

9th GRADE

SHORT STORY

- Cite several examples of envy in “The Necklace” using the character Mathilde Loisel. Did her envy produce more positive or more negative results? What theme regarding envy is emerging? Support your response with evidence from the text.
- In “Blues Ain’t No Mockingbird,” in what ways is Cathy more like an adult than a child? Support your answer using evidence from the text.

POETRY

- Choose one poem from our readings and analyze the poet’s use of figurative language (imagery, simile, metaphor, etc.) and its effect(s) on the poem’s overall meaning.
- The theme of “love” is portrayed in the poems “My Papa’s Waltz,” “The Gift,” and “Combing.” Discuss which poem creates the clearest “vision” of love. Support your opinion with specific references to the poems.

NONFICTION

- In “Not Much of Me,” Lincoln makes a personal impression on readers not just through the facts he provides, but also through his choice of words. Choose at least four words or word phrases and infer what they suggest about Lincoln’s personality.
- What persuasive techniques, such as logical and emotional appeals, did the writer use in *An Indian’s Views of Indian Affairs*? What did the appeal(s) reveal about the writer’s opinions concerning the subject of the selection?

DRAMA *Romeo and Juliet*

- Based on his actions and words in Act 1, is Romeo characterized positively or negatively? Be sure to use evidence from the text to support your answer.
- Is Romeo and Juliet’s relationship destroyed by fate, human error, or a combination of the two? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

10th GRADE

SHORT STORY

- In “Everyday Use,” Maggie and Dee have different ways of embracing their heritage. Compare and contrast how the two sisters value their heritage and decide which one you believe values her heritage more. Support your ideas with evidence from the text.
- In “By the Waters of Babylon,” John’s father believes that truth can be dangerous and should be brought out little by little. As John goes on his journey, he discovers many things that he has previously been taught are untrue. Discuss the effects on John as he discovers the truth. Support your ideas with evidence from the text.

POETRY

- The mother in the poem “A Voice” displays a quiet determined type of courage that enables her children to fulfill their dreams of a better life. Explain and cite examples of the mother’s quiet courage in the poem.
- Courage comes in all shapes and sizes. After reading the poem “Courage,” cite and explain the varied examples of courage mentioned in the poem and discuss whether or not you agree with the author’s view. Make sure you explain the metaphors and similes she uses to make her point.

NONFICTION

- “Into Thin Air” describes a number of decisions and actions on the part of the mountain climbers which resulted in serious consequences. Cite and explain several examples of the climbers’ decisions and actions and their negative impacts on the men.
- In the essay “I Acknowledge Mine,” Jane Goodall writes about her experience visiting research laboratories that use chimpanzees, and she argues for more humane and ethical treatment of animals. Cite and discuss how she uses the rhetorical appeals of ethos, logos, and pathos to develop her essay, and determine which one she uses most effectively. Support your ideas with details from the text.

DRAMA *Antigone*

- As you read, identify the figurative language describing Antigone, Ismene, and King Creon and explain what it says about them.
- Antigone, Ismene, and King Creon each resolve an internal conflict. Explain the conflict of each and discuss whether or not you agree or disagree with how the character resolves his or her dilemma.

11th GRADE

SHORT STORY

- In “A Wagner Matinee,” Georgiana has lost many pleasures. Which loss was the greatest? Explain your answer with evidence from the story.
- After you have read “The Life You Save May Be Your Own,” describe how you think the title applies to the character of Shiftlet. Support your ideas with evidence from the text.

POETRY

- Find two poems that depict usually benign and harmless facets of nature as predatory and dangerous. (“Apparently with no surprise” and “Design” would work well.) Analyze the word choice each poet uses to develop the poems’ tones and images. Be sure to cite with textual evidence.
- Choose two or three poems that express admiration for human beings and the human spirit. Write an essay explaining what the speakers admire about people and how they express their optimism. Support your ideas with evidence from the texts.

DRAMA *The Crucible*

- The stature or reputation of several characters rises or falls from Act One to Act Two. For example, in Act One, Mary Warren is John and Elizabeth Proctor’s maid. In Act Two, she is an official of the court. Generate a list of characters whose stature has risen or fallen between Act One and Act Two. Choose one of the characters whose stature has risen, and explain how it has risen. Do the same for a character whose stature has fallen. Use textual evidence to support your answer.
- The actions of certain characters during the climactic ending of the play reveal much about their personalities, thoughts, feelings, and values. For example, when Abigail’s accusations bring the threat of an uprising from the community, she leaves town. This reveals that she lacks courage and is more concerned about saving herself than in doing what is right. Choose one character from the play, and elaborate on what you have learned about him or her by the play’s end. Support your opinion with evidence from the play.

NONFICTION

- As you read King’s “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” note where he uses appeals to logic, emotion, and his own credibility. Then either write or discuss the reasons why he moves from one rhetorical appeal to another and what effect this has on his credibility and his audience. Support your ideas with direct references to the letter.
- Determine Jonathan Edwards’ purpose for his sermon, “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God.” Write an essay in which you analyze how the images and figures of speech he uses contribute to and develop his purpose.

12th GRADE

SHORT STORY

- Consider the role of dreams and reality in “Araby.” What is the overall message about each at the end of the story? Use textual evidence to support your answer.
- How does the author create a suspenseful tone in “The Demon Lover?” Cite specific lines and passages to support your answer.

POETRY

- Choose a poem and note any shifts (in tone, punctuation, narration, etc.). Explain the effect the shifts have on the overall meaning of the poem.
- Choose a poem and select an image you find most convincing and least convincing. Explain why.

NONFICTION

- What is Virginia Woolf’s overall view of women in her essay “Shakespeare’s Sister?” Cite specific lines and passages that support your opinion.
- How do you define “enemy?” Consider how different people were considered “enemies” in “Shooting an Elephant.” Does the story’s interpretation of being one’s enemy match your own? Write a paragraph to discuss your response.

DRAMA *Macbeth*

- In Act 2, Macbeth overcomes his reservations long enough to kill King Duncan and two of the king’s grooms. Search Act 2 for quotations that disclose Macbeth’s feelings about the murders. What does this reveal about what is going on inside Macbeth?
- Compare the previous prophecies of the witches with the events in Act 5. Summarize each prediction and explain how each comes true. Do you believe the witches have the ability to predict the future or do their prophecies merely plant the ideas in Macbeth’s head and he then, in turn, sets the events in motion? Support your opinion with textual evidence.

General Text-Based Questions for Writing or Discussion

For Biographies and Autobiographies

- Is the information the selection provides subjective, objective, or both? Explain your response using evidence from the text.
- What is the overall tone of the selection? Support your answer with details from the text.

Novel and Short Story

- How does the excerpt show the attitudes and emotions of the central character(s)?
- In what ways does the use of language reveal underlying tensions?
- How is the significance of the setting of the work revealed in the excerpt?
- How are the central ideas of the work conveyed through the excerpt?
- In what ways does the excerpt foreshadow subsequent developments in the work?
- How is the excerpt pivotal to the structure of the plot?

Nonfiction

- How does the point of view influence our attitude to the ideas being conveyed?
- How is diction used to influence the reader?
- Discuss the writer's attitude towards the subject matter. How is this revealed?
- Identify features of the writer's technique that you find particularly effective. Explain their effectiveness.

Poetry

- What use has the writer made of repetition to convey meaning and/or emotional effects?
- How does the use of a persona contribute to the dramatic force of the poem?
- How is symbolism used to convey meaning?
- In what ways does the final line/stanza change your understanding of the poem as a whole?
- How is rhythm used to complement the thought and feeling of the poem?

Drama

- How are gesture and action used to convey the state of mind of the character(s)?
- How is language used to show contrasts between/among characters?
- In what ways does the excerpt show or hint at developing conflict in the play?
- How does the excerpt reveal the time and place of the action in the play?
- In what ways is the excerpt significant in revealing a key idea of the play?
- How well do you think the writer manages to use the stage to establish a strong sense of setting?

