

WRITING LITERARY ANALYSIS ESSAYS: BODY PARAGRAPHS & CONCLUSIONS



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Things to remember...



- Avoid retelling the story. (Assume your reader is familiar with the story; however, give enough context so your reader knows what is going on.)

Example of retelling: As weeks go on, Jamie gets sicker and weaker. Landon is always there for Jamie, staying by her bedside and getting her everything she needs. He reads to her . . .

Giving context: When Landon tends to Jamie when she is sick, the reader sees that he is a changed person from who we saw in the beginning of the novel . . .

More things to remember...



- Each body paragraph needs a focus, and it works best if this focus is clear near the beginning of the paragraph.
- The focus of each paragraph needs to relate to your **THESIS STATEMENT**.
- Your body paragraphs should be balanced with evidence **AND** interpretation of that evidence.
- Depth > Breadth

Evidence + Interpretation = Analysis



- Evidence: quotes, specific examples from the text
- Interpretation: an explanation of what that evidence shows us / why it is important / how it links to the thesis
- Simple rule of thumb: When you quote or provide an example, follow it up with explanation of what you want your reader to see from that quote.

Sample Body Paragraph (From essay about *The Road*)

While the man teaches the boy not to fear death, he also teaches him that we cannot just give up, and we must persist to live every day no matter the odds we face. The boy asks, “What’s the bravest thing you ever did?” The father “spat a bloody phlegm. ‘Getting up this morning,’” he said (McCarthy 198). This quote demonstrates much about the character of the man because even though he knows he is ill, he doesn’t quit fighting for his life. He strives every day to live for himself and for the boy.

Conclusions



- Wrap up your main points.
- Avoid “judgment” statements like “I enjoyed reading this book” or “This book is an excellent example of . . .”
- Provide a sense of closure.