

Literary Analysis Rubric for Dr. K's 500-level Classes

	Outstanding (A range)	Above Average (B range)	Competent (C range)	Insufficient (D to F range)
Writer's Approach	The analysis presents fresh and defensible insights into the work being analyzed. The writer's ethos is one of confidence and competence.	The analysis presents defensible insights into the work being analyzed, but may not go much further than the obvious. The writer's ethos is one of competence.	The analysis limits itself to obvious perspectives and insights—it plays it safe. Writer seems to be relying on status quo instead of establishing her/his own ethos.	The analysis lacks insight, offers only commonplaces, or regurgitates class notes. There is no sense of the writer taking responsibility for the interpretation.
Application of Critical Technique & Perspective	Essay reflects mastery of the literary perspective applied. The writer is fluent in the language and theory behind the perspective.	Essay reflects a solid understanding of the literary perspective applied. The writer is using much of the language and theory behind the perspective.	Essay reflects some understanding of the literary perspective applied. The writer struggles to use the language and theory behind the perspective.	Essay reflects little to no understanding of the literary perspective applied. The writer barely uses the language and theory behind the perspective.
Use of Secondary Scholarship (if called for)	The analysis engages in dialogue with secondary scholarship on the work in a way that presents new insights to the reader. Powerfully chosen textual proof supports each point. The textual proof is thoroughly examined, explained, and clearly relevant to the thesis.	The analysis may engage in dialogue with secondary scholarship on the work but does not challenge or reinterpret what has already been said. Well chosen textual proof supports each point. The textual proof is adequately examined, explained, and relevant to the thesis.	The analysis includes excerpts from secondary scholarship on the work but does not engage in dialogue with them; they are more "plunked in." Acceptably chosen textual proof supports most points. Sources are the obvious suspects—"An Intro to X" or the <i>Twayne's Authors Series</i> level, for instance. The textual proof may be inconsistently examined, explained, or relevant to the thesis.	The analysis may include some excerpts from secondary scholarship, but these may be uninterpreted or misinterpreted; use of these sources substitutes, sometimes unsuccessfully, for the writer's own analysis. Questionably chosen textual proof supports a few points. Much of it sounds like <i>Cliff's Notes</i> or the <i>Wikipedia</i> . The textual proof is usually insufficiently examined, explained, or relevant to the thesis.
Use of Summary	The analysis summarizes the work to the extent needed to clarify main points but does not retell the work.	The analysis may not consistently summarize the work to the extent needed to clarify main points, or it may unnecessarily retell the work.	The analysis may summarize instead of analyze, or fail to summarize as needed to explain points.	Summary may be substituted for analysis.



Organization	The analysis begins with a clear thesis statement that identifies the work by title, author, and genre and succinctly states the point of the overall analysis or some part of it. The body expertly explains and develops the thesis and provides supporting examples from the work itself or from related works that back up the thesis. The conclusion leaves the reader with a question, a quotation, a fresh insight, or another memorable impression.	The analysis begins with a thesis statement that identifies the work by title and author and states the meaning of the overall analysis or some part of it. The body explains and develops the thesis and provides supporting examples from the work. The conclusion brings the analysis to a satisfactory close.	The analysis begins with a thesis statement that identifies the work by title and author, but it may not address the meaning of the overall analysis or some part of it. The body only partially explains or develops the thesis; few supporting examples from the work are given. The conclusion may be weak, repetitive, or missing.	The analysis does not begin with a thesis statement, and the writer fails to identify the work by title, author, and genre. No organizational plan is evident.
Writer's Language	Word choice is consistently precise, vivid, or powerful.	Word choice is generally precise.	Word choice is generally imprecise and may be misleading.	Word choice is incorrect or confusing.
Use of Borrowed Information	All borrowed material smoothly is incorporated without error, and citations are complete and correct.	Borrowed material may be inserted clumsily, but its incorporation is without error and citations are complete and correct.	Borrowed material may be inserted clumsily, and/or its incorporation may have a few minor errors in the format of citations.	Borrowed material is incorrectly inserted, or not clearly identified as borrowed material, or not correctly or completely documented.
Execution	Essay is flawlessly written with a flair for academic style. There are few or no errors in mechanics, usage, grammar, or spelling. This is ready to be submitted as a conference paper or article now.	Essay is well written with a solid academic style. There may be a few errors in mechanics, usage, grammar, or spelling. With revision, this can be submitted as a conference paper or article.	Essay is acceptably written with some academic style. There are several errors in mechanics, usage, grammar, or spelling—enough to distract a reader. This is not yet ready to present to a professional audience.	Essay is poorly written with little academic style. There are serious errors in mechanics, usage, grammar, and spelling. This is not up to the level we expect for academic writing in advanced courses.

Sources: Some of the material in these rubrics was taken from a rubric published by Prentice-Hall and available on the TeacherVision website at <http://www.teachervision.fen.com/tv/printables/07AAAM34.pdf>; other material was taken from a rubric at the English Odyssey website, <http://www.maitespace.com/englishodyssey/ScoringGuides/writingaboutlitrubric.htm>.