

What is a Critical Lens?

Task 4

A critical lens is a Regents essay. It's also called a

Critical = Judging

Lens = Help see

Writing the Introduction

1. Restate the quote. - Copy the quote word for word.
2. Paraphrase the quote. - Explain the quote in your own words.
3. Take a position. - Agree or disagree.
4. Relate two stories to the critical lens. - Include titles & authors.
5. Mention or refer to literary elements specifically relating the quote to your stories. Ex. Characterization, conflict...

Combine

*Connect Stories to Quote...

Sample Intro.

"Literature opens a dark window on the soul, revealing more about what is bad in human nature than what is good." This quote means stories can show us the true evil and cruelty that is found within people. This is validated by Edgar Allen Poe's "The Cask of Amontillado" and "The Most Dangerous Game," by Richard Connell. Both General Zaroff and Montreson lack pity for their victims who are ruthlessly killed.

In Connell's story, the General is a psychotic killer. He creates a "false channel" indicating a safe passage for boats, instead they crash and hit the rocks. This allows the villain to trap his victims for his twisted game. Zaroff is truly evil by fooling his victims into making his island appear safe. Another example of the villain's wickedness is his actual game. He has grown bored of hunting animals...

How Do I Write Body Paragraphs for a Critical Lens?

The **body paragraphs** of your essay should relate two stories to the **critical lens** quote. Be sure to include in your paragraphs . . .

1. An opening sentence relating the paragraph to the quote.

Sample: Does the opening sentence make sense? _____ Read it, underline it, & decide. Yes No

2. Prove your explanation of the quote with specifics.

Sample: Does the paragraph include events & details from the story to prove the point? _____

3. Include commentary. (Writer's Comments)

Sample: Does the writer explain how the details relate to the quote? _____
If so, circle the explanations.

4. Use Literary Elements. _____ If they were used, star them.

5. Include a Closing Sentence - Wrap up the paragraph, setting up the next paragraph to follow.

Sample Body Paragraph

The innkeeper in Poe's story "The Tell-Tale Heart" is a cold and evil character. He decided to murder an elderly visitor simply because his eye is scarred and scabbed over. The narrator says: he was "vexed" by the image of the "vulture eye." This is clearly twisted, but the narrator begins to plan and plot the old man's death simply because this eye becomes symbolic of evil. Finally, on a dark evening, the narrator slips into the old man's room and smothers him to death with a pillow. He then dismembers the old man's body in a tub and places his remains beneath the floorboards. This is clearly evil, but even still the power of darkness does not win in this struggle. In the end, the narrator's conscious overpowers him. He is haunted by the imagery of a heart pounding and throbbing beneath the floorboards. "Thudtump! Thuthump..!" He can no longer take the guilt of what he has done and loses this internal conflict. He admits his crime, turning himself over to the authorities. Evil is alive in this story, but in the end, goodness prevails and the villain is headed to prison.

