

Sample Literary Analysis Essay: Outlined & Color-Coded

Literary conventions
Transitions
Detailed Literary Analysis
Broadened Analysis (Theme)
Author + Analytical Verb

INTRODUCTION

Attention Grabber:

The government of a country is supposed to defend, protect, and regulate the safety and liberties of its people. Most governments succeed in this mission, but sometimes some problems can be a little too big for a government to handle.

Background Information:

“The Birds” is a short story that features a giant flock of birds that attacks people in Britain. The government in this situation failed to protect its citizens from the danger of the birds and even misled them into thinking that the help they did send “was going to take a while to take effect.”

Thesis Statement:

In “The Birds,” Daphne du Maurier utilizes suspense to illustrate that relying on someone else, like the government, isn’t as reliable as relying on individual people’s intuition.

BODY PARAGRAPH #1

Topic Sentence:

One way Maurier uses suspense to show that the government isn't as reliable as one's intuition is by using Nat's thoughts to show how people think that something isn't that big of a deal and assume that they are going to get help.

Context:

Maurier illustrates this with a section of the radio broadcast that was in response to the bird attacks that were happening all over the country.

Textual Evidence w/Lead-In:

Maurier writes, “Measures are being taken... but it must be understood that these are not easy to take effect immediately” (11).

Thorough Explanation:

This may not be as suspenseful as other moments in the story but it makes the reader feel slightly uneasy. Imagine being in this situation and hearing a statement from your government essentially telling you they're trying their best. This creates suspense for the character, not necessarily the reader. Also, the way Maurier wrote this section, she made the reader feel like the government may not have been completely honest. Even though the reader gets these feelings, the characters in the story believe them. The characters believing the broadcast brought some suspense, because the reader would be curious as to how this decision affected them.

Transition Sentence:

Maurier made sure to include slight suspense to show that the government was going to “help,” but the suspense grows as the need of the citizens grows.

BODY PARAGRAPH #2

Topic Sentence:

Another way Maurier uses suspense to show that the government may not always be trustworthy is by using suspenseful, pessimistic details that talk about the government's failed attempt to help the situation.

Context:

Maurier does this by using Nat's thoughts after a fighter jet had crashed outside their cottage.

Textual Evidence w/Lead-In:

The narrator states, "there was no further drone of aircraft... waste of life and effort" (Maurier 12).

Thorough Explanation

This is a suspenseful moment for the reader because it tells the reader that "measures" being taken by the government just failed and it leaves the reader wondering what will happen to Nat and everyone else affected by the birds. Also, Nat went from being positive that the government was going to help, to being pessimistic and not believing anything the government says anymore. This really shows that he was keeping a sliver of hope that they would be saved by the government and lost hope when they failed. Suspense for the character in the story and the reader made this anticipation much larger. Maurier effectively uses suspense during the bird attack and during the plane crash to illustrate that the government is failing in its duty to protect its citizens.

Transition Sentence:

Maurier effectively uses suspense during the bird attack and during the plane crash to illustrate that the government is failing in its duty to protect its citizens.

PARAGRAPH 5: CONCLUSION**Restate thesis differently:**

In "The Birds," Maurier uses suspense to emphasize that the government isn't as reliable as one's own brain.

Summarize main ideas:

Although the government attempts to reassure people that they will have receive help, in the end, they are left to fend for themselves.

Concluding thoughts:

The government is supposed to protect its citizens in times of crisis, but may not be as reliable as one would hope. The government shouldn't be a citizen's first thought in times of emergency; they should rely on themselves first.

Unit 1 Short Fiction Literary Analysis Essay Assessment Rubric

	ADVANCED (7-8)	PROFICIENT (5-6)	BASIC (3-4)	MINIMAL (1-2)
Criterion A: Analysing	i. provides perceptive analysis of the content, context, language, structure, technique, style of text(s) and the relationship among texts ii. perceptively analyses the effects of the creator’s choices on an audience iii. gives detailed justification of opinions and ideas with a range of examples, and thorough explanations; uses accurate terminology	i. competently analyses the content, context, language, structure, technique, style of text(s) and the relationship among texts ii. competently analyses the effects of the creator’s choices on an audience iii. sufficiently justifies opinions and ideas with examples and explanations; uses accurate terminology	i. Provides adequate analysis of the content, context, language, structure, technique and style of text(s) and the relationship among texts ii. provides adequate analysis of the effects of the creator’s choices on an audience iii. justifies opinions and ideas with some examples and explanations, though this may not be consistent; uses some terminology	i. provides limited analysis of the content, context, language, structure, technique and style of text(s) and the relationship among texts ii. provides limited analysis of the effects of the creator’s choices on an audience iii. rarely justifies opinions and ideas with examples or explanations; uses little or no terminology

Common areas for improvement:

- Thesis does not provide an interpretation of a theme of the text
- Thesis lists literary devices that will be discussed in the essay
- Literary conventions not included and/or used incorrectly in analysis
- Summary is included rather than analysis of a theme
- “Fluff” – information included that does not pertain to the text and/or literary analysis
- Quote bombs!

Other:

Overall Score = AD

Criterion B: Organizing	i. makes sophisticated use of organizational structures that serve the context and intention effectively ii. effectively organizes opinions and ideas in a sustained, coherent and logical manner with ideas building on each other in a sophisticated way iii. makes excellent use of referencing and formatting tools to create an effective presentation style.	i. makes competent use of organizational structures that serve the context and intention ii. organizes opinions and ideas in a coherent and logical manner with ideas building on each other iii. makes competent use of referencing and formatting tools to create a presentation style suitable to the context and intention.	i. makes adequate use of organizational structures that serve the context and intention ii. organizes opinions and ideas with some degree of coherence and logic iii. makes adequate use of referencing and formatting tools to create a presentation style suitable to the context and intention.	i. makes minimal use of organizational structures though these may not always serve the context and intention ii. organizes opinions and ideas with a minimal degree of coherence and logic iii. makes minimal use of referencing and formatting tools to create a presentation style that may not always be suitable to the context and intention.
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Common areas for improvement:

- Topic sentence does not connect to thesis and/or advance argument
- Quotation does not connect to thesis and/or advance argument
- Explanation does not connect to thesis and/or advance argument
- Include more transitions in your topic sentences and/or throughout paragraphs
- Quotations not cited using correct MLA formatting
- Page layout does not follow MLA formatting

Other:

Overall Score = AD

<p>Criterion C: Producing Text</p>	<p>i. produces texts that demonstrate a high degree of personal engagement with the creative process; demonstrates a high degree of insight, imagination or sensitivity and perceptive exploration of and critical reflection on new perspectives and ideas ii. makes perceptive stylistic choices in terms of linguistic, literary and visual devices, demonstrating good awareness of impact on an audience iii. selects extensive relevant details and examples to develop ideas with precision.</p>	<p>i produces texts that demonstrate considerable personal engagement with the creative process; demonstrates considerable insight, imagination or sensitivity and substantial exploration of and critical reflection on new perspectives and ideas ii. makes thoughtful stylistic choices in terms of linguistic, literary and visual devices, demonstrating good awareness of impact on an audience iii selects sufficient relevant details and examples to develop ideas.</p>	<p>i. produces texts that demonstrate adequate personal engagement with the creative process; demonstrates some insight, imagination or sensitivity and some exploration of and critical reflection on new perspectives and ideas ii. makes some stylistic choices in terms of linguistic, literary and visual devices, demonstrating adequate awareness of impact on an audience iii. selects some relevant details and examples to develop ideas.</p>	<p>i. produces texts that demonstrate limited personal engagement with the creative process; demonstrates a limited degree of insight, imagination or sensitivity and minimal exploration of and critical reflection on new perspectives and ideas ii. makes minimal stylistic choices in terms of linguistic, literary and visual devices, demonstrating limited awareness of impact on an audience iii. selects few relevant details and examples to develop ideas.</p>
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Common areas for improvement:

- Analysis of author’s choices may not fully demonstrate understanding of the complexities/nuances of literature
- Continue developing voice in your writing: match the task (formal analysis), convince the reader of your argument, and/or engage the reader consistently through the phrasing and construction of your essay
- Quotations provided may not be the strongest examples of textual evidence for your interpretation/argument
- Quote bombs!

Other:

Overall Score = PR

<p>Criterion D: Using Language</p>	<p>i. effectively uses a range of appropriate vocabulary, sentence structures and forms of expression ii. writes and speaks in a consistently appropriate register and style that serve the context and intention iii. uses grammar, syntax and punctuation with a high degree of accuracy; errors are minor and communication is effective iv. spells/writes and pronounces with a high degree of accuracy; errors are minor and communication is effective</p>	<p>i uses a varied range of appropriate vocabulary, sentence structures and forms of expression competently ii. writes and speaks competently in a register and style that serve the context and intention iii uses grammar, syntax and punctuation with a considerable degree of accuracy; errors do not hinder effective communication iv. spells/writes and pronounces with a considerable degree of accuracy; errors do not hinder effective communication</p>	<p>i. uses an adequate range of appropriate vocabulary, sentence structures and forms of expression ii. sometimes writes and speaks in a register and style that serve the context and intention iii. uses grammar, syntax and punctuation with some degree of accuracy; errors sometimes hinder communication iv. spells/writes and pronounces with some degree of accuracy; errors sometimes hinder communication</p>	<p>i. uses a limited range of appropriate vocabulary and forms of expression ii. writes and speaks in an inappropriate register and style that do not serve the context and intention iii. uses grammar, syntax and punctuation with limited accuracy; errors often hinder communication iv. spells/writes and pronounces with limited accuracy; errors often hinder communication</p>
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Common areas for improvement:

- Third person not utilized
- Present tense not utilized
- Informal language used in analysis
- Grammar, spelling, and/or proofreading errors
- Redundancy and/or “wordiness” (Be concise!)
- Awkward phrasing

Other:

Overall Score = PR