**Essay Writing Language Defined**

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*“There are no great limits to growth because there are no limits of*

*human intelligence, imagination, and wonder.”*

*–Ronald Reagan*

**Assignment:** Today we are going to be reviewing essay language and begin writing our first draft of a full essay. Your prompt is as follows: How does Gilman use fragments and syntactical structures to shape her overall tone, and for what purpose?

I will be looking for **five things** in the thesis statement: Author, Title of Work, Devices Employed (2 in this case), the Tone that is Shaped (include an adjective to describe that tone), and the Lesson the Audience can Derive from the Story.

**Introduction:**

1. **Grabber/Hook (GR)**—As a writer you want to get the attention of the reader immediately with an effective grabber, or hook.  Avoid asking a question unless you are a very proficient writer, because asking good rhetorical or deep questions can be tricky. If you do choose to start with a question, make sure you ANSWER that question in your writing.  Another grabber/hook can be a quote that expresses your main point and offer commentary on it, or make a comment about society or the issues presented in the story.  Another idea is to reference a well-known example, archetype, or quote.  For example, you could say, **GR:** “Living in confinement is bound to lead one into madness. In order lead a healthy yet satisfying life, individuals need to be liberated.” Do not assume that the **Grabber** must be only one sentence. From here I would transition to giving **Context** (see below) about the book/short story/poem and offer pertinent information.  Then, connect to the **Thesis** to round out the introduction and offer a clear plan for what the essay/paragraph will achieve.  (Intro=GR+CX+THESIS)
2. **Context (CX)**—The background information that is needed to make your references understandable.  For example, in *“*The Yellow Wallpaper*,”* you will be writing about a woman (the narrator) who is under the strict control of her husband. She is confined to a bedroom at the couple’s summer home. Due to her confinement and her reactions to the wallpaper, the reader is able to see into her insanity. Usually, the “when,” “where,” “who,” and “why do we care,” are given.
3. **Thesis**—Also called the controlling idea, it is the central message—the reason you are writing the paper.  Your paper is meaningless and terrible if it doesn’t have a thesis (no offense).  The whole point of a body paragraph is to PROVE that the thesis is valid.  This is called, “supporting your thesis,” and your paper must absolutely do that with ample evidence (concrete detail/quotes).

**Body Paragraphs:**

4. **Topic Sentence (TS)**—The first sentence in a body paragraph that introduces the idea the paragraph is going to express. For a stylistic analysis essay, which you are writing, you should address which device you are going to analyze. An example it would be something like, **TS:** “The central character in Gilman’s short story “The Yellow Wallpaper” narrates her own life; however, the reader never learns her name thus creating a sense of **ambiguity** to this character. Gilman has cleverly taken the reader into the inner-most realms of a woman’s mind and experiences, yet the woman in “The Yellow Wallpaper” remains anonymous, a reflection of her status in society.” (Body=TS+CX+CD+CM+TR) Students often ask, “How long should my essay be?”  The answer, “Long enough.”  Effective writing has plenty of concrete details and commentary.

1. **Concrete Detail (CD)**—A concrete example or evidence (also called a quote).  This always includes a citation for where it came from, usually with the author’s last name and page number, such as “(Gilman 7).”
2. **Commentary (CM)**—Your analysis of why the quote you referenced is significant and what it means.  This is the most important aspect of good writing.  Anyone can write down quotes from a book/short story.  Not everyone can interpret them and relate them to themes or ideas expressed in the story.  The best commentary ties the literary devices into the literary elements and explains how they are connected. Think about how that literary device shapes an element of literature---this is they ***why and the how.* Transition (TR)**—All writing should have a certain rhythm or flow to it, and good transitions make it so that the reader doesn’t get lost.  A helpful website to consult when looking for the proper transition is <http://www.studygs.net/wrtstr6.htm>.

Outline for this essay:

Introduction: GR+CX+THESIS (think broad to specific)

Body Paragraph 1: TS+CX+CD+CMx3+TR (analyze 1st device: fragments)

Body Paragraph 2: TS+CX+CD+CMx3+TR (analyze 2nd device: syntax)

Conclusion: Reiterate thesis statement, concluding sentence, call to action)