

Plot Analysis 4

Does the plot movement contain a climax?

How does the author build the climactic events to reach the climax?

Plot Analysis 3

Can the story be divided into parts?

What are they and how are they connected?

Plot Analysis 2

What is the point of view of the selection?

Is it consistent? Explain.

Plot Analysis 1

What are the main events in the plot?

Summarize the action using BME (beginning-middle-end) or SWBST (somebody-wanted-but-so-then).



Plot Analysis 8

Do all the events and details contribute to a single effect, impression, illusion, or theme for the selection? Explain.

Plot Analysis 7

Do the events of the plot occur logically and naturally, using the basis of cause and effect, or does the author contrive the events artificially in order to achieve a special effect or purpose? Explain.

Plot Analysis 6

Does the author use techniques like motifs, symbols, and/or irony to assist in establishing the plot structure? If not, what techniques does the author use to create structure?

Plot Analysis 5

How does the author arrange the plot to achieve suspense or keep the reader engaged in the story? Explain.



Character Analysis 3

What are the forces, internal and/or external, which motivate and shape the character’s actions and personality? Explain.

Character Analysis 2

What are the important traits of the main character(s)? Do the traits reveal a pattern? What details best support your interpretation of the character? Explain.

Character Analysis 1

What does the author use to develop his/her characters?

How is point of view related to characterization?

Plot Analysis 9

What is the relationship between the plot and the conflicts presented in the selection? Explain.



Character Analysis 7

Is the character a realistic human being? Is he character idealized too much? Is the character a stereo-type? Is the character a caricature? Explain.

Character Analysis 6

If during the course of the story a character changes, is the change appropriate and well prepared for? What steps do the go through to change? Explain.

Character Analysis 5

What does the character’s dialogue reveal about him/her?

Character Analysis 4

Are the character’s deeds and words believably motivated? Are they consistent? If not, is there a valid reason for the inconsistent or unexpected conduct? Explain.



Character Analysis 11

How does the character reveal himself/herself through speech, mannerisms, gestures, or mode of dress? Explain.

Character Analysis 10

Is the character easily identified as an archetype? If so, which archetype strongly relates to the character and why?

Character Analysis 9

Does the character have traits that contradict one another and therefore cause internal conflicts? Explain.

Character Analysis 8

How does the character attempt to solve his/her problems? Explain.



Setting/Atmosphere Analysis 4

What connection do the setting changes have with the structure of the plot? Explain.

Setting/Atmosphere Analysis 3

Does the setting change? Why? Explain.

Setting/Atmosphere Analysis 2

What atmosphere or mood comes from the setting? Explain.

Setting/Atmosphere Analysis 1

What is the basic setting? Include specific details on time, place, weather, season, etc.



Setting/Atmosphere Analysis 8

What effect does the setting have on the tone of the characters? Explain.

Setting/Atmosphere Analysis 7

What effect does the setting have on the mood of the characters? Explain.

Setting/Atmosphere Analysis 6

Would the story have been as meaningful if its action had occurred in another place and/or time? Explain.

Setting/Atmosphere Analysis 5

Is the setting important in establishing conflict or in making an impact on the character? Explain.



Style Analysis 2

How would you describe the author’s vocabulary and diction? Explain.

Style Analysis 1

Is the style of the author straightforward or connotative and figurative? Explain.

Setting/Atmosphere Analysis 10

In what ways doe the physical setting correspond to or reflect the characters or conflicts? Explain.

Setting/Atmosphere Analysis 9

Does the setting allude to any particular time period or event in history? Explain.



Style Analysis 6

How does the author’s use of dialogue contribute to his/her style? Explain.

Style Analysis 5

Does the author give a sense of his/her background through the use of diction, dialect, or colloquial language? Explain.

Style Analysis 4

What are the main characteristics of the author’s syntactical patterns? Explain.

Style Analysis 3

How well does the author handle descriptions and sense impressions? Explain.



Theme Analysis 2

Does the plot movement contain a climax?

How does the author build the climactic events to reach the climax?

Theme Analysis 1

Does the work emphasize a theme or a group of related themes—social, political, economic, psychological, moral, or spiritual, or any combination of these? Explain.

Style Analysis 8

Does the author tend to use flowery language that relies heavily on adjectives, adverbs, and/or other descriptive phrases or clauses? Why or why not? Explain.

Style Analysis 7

How does the author’s tone affect his/her style? Explain.



Theme Analysis 6

What technical resources did the author use to shape the theme of the work? Explain.

Theme Analysis 5

What insights into the meaning of the work has your analysis of plot, characterization, setting, and style provided? Explain.

Theme Analysis 4

Is the presentation of the theme direct or indirect? Explain.

Theme Analysis 3

Does the title of the work mirror the theme or give significant clues about it? Explain.



Theme Analysis 10

Explain in detail how the title, settings, conflicts, and characters are related to the theme.

Theme Analysis 9

Does the author vest one character more deeply as an example of the theme? Explain.

Theme Analysis 8

What are the moral conflicts in the work? Are they clear cut or ambiguous? Are these conflicts connected to the possible themes? Explain.

Theme Analysis 7

What image of humankind emerges from the work? Are people, for example, generally good or deeply flawed? Explain.



Symbol Analysis 4

Identify and interpret the meaning of the common archetypal symbols such as light and dark, fire and water, colors, season, weather, etc. Explain.

Symbol Analysis 3

Do characters seem to represent a type or group who hold similar characteristics? Do some characters fall into character archetypal patterns, such as the evil character with the good heart? Explain.

Symbol Analysis 2

Do the characters’ names have significance beyond the literal? For example, they might be biblical or the name itself might reveal something about what that character represents? Explain.

Symbol Analysis 1

Are there images that repeat, refer to, or echo the title as a symbol? Explain.



Symbol Analysis 6

Do you notice the use of motifs, recurring words, images, or patterns that take on significant symbolic weight through repetition? What might they symbolize? Explain.

Symbol Analysis 5

Are places used symbolically? What values seem associated with a particular setting? Could they symbolize certain values or ideals held by the society or ones that the author desires to criticize? Explain.



Generic Fiction Analysis

Task Cards

These cards can be used as stations to analyze short stories, novels, and plays for the basic literary elements of plot, setting, characters, conflicts, themes, and style. These cards can also be used as a whole class, round robin activity where students randomly exchange the cards on a timer.

The students are encouraged to answer these questions as small paragraphs that include quoted or paraphrased textual evidence to support their answers.