

# Literary Analysis Interpretive Essay Rubric

| Score Criteria   | Excellent  | Good   | Needs Work  | Rewrite Essay   |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| <b>Format</b><br>( /5)   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ MLA heading</li> <li>✓ Double-space text; no extra spacing between paragraphs</li> <li>✓ Title of essay is <b>original</b> and centered above the first line of the essay. It is NOT <u>underlined</u> or <i>italicized</i></li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ MLA heading</li> <li>✓ Double-spaced but incorrect spacing between paragraphs</li> <li>✓ Paragraphs are indented on the first line</li> <li>✓ Title of essay is unoriginal but formatted correctly</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Has name, date, and period but not MLA format</li> <li>✓ Paragraphs not indented</li> <li>✓ Inconsistent or wrong spacing</li> <li>✓ Unoriginal and incorrectly formatted title</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Name?</li> <li>✓ Margins?</li> <li>✓ Paragraphs?</li> <li>✓ Title?</li> </ul>  |
|  | <b>It's electrifying!</b>  | <b>You're plugged in</b>   | <b>A flickering lightbulb</b>   | <b>Blackout</b>   |
| <b>Structure (Intro &amp; Thesis)</b><br>( /15)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Opening line &amp; paragraph effectively leads reader to thesis</li> <li>✓ Title and author's name are mentioned &amp; title is underlined</li> <li>✓ Background of novel gives context for thesis</li> <li>✓ Thesis presents a clear, thoughtful, original statement</li> <li>✓ Thesis is focused on a specific theme, and shows complex understanding of the literature</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Opening line has potential, but worded awkwardly</li> <li>✓ Title and author are mentioned but may not be full name and/or title is not underlined</li> <li>✓ Summary of novel is given, but context may be missing or unclear</li> <li>✓ Thesis is focused on a specific theme, yet does not show complex understanding of the literature (<b>thesis is a bit obvious</b>)</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Opening line is used but may be ineffective (<b> cliché, inappropriate</b>)</li> <li>✓ Title or author is mentioned but not both; may not be full name</li> <li>✓ Summary of novel is inadequate to provide understanding</li> <li>✓ Thesis may be unsupportable or wording may be weak or confusing. Thesis is a list of 3 subtopics and not an idea or <b>thesis is too general</b></li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ States topic as introduction, or begins with the thesis (no opening line)</li> <li>✓ Opening paragraph lacks structure</li> <li>✓ No mention of title/author</li> <li>✓ No summary of novel</li> <li>✓ Thesis missing or a statement of fact/summary description, may not present an argument</li> </ul>               |
| <b>Structure Part II</b><br><b>Org./main ideas/unity/cohesion/support/concl.</b><br>( /20) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Topic sentences are specific and distinct, centering on an IDEA and clearly explaining what the writer is arguing in the paragraph</li> <li>✓ Information in each body paragraph directly supports the topic sentence/controlling idea</li> <li>✓ Reasoning of argument is consistently easy to follow</li> <li>✓ Transitions effectively show logical relationships between ideas</li> <li>✓ Conclusion sentences and conc. paragraph reinforces argument and leaves reader with a final thought and sense of closure</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Topic sentences center on an idea, but may be vague/awkward/simple</li> <li>✓ Information in each body paragraph is appropriate but some information may not directly support the topic sentence/controlling idea</li> <li>✓ Some use of transitions</li> <li>✓ Paragraphs are logically developed but revision would make them more effective</li> <li>✓ Conclusion sentences and conc. paragraph gives closure but may be cliché or repetitive</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Topic sentences center on an event/summary, and not an idea</li> <li>✓ In some places, the info in the paragraph is illogical or does not offer clear support of topic sentence/controlling idea</li> <li>✓ Reasoning is confusing or argument may not be clear</li> <li>✓ Lack of transitions</li> <li>✓ Choppy writing</li> <li>✓ Some points well-developed but others are underdeveloped</li> <li>✓ Conclusion sentences and conc. paragraph does not reinforce argument, lacks substance, or asks a question</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ No topic sentence/controlling idea</li> <li>✓ Writer may shift from main argument</li> <li>✓ Information in paragraphs consistently lacks logical development</li> <li>✓ Reasoning is lacking</li> <li>✓ Paragraphs not linked to thesis</li> <li>✓ No transitions</li> <li>✓ Abrupt concl./new ideas added</li> </ul> |

|  |   |   |  |  |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| <p><b>Use of analysis &amp; evidence</b></p> <p>( /30)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Quoted material is seamlessly integrated (not all begin with “s/he states...”</li> <li>✓ Substantial use of EFFECTIVE quoted material</li> <li>✓ Context for quotes classifies the meaning and significance of quotes</li> <li>✓ Context for quotes is smoothly integrated into the paragraph</li> <li>✓ Commentary/analysis is insightful and in depth; quoted material supports and extends the main idea of the paragraph</li> <li>✓ Commentaries clarify the relationship of the quoted material to the controlling idea/topic sentence</li> <li>✓ Quoted material is always cited correctly “...” (3). <b>The first citation includes author’s last name and page number (Tsukiyama 3)</b></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Quoted material is appropriately integrated (most may begin with “s/he states...”</li> <li>✓ Appropriate evidence is used but quoted material may lack impact (lacking “wow factor”)</li> <li>✓ Context for quotes given but may be missing information and not be worded smoothly</li> <li>✓ Commentary/analysis follows quoted material, but explanations do not consistently clarify the meaning and/or significance of quoted material</li> <li>✓ Commentary/analysis explains the relationship of quoted material to thesis but may lack variation or be simplistic</li> <li>✓ Citation has one error “...” (pg. 3).</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Quoted material is used inconsistently and does not provide context</li> <li>✓ Quoted material is not used selectively and may offer little support or relevance</li> <li>✓ Context is given, but may be missing information</li> <li>✓ Commentary/analysis may omit explaining meaning and significance or may be unclear</li> <li>✓ Summarizes quote, no analysis</li> <li>✓ Commentary/analysis may explain meaning or significance but fails to explain the relationship to the quoted material to the controlling idea/topic sentence/thesis</li> <li>✓ Quote is not referred to in the commentary</li> <li>✓ Citation has multiple errors “...” (pg 3)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Quoted material used rarely or not used</li> <li>✓ Writer may use quoted material randomly and/or may frequently use unsupported opinions</li> <li>✓ No context given</li> <li>✓ Commentary/analysis missing or poorly worded</li> <li>✓ Use of evidence shows that the writer may not understand meaning; significance of the support is omitted</li> <li>✓ Citations are not given or are consistently written incorrectly (see “excellent” column for format)</li> </ul> |
|  | <b>A well-oiled machine</b>   | <b>A bit squeaky</b>  | <b>Quite a few clicks and clacks</b>   | <b>A grinding halt</b>   |
| <p><b>Grammar &amp; Mechanics</b></p> <p>( /20)</p>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The sentences are complete : no run-ons, fragments, or contractions</li> <li>✓ There is subject-verb agreement</li> <li>✓ Writer consistently uses present tense (no past tense)</li> <li>✓ No 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> person (“I” or “you”)</li> <li>✓ Correct spelling</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 1-2 sentences run-ons or fragments</li> <li>✓ 1-2 contractions (can’t</li> <li>✓ A few subject-verb disagreements</li> <li>✓ Inconsistent use of tense</li> <li>✓ A few incorrectly spelled words</li> <li>✓ Uses some informal language</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 3-5 run-ons and fragments</li> <li>✓ Several subject-verb disagreements and sentence errors</li> <li>✓ Inconsistent use of tense</li> <li>✓ Uses 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> person (“I” or “you”)</li> <li>✓ Some incorrect spelling</li> <li>✓ Uses a lot of informal language</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Several run-ons and fragments</li> <li>✓ Significant grammar errors detract from the smooth flow of the paper</li> <li>✓ Inconsistent verb tenses</li> </ul>  |
|  | <b>Beautiful music!</b>   | <b>Humming a tune</b>   | <b>Off-key</b>   | <b>Lip-synching</b>  |
| <p><b>Overall Effect/Voice</b></p> <p>( /10)</p>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Writing shows confident control over style and outstanding insight</li> <li>✓ Uses sophisticated diction (word choice) and vivid, active verbs</li> <li>✓ Sentences vary in length and structure</li> <li>✓ Evidence of conscientious proofreading and revision</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Writing shows clear understanding of essay style and insight</li> <li>✓ Uses some sophisticated diction (word choice) and vivid verbs</li> <li>✓ Some sentences vary in length and structure</li> <li>✓ Could use more revision</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Writer shows some knowledge of essay style &amp; insight</li> <li>✓ Simplistic diction (word choice)</li> <li>✓ Simple sentence structure and awkward wording</li> <li>✓ Needs much more revision</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Shows limited understanding of subject</li> <li>✓ Simplistic diction</li> <li>✓ Little variety in length or structure of sentences</li> <li>✓ Serious lack of revision/effort</li> </ul>  |