

### Quote Explication: One Page Close Reading

**Content:** For the first two units, you will be required to select one of the readings and write a one page (~250 words) interpretive essay.

**Process:** I would begin by identifying a **major thematic issue** in the text. After reading the story, ask yourself, “*What does the story seem to suggest about this issue?*” The answer to that question should lead you to a thesis. Now you’ve got to find **ONE specific passage** that you feel really proves your interpretation. That quotation is your **evidence**, and you need to fully explain what the quotation teaches us about the story or poem and **exactly how the words in that quotation prove your point.**

**Format:** Even though this is not a full paper, I want you to include mini introductory and conclusion paragraphs just for practice/form. This should be organized into **three** paragraphs only. Font 12, Times New Roman, Double-Space. The only heading I need on this is your name in the upper left. Oh, and don’t forget an original, catchy title for your analysis.

- 1) Begin with a brief introductory paragraph (~2-3 sentences only here) that briefly introduces the work you will be writing about (title, author, *short* summary) and culminates with a very clear, precise thesis. The thesis should make an **argument about your specific interpretation of the text. A clearly expressed theme always makes a good thesis.**
- 2) Write a *body* paragraph (~5-10 sentences) dedicated to **fully explicating a single quotation**.
  - a. It should begin with a topic sentence that supports the thesis and states the main idea of the paragraph.
  - b. Next, you need to set the context of the quotation (what’s going on at this point in the story—“who said what to whom”).
  - c. Then lead into and cite the quotation in proper MLA format.
  - d. Most importantly, fully analyze the quotation—fully unpack it, pick it apart, dissect it, thoroughly explain exactly how/why this passage proves your thesis. You chose these specific words for a reason; walk me through *exactly* how *those words* prove your point! **FOCUS ON THE WORDS IN YOUR QUOTE!**
  - e. Finally end with a summative conclusion sentence.
- 3) End with a brief conclusion paragraph (~2 sentences) that sums up your overall argument (rephrase don’t repeat!) and leaves the reader with a sense of having learned something.

\*You do NOT need a Works Cited page for these short papers.\*

The following questions may lead to fruitful examination:

- What does this passage tell us about the author’s intent/the story’s lesson? *How do THOSE WORDS show this?*
- What does this passage tell us about a character? *How do THOSE WORDS show this?*
- How does this passage help to advance the argument the author is making? *How do THOSE WORDS show this?*
- How does this passage reveal a theme in the text? What is that theme, and *How do THOSE WORDS show this?*
- Why is the author using these particular words? Why not others? What does this tell us? *How?*

**Remember, you need to move beyond plot; I’m looking for analysis.**

**In short, this assignment asks you to focus in on ONE PIECE OF EVIDENCE and explain WHY THAT PIECE OF EVIDENCE IS IMPORTANT. Keep in mind that you chose this passage for a reason, but I have no idea why you chose it. Make sure you explain yourself (meaning: analyze the quotation!!) carefully and fully. The goal here is NOT to write a full argument. You are focusing ENTIRELY on ONE quote.**

**Goal: EXPLICATE ONE QUOTE! Write a LOT about a LITTLE.**