**Quarter 2 Essay**

For this essay, you’ll further develop your ability to analyze a text and a topic.   
  
**Length/Format**

* About 1.5 pages (no more than 2 pages)
* Works cited list (1 source minimum – at least the book you read); should be on its own page
* Assessment rubric should be copied/pasted into end of the document on its own page at the end of the document
* Word document format only
* Times New Roman font only – size 12
* double spaced (no extra spacing between paragraphs)
* 1” margins on all sides
* Title on first line; essay starts on the next line (don’t worry about your name, the date, etc. - that comes with your electronic submission)
* Submitted electronically on [turnitin.com](http://turnitin.com/) by Thursday, Dec. 22 3:00 pm.

**Guidelines**

* Analysis is the main focus of this essay.
* Sentence fluency is another main focus.
* What kind of essay organization? Choose compare/contrast, problem/solution, or cause/effect
* Use transitions to move smoothly from one idea to the next.
* Use a variety of sentence beginnings – adverbs, adverb clauses or phrases, prepositional phrases, appositive phrases, participial phrases, etc.
* Sentences must be concise – use as few words as possible – cut out any words that don’t contribute to meaning.

**Learning Targets**

1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
2. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
3. Demonstrate understanding of the subject under investigation.
4. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis and reflection
5. Demonstrate sentence fluency – variety in sentence beginnings, sentence length, and conciseness (every word must have meaning)
6. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage
7. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling
8. Create a properly formatted works cited list (using MLA format)
9. Properly cite quoted or paraphrased text within an essay (using MLA format)

**Required components**

1. Introduction
   1. Hook – grab the reader’s attention
   2. introduction of topic on a general level funneling down to more focus
   3. thesis statement – your narrowed down subject + your opinion
2. Body – 2-3 paragraphs (2 will work well if you choose a compare/contrast essay)
   1. Topic/Clincher sentences
   2. Support sentences
   3. [In-text citations](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/02/)
3. Conclusion paragraph – go beyond summarizing main points – Try to answer the question “so what now?” What is the significance of what your thesis shows? What lesson do you want to convey to your readers?
4. Works cited list

**Thesis Statements/Topic Sentences**

Both need two parts:  
1.       Subject-who or what the essay or sentence is about  
2.       Focus- what about the subject you will be discussing  
**Subject + Opinion  = Thesis**  
  
***Thesis statement***- a one sentence statement about your topic.  It sets the purpose for your essay.  It is something you claim to be true that you need to prove.  This is an arguable statement, not just a statement of fact.  Your thesis statement should be the last sentence of your introduction.  
**Example**: *In the novel The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Jim acts as a caring father figure to Huck.*  
  
***Topic Sentence*** – The beginning sentence of a body paragraph; it is part of the thesis.  It introduces the topic and focus of a body paragraph.  
**Example**:  *As they travel down the Mississippi, Jim goes out of his way to create comfort for Huck.*

***Support Sentences* -** The support sentences make up the body of the paragraph.  The support sentences are a combination of opinion and proof (facts, figures, quotes, examples, reasons, details, explanations). All sentences must ultimately prove the point of your topic sentence, and they must be put together in a logical order.  This is where you explore and develop your ideas!

***Clincher Sentences*** - The clincher sentence is a summary statement of the subject and focus of the paragraph.  It holds the same information as the topic sentence without using the same words, and it closes the discussion of the paragraph and transitions into the next paragraph.  
  
**Example**: In addition to *creating a caring environment for Huck, Jim also tried to pass on wisdom as any dedicated father would.*

**Possible Topics**

For any novel:

1. How is one of the characters in your novel like or unlike Branch Rickey or PeeWee Reese?
2. What are the effects of one of the main character’s actions?
3. What caused one of the characters in your novel to go against society?
4. What happened to cause one of the main characters in your novel to not act in a racist manner like those in surrounding society?
5. Oprah Winfrey once said, “Excellence is the best deterrent of racism.” Consider your author. Is your author making an anti-racist statement through his or her novel? If so, does your author show excellence as a means to deconstruct racism? Explain how your author does this.
6. “Racism is when you have laws set up, systematically put in a way to keep people from advancing, to stop the advancement of a people. Black people have never had the power to enforce racism, and so this is something that white America is going to have to work out themselves. If they decide they want to stop it, curtail it, or to do the right thing ... then it will be done, but not until then.” – Spike Lee  
   Has your character decided “to stop it, curtail it, or to do the right thing?” Why and how do you know?
7. Compare and contrast the lines (unspoken rules) that exist between the blacks and whites and rich and poor today to the ones that existed in your novel.
8. Discuss the causes and effects of the motivation behind actions of savagery of characters in your novel.
9. Identify a current problem regarding racial tension in the United States and propose a solution to improve or fix it.
10. How is modern United States culture similar to/different from the society in the novel you read?
11. My book should/should not be banned from school libraries because . . .
12. Identify a problem regarding racial tension in your book.  Has modern U.S. society tried to improve the issue?  Has the attempt been successful?  How so?  If not, what else needs to be done?

Specific to Huck Finn:

1. Is Huck Finn a Transcendentalist?
2. How does Jim act like a father-figure toward Huck?
3. Does Mark Twain truly take a stand against society by writing The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn?
4. Many critics of The adventures of Huckleberry Finn say that the image of Jim (the slave) is not realistic. They believe he is a caricature of what white people want black people to be like. Do you think your author honestly and accurately portrayed the black people in the book, or do you think they are only stereotypes of black people? Why?
5. Ernest Hemingway said, “All modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called Huckleberry Finn.”  Do you agree?  Explain.
6. Had Benjamin Franklin been around to read Huck Finn when it was first published, what would he have said about it?  Why?
7. Had John Smith been around to read Huck Finn when it was first published, what would he have said about it?  Why?

Specific to The Help:

1. How does the title "The Help" refer to Skeeter?
2. Minny says they are just writing about life, and it isn’t going to help black people. From reading the books and the research we did on finding articles about racially motivated incidents, it is clear that there is still a large racial problem in our country. Why do you think the problem exists and what do you think are solutions to the problem?

**Analysis Essay Rubric**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **A** | **B** | **C** | **D/I** |
| **Ideas** | - Creates a unique topic - Clear and relevant and thesis established through subject, focus, reason, position, purpose   - clearly and completely proves  and explores the TS/Thesis through facts, examples, details, incidents, figures, stats, etc. - Makes very strong connections between texts/characters/life -The reader has no unanswered questions | - Creates a mostly unique topic - Mostly clear and relevant thesis established through subject, focus, reason, position, purpose   - Mostly proves  and explores the TS/Thesis through facts, examples, details, incidents, figures, stats, etc. - Mostly makes strong connections between texts/characters/life -The reader has few unanswered questions | - Creates a somewhat unique topic - Somewhat clear and relevant and thesis established through subject, focus, reason, position, purpose   - Generally proves  and explores the TS/Thesis through facts, examples, details, incidents, figures, stats, etc. - Generally makes connections between texts/characters/life -The reader has some unanswered questions | -Lacks a unique topic - Lacks a clear and relevant and thesis   - Doesn’t  prove and explore the TS/Thesis - Lacks connections between texts/characters/life -The reader has many unanswered questions |
| **Organization** | - Clear introduction effectively establishes purpose - Paragraphs flow logically and effectively - Sentences flow logically and effectively - Transitions connect ideas effectively - Conclusion effectively ties together main ideas and offers satisfying closure -Uses appropriate organizational pattern  for essay structure | - introduction establishes purpose - paragraph flow is mostly logical and effective - sentence flow is mostly logical and effective - transitions connect ideas adequately - conclusion ties together main ideas and offer some closure -Mostly uses appropriate organizational pattern for essay structure | - introduction indicates a general purpose - paragraph flow is somewhat logical and effective - sentence flow is somewhat logical and effective - some transitions connect ideas - conclusion generally ties together main ideas but does not offer satisfying closure - Occasionally uses appropriate organizational pattern  for essay structure | - introduction does not establish purpose - paragraph flow is not smooth/effective - sentence flow is not smooth/effective - transitions are ineffective - conclusion does not tie together main ideas or offer satisfying closure - Does not use appropriate organizational pattern for essay structure |
| **Sentence Fluency** | - Sentences have impact, fluency, and variety in structure, length, and beginnings. | - Sentences mostly have impact, fluency, and variety in structure, length, and beginnings. | - Sentences occasionally have impact, fluency, and variety in structure, length, and beginnings. | - Sentences do not have impact, fluency, and variety in structure, length, and beginnings. |
| **Conventions** | **-** Very few conventional errors - Works Cited list correctly cites all texts referenced in the paper. - Texts referenced are correctly cited within the essay. | - Mostly strong conventions, but contains errors that begin to detract from the content - Works Cited list mostly reflects texts mentioned in the paper and  mostly lists them correctly. - Texts referenced are usually cited within the essay. | - Contains conventional errors that clearly detract from the content -  Works Cited list occasionally reflects texts mentioned in the paper and  mostly lists them correctly. - Texts referenced are sometimes cited within the essay. | - Contains many conventional errors; they overshadow the content - Works Cited list does not reflect texts mentioned in the paper or list them correctly. - Texts referenced are incorrectly cited within the essay. |