ENG 9DB

*To Kill A Mockingbird*: Essay Assignment

**TASK:**  Write a formal essay on **one** of the following topics:

1. “You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view.” (80) Atticus encourages his children to consider people from different perspectives. Discuss how Jem and Scout learn this lesson in their interactions with other characters in the novel. How does each meeting change their point of view?
2. “It was times like these when I thought my father, who hated guns and had never been to any wars, was the bravest man who ever lived.” (100) Discuss how Scout and Jem learn about bravery and courage from Atticus throughout the novel.
3. “In our courts, when it’s a white man’s word against a black man’s, the white man always wins.” (220) Discuss how racism affects specific characters in the novel.
4. “I think I’m beginning to understand why Boo Radley’s stayed shut up in the house all this time.... it’s because he *wants* to stay inside.” (227) Discuss the development of the relationship between the children and Boo “Arthur” Radley. How does it change? What are the causes of these changes?
5. Choose another topic of your choice. You must get approval from ME!

Take into account **ALL** of the following criteria:

* Adherence to the rules of formal writing
* Complete sentences
* Proper essay form
* A properly selected and properly formatted title
* Introductory paragraph with some sentences of introduction, a thesis, some elaboration, and a plan of development
* Three body paragraphs in well-structured paragraph form, with all nine elements (topic sentence, elaboration, example/analysis x 3, concluding sentence)
* Concluding paragraph with a restated thesis, a summary of your examples, and some words of conclusion
* Proofs from the literary work

This means that you **MUST USE QUOTATIONS**, and they should be properly formatted. When citing a page number, just put the number in parenthesis: (82). NOT p.82 or page 82, etc.

* Proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation (as always)

**DO…**

* Keep track of the sentences in each of your paragraphs, and be very aware of what every sentence is supposed to do.
* Format your quotations properly. Blend them into your example sentences and cite a page number after the quotation.
* Stick to third person only.
* Write as formally as possible, with no contractions, short forms, or informalities.
* Stick to your argument. Make sure that every sentence in your paper points back at your thesis statement in some way.
* Use transition language. Words like also, furthermore, and another make the sentences flow together in your paragraphs.
* Read your essay aloud to yourself when you are editing it. This will catch a lot of errors, both grammatical and logical.

**DO NOT…**

* Use first or second person! Avoid using you or any form of you (e.g. – your, yours), and “I think” or “I feel” at all times!
* Write informally! Banish all contractions (can’t, don’t, isn’t, wouldn’t, he’s, she’s, et cetera), short forms (cuz for because, OK for okay, & for and), and informal language (guy for man or person, dad for father, pretty for rather or quite) from your writing.
* Draw attention to the mechanics of the paper. For example, do not actually use the word essay in the essay (e.g. – “This essay will prove…”). Do not use words like thesis, paragraph, or conclusion either.

You will be given time in class to work – **IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO COME TO CLASS PREPARED!**

**ASK ME for HELP early and often!** (room 222 or 252 at lunch)

**Rubric – Literary Essay**

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| **Element** | **Level 4 – A**  **80-100%** | **Level 3 – B**  **70-79%** | **Level 2 – C**  **60-69%** | **Level 1 – D**  **50-59%** |
| **Knowledge/**  **Understanding**  **/20** | **(20-16)** | **(15-14)** | **(13-12)** | **(11-10)** |
| * handling of themes, ideas, and concepts * thesis * logic of arguments | * thorough understanding of relationships among text’s themes, ideas, and concepts; * excellent thesis * arguments very logical and skillful | * clear understanding of text’s themes, ideas, and concepts * good thesis * logical arguments | * some understanding of text’s themes, ideas, and concepts; * weak thesis * some logic and skill in arguments | * limited understanding of text’s themes, ideas, and concepts * very weak thesis * very little logic to arguments |
| **Thinking/Inquiry**  **/20** | **(20-16)** | **(15-14)** | **(13-12)** | **(11-10)** |
| * insight * analysis * drawing inferences * interpretation * relevant detail and quotations | * penetrating insight * excellent analysis * clever inferences drawn * fine interpretation * quotations are thoughtful | * clear insight * good analysis * fairly good inferences drawn * good support from text | * some insight * some analysis * some inferences drawn * some interpretation * limited support from text | * limited insight * weak analysis * few inferences drawn * limited interpretation * little to no support from text |
| **Communication**  **/20** | **(20-16)** | **(15-14)** | **(13-12)** | **(11-10)** |
| * spelling, grammar, sentence structure * formal and appropriate use of language * structure follows essay writing prompts | * almost no spelling, punctuation, sentence structure errors * fluent, clear and original use of language * very structured; effective organization | * very few spelling, punctuation, sentence structure errors * coherent and interesting use of language * good structure; clear organization | * some spelling, punctuation, sentence structure errors * some coherence; language lacks some clarity * some structure; some organization | * several spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure errors that interfere with meaning * no coherence; unclear use of language * limited evidence of structure or organization |
| **Application**  **/10** | **(10-9)** | **(8-7)** | **(6)** | **(5)** |
| * essay is coherent with a unifying idea * sense of cohesive paragraph structure | * strong and sustained unifying idea * excellent sense of linking paragraphs | * sustained unifying idea * good sense of linking paragraphs | * idea is somewhat unifying * some sense of paragraphing | * unifying idea is unclear or not sustained * limited sense of paragraphing |
| **NOTES:** | | | | |

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| Element | Level 0 – F  0-49% | Level 1 – D  50-59% | Level 2 – C  60-69% | Level 3 – B  70-79% | Level 4 – A  80-100% |
| Knowledge/  Understanding  - handling of themes, ideas, and concepts  - thesis  - logic and skill of arguments  **/20** | - very little understanding of text’s themes, ideas, and concepts; little notion of relationships among them  - nonexistent thesis  - no logic or skill to arguments | - limited understanding of text’s themes, ideas, and concepts; limited notion of relationships among them  - very weak thesis  - very little logic or skill to arguments | - some understanding of text’s themes, ideas, and concepts; some notion of relationships among them  - weak thesis  - some logic and skill in arguments | - clear understanding of text’s themes, ideas, and concepts; clear notion of relationships among them  - good thesis  - arguments logical and reasonably skilful | - thorough understanding of relationships among text’s themes, ideas, and concepts; - excellent thesis  - arguments very logical and skilful |
|  | **(0-9)** | **(10-11)** | **(12-13)** | **(14-15)** | **(16-20)** |
| Thinking/Inquiry  - insight  - analysis  - drawing inferences  - close reading  - interpretation  **/20** | - very little insight  - poor analysis  - no inferences drawn  - very weak close readings  - no interpretation given | - limited insight  - weak analysis  - few inferences drawn  - weak close readings  - limited interpretation given | - some insight  - some analysis  - some inferences drawn  - adequate close readings  - some interpretation given | - clear insight  - good analysis  - fairly good inferences drawn  - clear close readings  - reasonable interpretation given | - penetrating insight  - excellent analysis  - clever inferences drawn  - detailed, illuminating close readings  - fine interpretation given |
|  | **(0-9)** | **(10-11)** | **(12-13)** | **(14-15)** | **(16-20)** |
| Communication  - structure and organization  - stylistic skill  - paragraphing  - coherence  - use and formatting of supporting quotations  **/20** | - very little structure; little or no organization  - no controlling idea  - weak paragraphing  - no coherence; poor diction; unclear  - supporting quotations not used at all | - limited structure; weak organization  - feeble or intermittent controlling idea  - limited sense of paragraphing  - poor coherence; often unclear  - very few supporting quotations used; serious issues with formatting of quotations | - some structure; some organization  - some sense of paragraphing  - some coherence; intermittent clarity  - some supporting quotations used, but not enough; some issues with formatting of quotations | - good structure; clear organization  - clear controlling idea  - clear paragraphing  - good coherence; clear  - a reasonable number of supporting quotations used; minor issues with formatting of quotations | - very structured; effective organization  - strong and sustained controlling idea  - excellent paragraphing  - clear and coherent throughout  - a number of supporting quotations used, and used well; very good formatting of quotations |
|  | **(0-9)** | **(10-11)** | **(12-13)** | **(14-15)** | **(16-20)** |
| **Application**  - mechanics, language conventions, spelling, punctuation, sentence structure  - formal qualities  **/10** | - far too many errors in mechanics, language conventions, spelling, punctuation, sentence structure  - very few to no formal qualities | - quite a few errors in mechanics, language conventions, spelling, punctuation, sentence structure  - few formal qualities | - some errors in mechanics, language conventions, spelling, punctuation, sentence structure  - some formal qualities | - very few errors in mechanics, language conventions, spelling, punctuation, sentence structure  - acceptable formal qualities | - almost no errors in mechanics, language conventions, spelling, punctuation, sentence structure  - strong formal qualities |
|  | **(0-4.5)** | **(5-5.5)** | **(6-6.5)** | **(7-7.5)** | **(8-10)** |

**NOTES:**