Essay #2: Analysis of a Single Work of Literature Using a Single Literary Theory

Value: 200 points

Format: Typed, MLA style

Length: 1,000 words or more and a minimum of 5 paragraphs (quotations don’t count as your words)

Due Date: See Syllabus or Website

Directions: In an essay of at least 1,000 words, write a claim-driven essay about one of the works we’ve read so far (Susan Glaspell’s Trifles, Shakespeare’s The Tempest, Cesaire Aimé’s A Tempest, or Lorraine Hansberry’s A Raisin in the Sun). Your claim should identify a meaning or argument of the text based on a question or concern raised by one of the Literary Theories. (Ideally, this essay develops from one of your response papers.) Support your claim with evidence from the text along with your discussion of that evidence, point by point. Quote, paraphrase/summarize, and cite texts correctly according to genre. As a final step, submit the final draft of your essay to Turnitin.com (worth 10 points and minus an additional 10 points if I have to submit it for you). Typed, rough drafts of about 1,000 words are due in class for peer review; missing the rough draft/peer review will result in a loss of 20 points on the final draft.

Be sure to edit and proofread your essay before turning it in.

If you use New Historicism, remember you:
- are still bound by the 80/20 ratio (80% your interpretation & analysis/20% quotations including both quotations from the play and from the secondary sources you find);
- are still expected to present and support an argument interpreting the play’s meaning, analyzing how it communicates that meaning, and determining for what purpose;
- must select legitimate sources (using NVC Library database);
- and must provide a correct MLA-style Works Cited page.
GRADING CRITERIA:

An “A” Essay (180-200 points) – SUPERIOR
1. Will demonstrate excellence in Critical Thinking, responding effectively and originally to the assignment, fulfilling or exceeding the length, consistently, thoughtfully, and thoroughly analyzing the text, and demonstrating keen understanding of it and the literary theory.
2. Will have excellent Focus, presenting a clear, specific, unified claim (thesis) and focused reasons (points) in support of it.
3. Will provide excellent support and development, offering sufficient specific reasons (support points), evidence (examples & details from or about the text), warrants, and backing (explanation and discussion of the meaning of the evidence).
4. Will have logical and effective Organization.
5. Will have correct and effective Integration of Sources, with correct presentation and effective use of quotations, paraphrase, and summary, and correct MLA in-text citation, according to genre.
6. Will have clear and specific Writing, effectively communicating the ideas.

An “B” Essay (160-179 points) – STRONG

A “C” Essay (140-159 points) – ADEQUATE
1. Will demonstrate adequate Critical Thinking, responding adequately to the assignment, fulfilling the length, demonstrating adequate understanding of the text and literary theory, and presenting some analysis of the text with occasional slips into (plot) summary, (character) description, judgment, or personal experience that do not derail from the overall analytical purpose.
2. Will have adequate Focus, presenting a vague or general claim and points.
3. Will provide adequate Support and Development, offering minimal, vague, or general evidence, warrants, and backing.
4. Will demonstrate adequate Organization, so that the reader can follow the argument despite occasional lapses.
5. Will have adequate Integration of Sources, clearly distinguishing between the student’s ideas and ideas from the text though presentation or use of quotations, paraphrase, summary, and parenthetical in-text citation may be inconsistent or incorrect.
6. Will have Writing that communicates the ideas but has some serious errors as well as considerable awkwardness and minor errors.

A “D” Paper (120-139 points) – WEAK

An “F” Paper (0-119 points) – INADEQUATE
1. will lack Critical Thinking, failing to respond to the assignment, failing to fulfill the length, failing to analyze but instead summarizing or judging the text or its contents or discussing material not in the text, or failing to understand the text and/or literary theory.
2. Will lack Focus, having no claim.
3. Will lack Support/Development, listing facts from the story without explanation of them or listing opinions without supporting them.
4. Will lack any sense of Organization.
5. Will be plagiarized or contain plagiarism unintentional or intentional.
6. Will have unclear Writing due to numerous and/or serious errors that prevent the ideas from being communicated.