experiences throughout the novel. Also, the descriptors are vivid and apt for the character.

**BAD THESIS: In this essay, I will show you how Jem is spoiled, stubborn, and childish.** Remember, never write “in this essay” or “you” in formal compositions. Not to mention, these adjectives are weak – you can do better!

**Body Paragraph #1:** Your topic sentence includes the first adjective/trait listed in your thesis statement to describe your character. You will support that topic sentence with two examples from the novel and one quote from the novel. Your quote must be cited in MLA format. Make sure you explain the connection between the examples and the adjective. This paragraph should be 6-8 good sentences in length.

**Body Paragraph #2:** Your topic sentence includes the second adjective/trait listed in your thesis statement to describe your character. You will support that topic sentence with two examples from the novel and one quote from the novel. Your quote must be cited in MLA format. Make sure you explain the connection between the examples and the adjective. This paragraph should be 6-8 good sentences in length.

**Body Paragraph #3:** Your topic sentence includes the third adjective/trait listed in your thesis statement to describe your character. You will support that topic sentence with two examples from the novel and one quote from the novel. Your quote must be cited in MLA format. Make sure you explain the connection between the examples and the adjective. This paragraph should be 6-8 good sentences in length.

***All body paragraphs need to have a topic sentence, transitions into your evidence of the characteristic, evidence to support your claim with internal documentation, explanation of your evidence, and a concluding sentence!***

**Conclusion**: Summarize your main points. Restate your thesis statement, but make sure you reword it. Provide some final, creative thoughts about the character. This is the last paragraph your audience reads, so make it good (5-6 sentences).

**Quotation Requirements:**You must include the page number of the quotation and introduce or lead in the quotation properly. ***Note:*** *For your first quote, use author last name and page number [e.g., (Lee 127)]; for subsequent quotes, the page number is sufficient [e.g., (127)].*

**EXAMPLE:When telling about Jem’s attempt to touch the Radley house, Scout tells the reader, “In all his life, Jem never declined a dare” (29).**  Notice in the example how the quotation is introduced, where the quotation marks are placed, how the page number for the quote is noted in parentheses, and where end punctuation is placed. *Refer to the MLA guideline links below for more help.*

**Essay Requirements:**

* Use proper MLA format: paper must be typed; Times New Roman, 12-point font; one-inch margins on all sides; double-spaced throughout; proper first page heading; proper page numbering. *Use the template on my website* *OR refer to the MLA guideline links below for guidance.*
* You must have a Creative Title. “Character Analysis”, “Jem”, or something to that effect does not work.
* You must submit a typed Outline via Google Classroom as evidence of your pre-writing *(use template on my website).*
* Your essay must have an introduction, three body paragraphs, and a conclusion.
* Your direct quotations should be no more than three lines long each.
* You must include a separate, properly formatted MLA-formatted Works Cited page to match your in-text citations. *Refer to the MLA guideline links below for guidance.* For purposes of this essay, use the following citation for the novel: **Fitzgerald, F. Scott. *The Great Gatsby.* New York, C. Scribner’s Sons, 1925.**
* Submit your essay to [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com).

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| Helpful Links for proper MLA Format:* Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL): [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\_and\_citation/mla\_style/ mla\_formatting\_and\_style\_guide/mla\_formatting\_and\_style\_guide.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/)
* The MLA Style Center: <https://style.mla.org/formatting-papers/>
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**Writing Tips You Must Follow (or lose points).** Check and double-check your paper!

* Write in all present tense. Books never “end” – they continue for a new reader.
* Avoid contractions (can’t, won’t, etc.) unless in a quotation.
* Do not use slang or common words (things, stuff, etc.), unless in a quotation.
* Write only in third person. Do not use “you” or “I.”
* Do not underline or put the novel title in quotations; use italics instead.
* Use the author’s full name in your first reference (e.g., Harper Lee), then by last name in subsequent references (e.g., Lee). Never refer to the author solely by first name.
* Use sentence variety (simple, compound, complex).
* Use specific, vivid, and detailed incidents and examples to support your thesis.
* Use strong verbs!
* Make sure all paragraphs are indented half an inch on the first line.
* Correct all comma splice errors, run-ons, and sentence fragments.
* Run spell check but remember that it will not catch the wrong use of words (e.g., hear/here).
* Edit your writing! Correct all typing errors.

**Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Adapted from “The Character Analysis Essay.” Union Academy Charter School, 2018. 02 Nov. 2018. https://unionacademy. instructure.com/courses/1038/files/45395/download?verifier=fVcHbfg1L4qzWmuFQ5tzcAmfv7fjk jtymAO0Hdc1.

***The Great Gatsby* Character Analysis Essay** Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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| PART 1: CONTENT | REQUIRED ELEMENTS | POINTS  |
| Introduction | * Selected character introduced in a creative, interesting manner
* Thesis Statement
* end of first paragraph
* clearly informs reader of what essay will reveal
* includes character’s name and three adjectives/character traits
* Appropriate length (5-6 sentences)
 | \_\_\_\_\_/20 |
| Body Paragraph #1 | * Topic sentence includes first adjective listed in thesis statement
* 2 detailed examples from novel provided for support
* 1 quote from novel provided for support; quote properly cited
* Connection between first adjective and examples/quote clearly explained
* Appropriate length (6-8 sentences)
 | \_\_\_\_\_/20 |
| Body Paragraph #2 | * Topic sentence includes second adjective listed in thesis statement
* 2 detailed examples from novel provided for support
* 1 quote from novel provided for support; quote properly cited
* Connection between second adjective and examples/quote clearly explained
* Appropriate length (6-8 sentences)
 | \_\_\_\_\_/20 |
| Body Paragraph #3 | * Topic sentence includes third adjective listed in thesis statement
* 2 detailed examples from novel provided for support
* 1 quote from novel provided for support; quote properly cited
* Connection between third adjective and examples/quote clearly explained
* Appropriate length (6-8 sentences)
 | \_\_\_\_\_/20 |
| Conclusion  | * Main points summarized
* Thesis restated (original thesis reworded)
* Final, creative thoughts about character provided
* Appropriate length (5-6 sentences)
 | \_\_\_\_\_/20 |
| SUBTOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_/100 Points |

*The Great Gatsby* Character Analysis Essay (cont.)

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| PART 2: STYLE, FORMAT, and DOCUMENTATION  | REQUIRED ELEMENTS | POINTS  |
| Style | * Written in present tense
* Written in 3rd person (no 1st- or 2nd-person pronouns)
* No contractions
* No use of slang words
* Shows skillful and effective use of language
* Appropriate word choice and voice
* Specific, vivid, and detailed references used throughout
* Logical flow and smooth transitions between paragraphs
 | \_\_\_\_\_/25 |
| Grammar and Mechanics | * Effectively used throughout (no errors in spelling or punctuation, no run-ons, no sentence fragments, etc.)
* Varied sentence structure
 | \_\_\_\_\_/20 |
| Overall MLA Format | * Proper first-page heading
* Times New Roman, 12-point font throughout
* Double-spacing throughout
* 1” margins on all sides throughout
* 1st line of each paragraphs indented ½ inch
* Header/Page #s properly formatted in Times New Roman, 12-point font; pages follow in correct sequence
 | \_\_\_\_\_/25 |
| Documentation | * Source(s) properly documented throughout essay
* Correct in-text citation formatting and punctuation throughout
 | \_\_\_\_\_/20 |
| Works Cited | * Separate page
* Works Cited centered at top of page
* Source(s) listed in alphabetical order
* Hanging indentation
* Header/Page # follows in correct sequence
 | \_\_\_\_\_/10 |
| SUBTOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_/100 Points |

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| FINAL TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_/200 Points (\_\_\_\_\_\_\_%) |

*Teacher Comments:*