**10th Grade Literary Analysis Essay**

You will write a literary analysis essay that examines some aspect of the style, symbolism, characterization, theme, etc. in your novel, *THe Joy Luck Club*, by Amy Tan.

Your paper will be written over the course of several steps, at each of which you will receive teacher feedback before continuing. Each step of the process is important, as the steps build on each other. By completing each step on time, you will make writing the paper significantly less stressful for yourself. **Because of this building process, no late credit will be given to any item that is received after the next item is due/turned in.** So, for example, you may not turn in an outline for credit if you have already turned in a draft, and your draft cannot be turned in for credit once your final paper is due/turned in. **You MUST use the feedback you receive at each step to get credit for the next step. If you ignore feedback (in other words, refuse to grow), your next step will receive a failing grade.**

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| **Research Step** | **Due** | **Point Value** | **Notes** |
| Topic Selection | Sept. 19 | 10  **INFORMAL** |  |
| Working thesis and partial quotes | Oct. 10 | 25  **INFORMAL** |  |
| Outline and Works Cited Page | Oct. 24 | 30  **INFORMAL** |  |
| Draft | Nov. 17 | 40  **INFORMAL** |  |
| Final Draft | Dec. 15 | 100  **FORMAL** |  |

**Important Information:**

1. Each pre-writing activity must be turned in with the Requirements and Deadlines Sheet.
2. All pre-writing activities will be collected on the final due date to add to student portfolio.
3. The rubric should be attached to the final draft of the essay.

Common Core Standards: RL2, RL3, RL4, RL5, RL6, W2, W4, W5, W6, W7, W8, L1, L2, L3

**Essay Prompts**

*Write a well-developed essay on one of the prompts below. Develop a clear thesis, stating the purpose and setting the tone and direction of the essay. Prove the thesis in the body paragraphs. You must have between two and four body paragraphs. The specific number will be determined by your thesis statement. How does your thesis need to be broken down? Each body paragraph should begin with a claim statement and provide supporting details. Include textual support, both direct and indirect (with MLA citations) in each body paragraph.You must include at least two quotes per body paragraph. Include a works cited page.*

*Some prompts have multiple questions. This does not mean you must answer each question like it’s a checklist. The questions are there simply to help guide you in your analysis and in setting a focus. You may find that your paper does ultimately answer most of the questions, or you may find that only one question really becomes your focus. The key is to choose your focus, stick with it, and examine it thoroughly.*

*NOTE: If you think of a topic that interests you that is not listed here, please discuss it with your teacher prior to going ahead with it, and your teacher will work with you on setting focus. It is perfectly acceptable to forge your own idea.*

* What is the central conflict in each of the mother-daughter relationships in the novel? Compare and contrast the four relationships. What is the role of communication in these conflicts? What are the obstacles to understanding? What themes emerge?
* How do East and West collide in the novel? What conflicts exist between Chinese tradition and modern American practices? Discuss these conflicts as they are developed in the novel. What themes emerge?
* Each mother relates specific stories of her past. Why does each mother tell her specific tales? How does each mother’s story relate to her daughter’s situation and needs? What themes emerge?
* How does each mother’s experiences in China shape her character and the expectations she develops for her daughter? How does each mother’s past affect her relationship with her daughter and other characters in the novel? What themes emerge?
* What is the role of symbolism in the novel? Choose three or four specific symbols used in the novel and discuss their role in the novel. How do symbols work to develop characterization and theme?
* How do male characters function in the novel? How do relationships with males impact each of the mothers and daughters? What themes emerge?
* Discuss the significance of titles in the novel--including the title of the novel and the titles of sections and chapters. What is the significance of each chapter title and how does it connect to the focus of the chapter? How do the titles of the four sections serve to connect the chapters within each section thematically?
* Discuss the most significant secondary characters in the novel. How do these characters impact the events and shape the main characters? How do their roles and relationships help to develop themes?
* Choose a specific theme in the novel. Discuss how it is developed across the various stories and characters’ experiences.
* Consider text structure. How is the novel structured? What is the significance of this structure and the order in which the stories are presented? How does it serve to connect the stories and to develop specific themes?
* Examine the role of superstition and/or myth. In what ways are characters, both Chinese and Chinese-American, driven by superstition? What is the role of myth in the culture and in the characters’ lives? What is the impact? What themes emerge?
* Consider how violence and pain manifest themselves in each generation and to what end. According to Tan, is suffering an integral part of understanding one’s heritage and/or oneself, or is it just an unfortunate side effect of digging into the past?
* Examine the use of storytelling in the novel. It is not only Tan who tells a story. Each character tells her own story, and within those stories, other stories are told. What power lies in storytelling? How are stories used to teach lessons or to reveal beliefs, thoughts, or desires?

**10th Grade Research Paper Expectations**

Honors: Minimum of 4 pages, maximum of 5

Introduction Paragraph

* Includes necessary background information
* Establishes focus and tone
* Must have as its last sentence a precise, thesis statement that establishes the purpose and focus of the paper
  + **Sample thesis:** *Through its contrasting river and shore scenes, Twain’s* Huckleberry Finn *suggests that to find the true expression of American democratic ideals, one must leave “civilized” society and go back to nature.*

Body Paragraphs

* Must begin with a precise topic sentence that sets the focus on a specific facet of the thesis or contributes to the development of the thesis
  + **Sample topic sentence:** *In the scenes on shore, Twain paints a portrait of almost barbaric hypocrisy and disrespect for democracy and for humanity.*
* Must include textual details that support the topic sentence of that specific paragraph.
* Textual support comes in two forms: direct and indirect. Some points or ideas require direct textual support, while indirect helps to move your essay forward without being bogged down by unnecessary quotes.
  + **Direct textual support**: this means quotes (which you must set up first with your point or idea and then with a little indirect support to establish context, and then cite!). Quotes are used when the author’s words are the best support possible. They support the thesis or paragraph claim precisely by capturing the author’s language or a character’s true nature/thoughts/conflict/etc.
  + **Indirect**: this is *quick* summation. You don’t always need a quote just to prove something happens. You may just want to refer to an event or situation, rather than wasting your quotes on basic information.
* Analyze and explain the information you present. Your body paragraph should not consist entirely or even primarily of quotes! Quotes are used to support YOUR writing, not to replace it.
* Synthesize your ideas. Make sure your body paragraphs work together to support your thesis by addressing various facets of that thesis. Each body paragraph should lead logically to the next. This is done through unity of ideas as well as through transition devices.
* Must end with a concluding sentence that ties the ideas in the paragraph together and allows for a smooth transition to the next idea.

Conclusion Paragraph

* Let’s make this clear immediately: do NOT copy and paste your thesis statement into this paragraph. You are to reinforce the concept of the thesis, not regurgitate its words.
* Must sum up major points of significance.
* Must arrive at some kind of conclusion. It should answer the question, “So What?”
* Give your reader “One to Grow On.” This means leaving your reader with a meaningful thought, or a reason to read this book. How does what you have presented give additional reason to reading this novel?
* Do not introduce new evidence in the conclusion. The show is over, and this is your final bow, not a new scene.
* Do not bring yourself into the paper here (or anywhere).

**Literary Analysis Rubric**

**A = 90-100**

* Consistent clarity of ideas; establishes and maintains focus throughout
* Correctly and effectively uses in text citations to support focus of the thesis.
* Uses quotes and paraphrases from text effectively to support an idea
* Appropriately structured with an introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion; organization allows for a logical flow of ideas; meets page requirement
* Thesis statement establishes clear purpose and sets tone effectively
* Topic sentences set tone for paragraph and helps to maintain focus and support for the thesis.
* MLA format is correctly used; first page is correctly formatted
* Correctly formatted MLA works cited page.
* Correct use of the English language and sentence structure (spelling, mechanics, punctuation, elevated vocabulary, subject verb agreement, written in present tense, variety of sentences used.)
* No factual errors (this applies to research and to novels).

**B=80-89**

Paper lacks one of the above elements or one or more of the above elements are

insufficient.

**C=70-79**

Paper lacks two of the above elements or two or more of the above elements are

insufficient.

**D=60-69**

Paper lacks three of the above elements or three or more of the above elements are

insufficient.

**F= below 60**

Paper lacks four of the above elements or four or more of the above elements are

insufficient.

**ZERO**

Paper was not submitted.

Paper was plagiarized

**\*English Department Late Policy will apply. However, please note the specific exceptions on the first page of this assignment packet.\***