

Purposes:

1. To analyze a character
2. To show depth of thought
3. To practice citing from multiple sources
4. To hone your composition skills

The assignment:

1. Make and support a claim about the protagonist of your second summer novel. Consider the following as you plan your paper. Is he or she a strong person? Does he or she exhibit contradictory traits? Discuss the challenges facing the protagonist and how he or she handles the obstacles. What does the protagonist learn/ what wisdom does he or she gain by the end?
2. In your paper, make a few references or comparisons to other characters and situations in books you have read. Make at least one connection to the other book you read for me. Include these titles in an MLA Works Cited page.

Requirements:

1. Focus on the protagonist of your second summer novel.
2. Make a claim about this protagonist and support it with specific examples **and** direct quotations from throughout the book.
3. Draw similarities and note key differences between the protagonist and main characters from your other summer novel.
4. Use literary present tense when appropriate.
5. Follow MLA guidelines, including a heading, a title, page numbers, margins, and a Works Cited page (with at least 2 sources).
6. Length: 4-6 pages plus a Works Cited page
7. Do your own work.
8. Have at least one Writing Center conference over major aspects of your paper (thesis statement, transitions, use of evidence).

Recommendations:

(These will distinguish stronger papers from average or lower ones.)

1. Use sophisticated language and varied sentence structure.
2. Keep a formal tone (no contractions, no references to yourself, no fillers).
3. Draw similarities and note key differences from a third source (and list that source in your Works Cited page).
4. Have a creative title that is relevant and thought provoking.

Category	Strong	Proficient	Developing	Inadequate
Content & Clarity 25 points	The paper fully & insightfully answers the question with multiple observations, examples, and interpretations. There are examples from outside sources that complement examples from the book. The writer anticipates the reader's questions & addresses them. The writer explains things as though the reader is familiar with the story but may not have picked up on the nuances of the protagonist's character. The paper is longer than 4 pages.	The paper fully answers the question with multiple observations, examples, and interpretations. There are fewer outside examples or they are not integrated well. The writer explains things as though the reader is familiar with the story but may not have picked up on the nuances of the protagonist's character. The paper is at least 4 full pages.	The paper answers the question, but less fully. There are multiple examples, but interpretations and observations are literal or simplistic. There are few outside examples; they may not really pertain to the topic at hand. The writer either over-explains things as though the reader is unfamiliar with the story or fails to explain ideas sufficiently, relying on the reader to guess what the writer means. The paper is at least 3 full pages.	The paper disregards the question or only partially answers it. The paper may dwell on plot summary rather than analysis. There are few examples, or many but no interpretation or ideas. There are no outside examples. The paper may indicate that the writer did not read the book (or not read it carefully). The paper is under 3 full pages. Plagiarized papers will result in a ZERO.
Use of Quotations 10 points	Every section of the body includes 2-3 relevant quotations illustrating the writer's point. There are direct quotations from at least 3 outside sources. Every quotation is cited correctly using MLA format.	Each body section uses 1-3 quotations, though the use of quotations may be uneven or less effective. There are direct quotations or very specific examples from 2 outside sources. Citing is may be done incorrectly.	There may be lots of paraphrased examples, but only 1-3 direct quotations in the whole paper. There are examples from the other summer book you read. Citing may be missing or wrong.	There are no direct quotations, though there may be some paraphrased examples. There are no examples from your other summer novel or perhaps from any outside source.
Organization 5 points	The paper has a strong, clear thesis indicating the order of points in the body. Topic sentences and transitions are logical, effective, and meaningful.	The paper has a clear thesis which may indicate the order of the points. Topic sentences and transitions are present. The order of information is logical.	The thesis may be unclear; the order of information may be random but not confusing. The order established in the thesis may not match the order in the body. There is an inconsistent use of topic sentences & transitions.	There is no thesis or it is irrelevant. The order of information is unclear or illogical or in some way detracts from the paper. There is a lack of transitions or topic sentences.
Style 4 points	The writer uses a formal style (no I, we, or you; no contractions; no slang). There is a sophisticated use of language and sentence variety. The writer may use rhetorical techniques (like analogies, parallel structure, antithesis, asyndeton, etc.) to enhance the paper. The title is creative and meaningful.	The style is mostly formal, but may occasionally use I/we/you or contractions. The language and sentence structure are age appropriate. Style is not noticeable either in a good or bad way. The title is utilitarian.	The writer may draw attention to himself/ herself ("In my opinion" or "as I was reading"). There may be frequent usage of I/we/ you or contractions or slang. Language & sentence structure are unvaried and basic. Style choices negatively, but mildly, impact the paper.	References to the writer or writing process, use of I/we/you, contractions, slang are frequent and distracting. Language and sentence structure are repetitive and basic. Style choices negatively impact the paper.
MLA Format 10 points	The writer adheres to MLA format for headings, page numbers, internal citation, margins, marking titles, etc. A Works Cited page should have all sources used (at least 2, preferably 3-4).	There may be 1-2 minor mistakes with MLA formatting. The Works Cited page may be incomplete.	There are multiple mistakes with MLA formatting, but the writer made the attempt.	Most or all MLA formatting is missing or wrong. There is no Works Cited page.
Mechanics 5 points	There are virtually no errors in grammar, spelling, word choice, or punctuation.	There are few errors in grammar, spelling, word choice, or punctuation; there may be one or two recurring error.	There are noticeable errors in mechanics. The writer did an insufficient amount of proofreading.	There is no evidence of proofreading. The abundant errors detract from the paper.

Plagiarized papers will receive a zero. Don't do it.

Sample Outline (Your thesis may call for a different organizational scheme.)

I. Introduction

A. Introductions

1. Author's full name (and perhaps time period)
2. Full title, italicized
3. Premise of the book and setting
4. Major characters

B. The Protagonist

1. Insightful observation about the protagonist
2. Identify the problem or question at hand (something about the main character's journey or problems or suffering, etc.)

D. Thesis statement (argument): tell me how and why the protagonist changes or how the conflicts affect the protagonist or how you resolve an apparent contradiction in your protagonist's personality or some other insightful interpretation of your protagonist.

II. The Protagonist at the Beginning (and maybe the middle) of the Book

A. Transition and topic sentence

B. Situation at the Start (for example, working at a diner, or captain of a ship, or a young child)

C. Personality Traits in the beginning

1. Example 1

- a. Identify the trait
- b. General discussion
- c. Direct quotation
- d. Explain the direct quotation
- e. Connect this to a character in another work (*The Great Gatsby*? *Sense and Sensibility*? *The Hunger Games*?)
- f. Transition

2. Example 2

- a. Identify the trait
- b. General discussion
- c. Direct quotation
- d. Explain the direct quotation
- e. Transition

3. Example 3

- a. Identify the trait
- b. General discussion
- c. Direct quotation
- d. Explain the direct quotation

e. Transition

D. Personality Traits in the Middle (same traits, different examples? Different traits and examples?)

Repeat above organization.

E. Mini-conclusion: summarize major examples and points

III. Obstacles/ Challenges/ Conflicts

A. Transition and Topic Sentence

B. Obstacle 1 (or first stage in a complex conflict)

1. Identify it
2. Explain it (who, what, why, etc.)
3. How the protagonist handles it
4. How this relates to a conflict in another work (*Romeo and Juliet*? “The Yellow Wallpaper”? *Fahrenheit 451*?)
5. Why this obstacle is important in the overall journey or plot

C. Obstacle 2 (or second stage of the same conflict)

1. Identify it
2. Explain it (who, what, why, etc.)
3. How the protagonist handles it
4. Why this obstacle is important in the overall journey or plot

D. Obstacle 3 (or third stage of the same conflict)

1. Identify it
2. Explain it (who, what, why, etc.)
3. How the protagonist handles it
4. Why this obstacle is important in the overall journey or plot

E. Mini-conclusion: show how the protagonist’s personality and the conflict interact (maybe her attitude is partially responsible for the conflict or maybe his job makes this kind of problem more likely)

IV. How the Protagonist Grows/ Learns/ Changes as a Result of the Obstacles

A. Transition and Topic Sentence (Does the protagonist change gradually or suddenly? Does the protagonist have an epiphany or is there a mentor who guides him/her?)

B-D. Have multiple points and support with specific examples and direct quotations as above. Make some reference to another major literary work.

E. Mini-conclusion: reiterate that/how the obstacles are related to the character’s changing knowledge or personality (does the character’s growth allow him/her to overcome the obstacles? Do the obstacles cause the character’s growth?)

V. Conclusion

A. Transition and Topic Sentence

- B. Succinctly recap the protagonist's journey (1-2 sentences, maximum)
- C. Identify the key reasons or ways the protagonist changes
- D. Share some insight you gained into the book via this close analysis. For example, connect the protagonist's growth to the theme of the book. Or discuss how the protagonist's growth affects other characters or situations. Or how the main character represents something in the time period in which the book was written.

Works Cited

Follow MLA format!