

BODY PARAGRAPHS FOR A LITERARY ANALYSIS ESSAY

A) BODY:

THE SUPPORT PARAGRAPHS OF YOUR ESSAY. THESE PARAGRAPHS CONTAIN SUPPORTING.

EXAMPLE: (CONCRETE DETAIL) AND ANALYSIS/EXPLANATION (COMMENTARY) FOR YOUR TOPIC SENTENCES. EACH PARAGRAPH IN THE BODY INCLUDES (1) A TOPIC SENTENCE, (2) TEXTUAL EVIDENCE AND COMMENTARY, AND (3) A CONCLUDING SENTENCE. IN ITS SIMPLEST FORM, EACH BODY PARAGRAPH IS ORGANIZED AS FOLLOWS:

1. TOPIC SENTENCE- MAIN POINT
2. LEAD-IN TO TEXTUAL EVIDENCE 1
3. TEXTUAL EVIDENCE 1
4. COMMENTARY (EXPAND)
5. TRANSITION AND LEAD-IN TO TEXTUAL EVIDENCE 2
6. TEXTUAL EVIDENCE 2
7. COMMENTARY (EXPAND)
8. CLINCHER SENTENCE

1) **TOPIC SENTENCE:** THE FIRST SENTENCE OF A BODY OR SUPPORT PARAGRAPH. IT IDENTIFIES ONE ASPECT OF THE MAJOR THESIS AND STATES A PRIMARY REASON WHY THE MAJOR THESIS IS TRUE.

EXAMPLE: WHEN HE FIRST APPEARS IN THE NOVEL, SIDNEY CARTON IS A LOVELESS OUTCAST WHO SEES LITTLE WORTH IN HIMSELF OR IN OTHERS.

2) **TEXTUAL EVIDENCE:** A SPECIFIC EXAMPLE FROM THE WORK USED TO PROVIDE EVIDENCE FOR YOUR TOPIC SENTENCE. TEXTUAL EVIDENCE CAN BE A COMBINATION OF PARAPHRASE AND DIRECT QUOTATION FROM THE WORK.

EXAMPLE: WHEN CARLTON AND DARNAY FIRST MEET AT THE TAVERN, CARLTON TELLS HIM, "I CARE FOR NO MAN ON THIS EARTH, AND NO MAN CARES FOR ME" (DICKENS 105).

3) **COMMENTARY:** YOUR EXPLANATION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE TEXTUAL EVIDENCE. COMMENTARY TELLS THE READER WHAT THE AUTHOR OF THE TEXT MEANS OR HOW THE TEXTUAL EVIDENCE PROVES THE TOPIC SENTENCE. COMMENTARY MAY INCLUDE INTERPRETATION, ANALYSIS, ARGUMENT, INSIGHT, AND/OR REFLECTION. (*HELPFUL HINT: IN YOUR BODY PARAGRAPH, YOU SHOULD HAVE TWICE AS MUCH COMMENTARY AS TEXTUAL EVIDENCE. IN OTHER WORDS, FOR EVERY SENTENCE*

OF TEXTUAL EVIDENCE, YOU SHOULD HAVE AT LEAST TWO SENTENCES OF COMMENTARY.)

EXAMPLE: CARTON MAKES THIS STATEMENT AS IF HE WERE EXCUSING HIS RUDE BEHAVIOR TO DARNAY. CARTON, HOWEVER, IS ONLY PRETENDING TO BE POLITE, PERHAPS TO AMUSE HIMSELF. WITH THIS SEEMINGLY OFF-THE-CUFF REMARK, CARTON REVEALS A DEEPER CYNICISM AND HIS EMOTIONAL ISOLATION.

4) **TRANSITIONS:** WORDS OR PHRASES THAT CONNECT OR "HOOK" ONE IDEA TO THE NEXT, BOTH BETWEEN AND WITHIN PARAGRAPHS. TRANSITION DEVICES INCLUDE USING CONNECTING

WORDS AS WELL AS REPEATING KEY WORDS OR USING SYNONYMS.

EXAMPLES: FINALLY, IN THE CLIMAX... ANOTHER EXAMPLE: ...

LATER IN THE STORY... IN CONTRAST TO THIS BEHAVIOR...

NOT ONLY...BUT ALSO... FURTHERMORE...

5) LEAD-IN: PHRASE OR SENTENCE THAT PREPARES THE READER FOR TEXTUAL EVIDENCE BY INTRODUCING THE SPEAKER, SETTING, AND/OR SITUATION.

EXAMPLE: LATER, HOWEVER, WHEN THE CONFIDENT SIDNEY CARTON RETURNS ALONE TO HIS HOME, HIS ALIENATION AND UNHAPPINESS BECOME APPARENT: "CLIMBING INTO A HIGH CHAMBER IN A WELL OF HOUSES, HE THREW HIMSELF DOWN IN HIS CLOTHES ON A NEGLECTED BED, AND ITS PILLOW WAS WET WITH WASTED TEARS" (DICKENS 211).

6) CLINCHER/CONCLUDING SENTENCE: LAST SENTENCE OF THE BODY PARAGRAPH. IT CONCLUDES THE PARAGRAPH BY TYING THE TEXTUAL EVIDENCE AND COMMENTARY BACK TO THE THESIS.

EXAMPLE: THUS, BEFORE CARTON EXPERIENCES LOVE, HE IS ABLE TO CONVINCCE HIMSELF THAT THE WORLD HAS NO MEANING.