

Grades 11-12

Self Assessment

Dracula Essay

In 4-5 pages, in MLA format (see handouts), present your own argument, analysis, exploration of Dracula. You will want to advance a thesis, elaborate on that thesis with reasons, and support it with specific textual evidence (quotes and summary) from the novel. Be sure to explain your evidence, applying your thesis and analysis to it.

Do be sure to make your own argument - that is, Do go beyond our class discussion and the critical readings included in the text. Do try to express your ideas clearly, thoughtfully, and in the standard language of formal essays - that is, grammatically and without slang.

Do provide specific examples, quotes, and scenes from the text, along with specific discussion and explanation of those quotes and scenes.

Do not simply summarize the plot or describe the characters - instead, make an argument, offering an interpretation, explanation, analysis, discussion... that goes beyond what is already in the book. Push your thesis so that it is not simplistic, obvious, or merely descriptive. Why is it important that X happens, or that Y doesn't? How does X pattern help to understand Y pattern in the novel? If X and Y are opposed or contrasted, why is that significant, to the novel or to an understanding of the culture that produced it? Do not argue a thesis that is essentially a moral....

Issues you might consider include (but are not limited to):

Masculinity

Femininity

Gender roles, Gender reversals

Science, Technology, Progress

Tradition, Superstition, Faith

Tourism, Travel

Class, Wealth, Power

Imprisonment, Freedom

Knowledge, Records, Secrets, Truth

Can a discussion or exploration of one (or more) of these themes provide the reader with a closer, clearer, more developed understanding of the text, of some aspect of the text, of its significance? Try to offer an argument (thesis, idea, position) that ties together (or explains, or makes clear the significance of) one or more elements of the text (plot, structure, style, characterization, description,

decisions, consequences, relationships...).

Explore ways in which some repetition, of plot, of character, of symbol, of description, of location, of problem or solution..., combines to suggest something important or explanatory about the novel as a whole or about some other significant aspect of the novel. How does one set of data illuminate another set of data?

Please bring a DRAFT (at least 2 1/2 pages) next week, to receive comments from a classmate. The completed PAPER is due in two weeks (6/8).

Include a bibliography, in MLA format, and a draft of your essay.

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