

Mark Twain Boyhood Home & Museum
 Unit Plan for Short Stories that Epitomize Twain:
 “The Jumping Frog,” “Hadleyburg,” and “A True Story”

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 City, State: Tamms, Illinois
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 Hannibal, Missouri

UNIT PLAN for Short Stories that Epitomize Twain: “The Jumping Frog,” “Hadleyburg,” and “A True Story”	
Concept or Topic: The Many Faces of Mark Twain: Linguist, Humorist, Humanist and the Mysterious Stranger	Suggested Grade Level(s)/Course: 11/12 Communication Arts/American Literature
Subject: Literature	Suggested Time Frame: 5 days (52 minutes per class)
Objective(s): 12 th grade American Literature students will develop a familiarity with Mark Twain as a person and author via biographical materials and analyzation of three short stories displaying Twain’s versatility as a writer. Students will be assessed based on the related analysis paragraph rubric for each short story we read. To demonstrate mastery, students are expected to achieve a minimum a 10 of 12 score (83%) on each section of the rubric and 20 out of 24 scored (80%) on the literary analysis rubric.	
Common Core State Standards: Common Core 11/12 CCSS.ELA.Literacy 11-12.RL1, RL3, RL4, RL5, RL6, RL9, RL10, W1a, W1b, W1c, W1d, W2a, W2b, W2c, W2d, W2e, W3c, W4, W9a, W10	
Assessments: Paragraph on Tone Analysis, Paragraph on Characterization, Paragraph on Satire, Literary Analysis Essay	
Vocabulary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Hadleyburg”: blasphemous, derelict, remnant, stammer; • “Jumping Frog”: imposed, infamous, roused, tedious; • “A True Story”: cavortin’, dander, ransacked, spruce 	
Subject Area Integration: History—pre and post Civil War	
Background Information Required for Lesson: Twain biography, Civil War background--PowerPoint (email allenpearman@att.net to obtain the PowerPoint.	
Materials: Twain’s biographical handout; Twain biography (Famous Authors Series DVD video – must be purchased); audio version of “Jumping Frog” CD; <i>The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg</i> (PBS DVD Video – must be purchased); <i>A True Story</i> (Mark Twain Museum DVD Video); Mary Cord	

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biographical handout; copies of the following Short Stories: “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County” (<http://twain.lib.virginia.edu/projects/price/frog.htm>), “The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg” (<http://www.eastoftheweb.com/short-stories/UBooks/CorrHadl.shtml>), and “A True Story” (<https://americanliterature.com/author/mark-twain/short-story/the-true-story>); Student writing prompts/handouts/rubrics; audio of “Rollin’ on the River” by Creedence Clearwater Revival; Audio of “When We Were Kids” (edited version) by Ludacris; carnival music audio; index cards; index cards instruction handout; introduction/conclusion handout; transition handout

Technology:

Computer/Smartboard for audio CD, DVD viewing, and PowerPoint, use of the computer lab

Related Twain Quotes/Passages:

- “I have learned that human existence is essentially tragic.”
- “It is governed by minorities, seldom or never by majorities. It suppresses its feelings and its beliefs and follows the handful that makes the most noise. Sometimes the noisy handful is right, sometimes wrong, but no matter, the crowd follows it.”
- “Such is the human race. Often it does seem such a pity that Noah and his party did not miss the boat.”
- “Our Civil War was a blot on our history, but not as great a blot as the buying and selling of Negro souls.”

Lesson Sequence:

Day 1: (52 minutes)

Hook/Intro: As students enter the room “Rollin’ on the River” by Creedence Clearwater Revival and “When We Were Kids” by Ludacris will play on a loop until all students are in their seats and have time to absorb the songs.

Teaching of the Concept(s):

1. Students will respond to a writing prompt asking them to make a connection with either or both of the songs and perform a 5-minute freewrite.
2. Students will briefly share some of their freewrites and discuss how the Mississippi River and childhood were major influences in Twain’s writings.
3. Teacher will provide a brief biographical handout on Mark Twain (see below).
4. Students will take turns reading the biographical handout.
5. Students will watch a 30-minute biographical video on Mark Twain

Suggested Questions:

1. Think about your youth: What location (park, old home, etc.) is symbolic of your existence?
2. Although Twain progressed in terms of his ideology in regard to slavery, what caricature does the image of Twain often represent?

Learning Activity: Write five things from the video that you did not know about Mark Twain.

Review/Closure: Students will discuss the life of Twain as presented in the video and handout. Teacher will explain how Twain’s experiences were highly influential to his work and what to expect from Twain as a person and an author. Vocabulary exercises for the next day in the lesson will be handed out.

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Day 2: (52 minutes)

Hook/Intro: As students enter the classroom, carnival music will be playing in the background. We will talk about carnival games, dog races, etc.

Teaching of the Concept(s):

1. Teacher will review the 3-D's with the students (diction, dialect, and dialogue).
2. Teacher will introduce the concept of the frame story with students.
3. Teacher will pass out a printed copy of “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County.”
4. Teacher will play an audio CD of the story and students will follow along with the reading.
5. Students will discuss their opinions on the story and how Twain used the elements of language to facilitate humor in the story.

Suggested Questions:

1. Did the narrator get the answer he was looking for from Simon Wheeler?
2. How does language represent class or education level of the men in the story?

Learning Activity: Tone Analysis paragraph writing

Review/Closure: Discuss the two language styles of the characters in the story and how people from different walks of life (even those who live near each other) speak differently within a culture. Let the students know that tomorrow we will be experiencing language of another culture. Vocabulary exercises for the next day in the lesson will be handed out.

Day 3: (52 minutes)

Hook/Intro: As students enter the classroom, Negro spirituals will be playing in the background. We will discuss slavery, the Civil War, emancipation, and vernacular (a brief history of the African-American vernacular).

Teaching of the Concept(s):

1. Teacher will review ethos, pathos, and logos with the students.
2. Teacher will provide a handout with a definition of ethos, pathos, and logos to the students and students will provide a basic example of each.
3. Students will share examples and teacher will connect the examples to the definition for clarification.
4. Teacher will show a brief power point on the Civil War. (Do you have a link to this?)
5. Teacher will provide a printed version of “A True Story.”
6. Students will begin reading the first few passages to gauge the difficulty of reading dialogue.
7. Teacher will read a sample of the story, modeling the proper reading of dialect.
8. Teacher will explain the significance of language and culture to tell a complete story.
9. Teacher will play a video of a dramatic reading of the story.
10. Teacher will stop video when the actual story ends to (a) inform the students that the actual video has ended and (b) review a handout about Mary Cord (see below); afterwards the teacher will resume the video.
11. Students will discuss their opinions on the story and how Twain used ethos, pathos, and logos to humanize Aunt Rachel in the story.

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Suggested Questions:

1. Think of how you would feel if you had all of your family one day and the next day you were separated from them to never see them again?
2. Aunt Rachel did reunite with Henry eventually; do you know of any first-hand accounts of a similar instance? If not, is there anything from media/social media you can recall?

Learning Activity: Ethos, Pathos, Logos paragraph writing

Review/Closure: Discuss the hardships of slavery and the lack of humanity toward Blacks at the time. Let the students know that tomorrow we will be experiencing another view of human deficiency in another of Twain’s works. Vocabulary exercises for the next day in the lesson will be handed out.

Day 4: (52 minutes)

Hook/Intro: As students enter the classroom, “All Gold Everything” (edited version) by Trinidad James and “Gold Digger” (edited version) by Kanye West will be playing in the background. We will discuss greed and human nature.

Teaching of the Concept(s):

1. Teacher will review characterization and character traits (physical and personality traits).
2. Teacher will provide a handout with a list of the characters in the story for students to take notes on character traits.
3. Teacher will provide a printed version of “The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg” for future reference.
4. Teacher will play a film adaptation of the story?
5. Students will discuss their opinions on the story and how Twain used different characters to depict human fault.

Suggested Questions:

1. Who were the town outcasts?
2. Did the people of Hadleyburg get what they deserved?
3. Did the town remind you of anywhere you’ve been?
4. Can you think of other films or stories in which greed leads to one’s demise?

Learning Activity: Characterization paragraph writing

Review/Closure: Discuss the flaws of humans and the ways that money, power, and greed can influence dishonesty. Teacher informs the students to meet in the computer lab for the next class period. Teacher informs the students that the three paragraph writings will be returned and will be used again in the next class period.

Day 5: (52 minutes)

Hook/Intro: As students enter the lab, two index cards will be placed at their work stations along with their three graded paragraphs and instructions to write a sentence that connects two of the paragraphs on one card and another sentence that connects the third paragraph to either of the other two.

Teaching of the Concept(s):

1. Teacher will review transitions and introductions and conclusions. (In terms of claim evidence reasoning, introduction = claim and conclusion = reasoning.)
2. Teacher will provide a handout addressing transitions and a handout addressing

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introductions and conclusions.

3. Students will read the transitions handout and discuss possible transitional phrases.
4. Students will arrange the paragraphs with transitional sentences in a logical order.
5. Students will read introductions/conclusions handout.
6. Teacher will provide students with a literary analysis essay rubric.
7. Students will then compose an introduction and conclusion to accompany the paragraph writing and transitions.
8. Students will arrange the paragraphs and transitions in a logical order.
9. Students will get in pairs for peer editing. At this point the students have a rough draft even though it appears to be a collection of individual paragraphs.
 - a. Student A will read Student B’s paper aloud; afterwards Student A makes suggestions and student B makes his/her own edits.
 - b. Student B will read Student A’s paper aloud; afterwards Student B makes suggestions and student A makes his/her own edits.
 - c. Student B will read his/her own paper aloud; afterwards Student A makes suggestions and student B makes his/her own edits.
 - d. Student A will read his/her own paper aloud; afterwards Student B makes suggestions and student A makes his/her own edits.
10. Students may use the rest of the class period to begin typing the cohesive essay for grading.

Suggested Questions:

1. What are you saying? What is your claim?
2. What is the final thought you want to leave with your reader? What is your reasoning?

Learning Activity: Five-paragraph literary-analysis essay

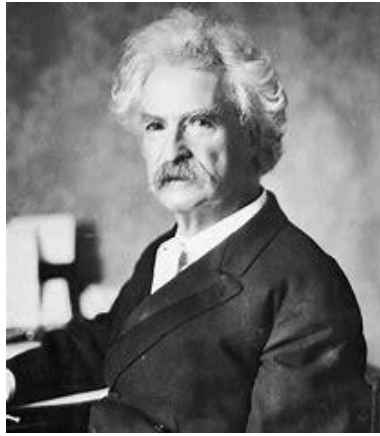
Review/Closure: Remind the students to title the essay and that we will have a day of prereading for *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* during the next class period. The essay will be due two class periods after this one. (Assuming this unit is a Monday through Friday Lesson, I do not want a final draft to be due on a Monday, I usually give until Tuesday. I will remind them again Monday.)

Homework (for the unit): Vocabulary exercises, paragraph writings that are not finished in class

Strategies for Exceptional Students (for the unit):

- Examples of transitions will be given to struggling writers.
- Advanced writers will be encouraged to include secondary sources as evidence to support their reasoning.

Suggested Follow-Up Activities (for the unit): As a follow up, the class will read *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* after familiarizing themselves with Twain and his style.



MARK TWAIN BIOGRAPHY

Samuel Langhorne Clemens, better known as **Mark Twain** (November 30, 1835 – April 21, 1910) was an **American writer, humorist, entrepreneur, publisher, and lecturer**. Originally from Florida, United States. He grew up on his Uncle John's farm, a rich slave trader who owned about twenty slaves, and Mark's father would take care of the crops. The farm was located in Hannibal, a small town in Mississippi, place that would work as a source of inspiration for Twain's future literary creations.

At the age of eleven, he had to face the death of his father which left him only with his mom. Therefore, he decided to leave school. Over time, with the help of his brother, he entered as a typographer's apprentice in the Hannibal Journal, where he began getting interested in writing and he would continue to make his first newspaper articles in other publishers.

At the age of eighteen and with some economic independence, he decided to leave the house to start a new life. Life led him to settle for the first time in New Orleans; where he began as an apprentice pilot of a riverboat on the Mississippi River, a profession that was easy for him and in which he worked for until the river traffic was affected by the consequences of the Civil War of 1861. Because of this, together his brother enlisted in an irregular company of cavalry volunteers belonging to the Confederate army. They were sent to Nevada, where they tried their luck in the rudimentary silver mines. He always kept in mind that his goal was to make a fortune. Therefore, in the mines, he worked hard to achieve it, but the situation was not as pleasant as he imagined it, so he decided to start working as a journalist in the *Territorial Enterprise* of Virginia City, writing articles with great ease, which produced a rapid popularity. Being twenty-eight years old, he understood that looking for fortune could bring him an unhappy life, and he decided to put all his effort to do what he enjoyed the most. Writing. He traveled to San Francisco, in 1864.

A year later, he was inspired by the stories of the gold miners of California and wrote his famous short story *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County*, achieving a great reputation throughout the country. This short story was published in the literary session of several newspapers in the city, where he signed with the pseudonym Mark Twain, although this pseudonym had been already adopted by him since 1863. This artistic name was chosen by him because it is an idea that expresses the depth necessary for optimal navigation (in other words safe water).

Each of his trips was undoubtedly the birth of a story. In 1867, he made a trip through Europe and the Holy Land and based on this experience, he would write the story of *"The innocents abroad"* (1869). This story is really an excuse for Mark to express his vision about the experiences, the perspective of the places he visited: what his agents were like, his railroads, his hotels, etc. All with a view free of prejudice and very sincere. At this time, Mark was dating Olivia Langdon, the daughter of a businessman convinced of the anti-slavery struggle. He would marry her in 1870 and settled in Hartford, Connecticut.

In recognition of his outstanding work as a journalist and writer, he was awarded by the University of Oxford the Honoris Causa doctorate in 1907. **Three years later, Mark Twain dies in Redding, Connecticut due to a heart attack. After his death, he was recognized as the father of American literature.** A talented writer who had the gift of turning every experience of his life into an admirable story.

Information obtained from: <https://history-biography.com/mark-twain/>

Tone Analysis Paragraph
Summative Assessment

Description

We have reviewed **the 3-D's – diction, dialect, and dialogue and** discussed how authors can make decisions about each of these elements to impact **tone** of a story. You practiced analyzing these elements in classroom discussions in which you provided examples of other readings inclusive of Twain and other authors you have read.

As we read “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County,” you analyzed another author’s decisions and their effects. With a group, you collaborated on a list of the above three elements that were used in the text and explained how they can be used to establish a **tone**.

Drawing on your practice experiences analyzing stories, and using the feedback from related class discussions and group feedback, **submit a finished, edited paragraph that explains how the literary element you chose helps to establish tone in “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County.”** Be sure that your topic sentence includes your chosen element (one of the 3-D’s), since you will not be providing me with an introductory paragraph or thesis statement.

Rubric**Paragraph structure: Claim, Evidence, Reasoning (CER)**

12	Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning are present and strong, demonstrating mastery of each part’s purpose. Ideas are well-connected and expressed not just clearly, but fluently.
11	CER are present and correct. Claim is clearly expressed, evidence supports it, and reasoning explains how evidence supports the claim.
10	Same as above, except that one part is ineffective (it is present, but does not accomplish its purpose). For example, reasoning that only restates claim.
9	All parts are present, more than one is ineffective.
8	One part is missing, or all are included but ineffective.
6	Attempted Claim Evidence Reasoning development. Must revise and resubmit.
0	No evidence of Claim Evidence Reasoning development. Must revise and resubmit.

Content of analysis

12	Description of how element contributes to tone is insightful, with well-chosen examples.
11	Clearly describes how element contributes to the tone, with effective examples.
10	Shows how the element contributes to the tone with relevant examples. Connections between ideas or examples may be implied rather than stated explicitly.
9	Tells how element contributes to the tone, with related examples. Connections unclear.
8	Provides inconsistent analysis. Parts are developed, others lack explanation or evidence.
6	Attempts to analyze element, but is unsuccessful or incorrect. Must revise and resubmit.
0	Does not discuss literary element, or provides only a summary. Must revise and resubmit.

Name _____

Date: _____

**Modes of Persuasion:
Ethos, Pathos, Logos
English IV**

1. Ethos is the ethical appeal, means to convince an audience of the author's credibility or character.

Example (preferably not mentioned in class):

Example in text:

2. Pathos is the emotional appeal, means to persuade an audience by appealing to their emotions.

Example (preferably not mentioned in class):

Example in text:

3. Logos is the appeal to logic, means to convince an audience by use of logic or reason.

Example (preferably not mentioned in class):

Example in text:

WHAT HAPPENED TO MARY CORD?

Mary Cord was a slave raised in Virginia. In 1852 her family was broken up and sold. Mary Ann Cord went to a farm in New Bern, North Carolina.

After the Civil War, Union soldiers were headquartered at the farm where Mary was. She was the household cook and took on cooking duties for the troops.

Mary's son, Henry, as a boy had two scars, one on his forehead and one on a wrist. He gave his mother a ring she wore.

In 1858 Henry escaped from his master and fled north, reaching Elmira, New York. There he was befriended by the man who ran the barber shop in the Rathbun Hotel. Henry learned the trade and became a skilled barber. He assumed the name Henry Washington.

During the Civil War, Henry enlisted in the Union army and went to Virginia. His version of the reunion story is very similar to Mary's as told in "A True Story."

After being reunited, Henry and his mother located in Elmira, New York. In Elmira, Mary married Primus Cord. She became a cook at Quarry Farm where she first met Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain) in 1874.

Mary Ann Cord died January 1, 1888, in Elmira at her son's home. Henry lived to age 82.

References:

"The True Story of Auntie Cord" by Herbert A. Wisbey, Jr., in *Mark Twain Society Bulletin*, Vol. 5 No. 2, June, 1981, Elmira, New York.

"Photographs of 'Auntie Cord' Discovered" in *Mark Twain Society Bulletin*, Vol. 9, No. 2, July, 1986, Elmira, NY.

Two photographs of Mary Ann Cord from *Mark Twain Society Bulletin*, Vol. 9, No. 2, July, 1986, page



Modes of Persuasion Analysis Paragraph
Summative Assessment

Description

We have reviewed the three **modes of persuasion – ethos, pathos, and logos** and discussed how authors can make decisions about each of these elements to impact **tone** of a story. You practiced analyzing these elements in classroom discussions in which you provided examples of other readings inclusive of Twain and other authors you have read.

As we read and watched “A True Story,” you analyzed another author’s decisions and their effects. As a class we collaborated on a list of the above three elements that were used in the text and explained how they can be used to establish a Twain as a **humanitarian** or his characters as **humane/inhumane**.

Drawing on your practice experiences analyzing stories, and using the feedback from related class discussions and notes, **submit a finished, edited paragraph that explains how the literary element you chose helps to establish Twain as a humanist in “A True Story.”** Be sure that your topic sentence includes your chosen element (one of the three modes of persuasion), since you will not be providing me with an introductory paragraph or thesis statement.

Rubric

Paragraph structure: Claim, Evidence, Reasoning (CER)

12	Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning are present and strong, demonstrating mastery of each part’s purpose. Ideas are well-connected and expressed not just clearly, but fluently.
11	CER are present and correct. Claim is clearly expressed, evidence supports it, and reasoning explains how evidence supports the claim.
10	Same as above, except that one part is ineffective (it is present, but does not accomplish its purpose). For example, reasoning that only restates claim.
9	All parts are present, more than one is ineffective.
8	One part is missing, or all are included but ineffective.
6	Attempted Claim Evidence Reasoning development. Must revise and resubmit.
0	No evidence of Claim Evidence Reasoning development. Must revise and resubmit.

Content of analysis

12	Description of how element contributes to the modes of persuasion, is insightful, with well-chosen examples.
11	Clearly describes how element contributes to modes of persuasion, with effective examples.
10	Shows how the element contributes to the modes of persuasion with relevant examples. Connections between ideas or examples may be implied rather than stated explicitly.
9	Tells how element contributes to the modes of persuasion, with related examples. Connections unclear.
8	Provides inconsistent analysis. Parts are developed, others lack explanation or evidence.
6	Attempts to analyze element, but is unsuccessful or incorrect. Must revise and resubmit.
0	Does not discuss literary element, or provides only a summary. Must revise and resubmit.

Name _____

Date: _____

**Characterization:
Physical and Personality Traits**

Character	Physical Traits	Personality Traits
Edward Richards		
Mary Richards		
The Stranger		
Reverend Burgess		
Barclay Goodson		
Deacon Billson		
Lawyer Wilson		
Mr. Cox		
Pinkerton		
Other: _____		
Other: _____		

Character Analysis Paragraph
Summative Assessment

Description

We have reviewed the three **traits of characterization – physical and personality** and discussed how authors can make decisions about each of these elements to impact **characters** of a story. You practiced analyzing these elements in classroom discussions in which you provided examples of character traits in the film adaptation of “The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg.”

As we watched “The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg,” you analyzed another author’s decisions and their effects. As a class we collaborated on a list of the above two elements that were used in the text and explained how they can be used to establish the characters in Twain’s story

Drawing on your practice experiences analyzing stories, and using the feedback from related class discussions and notes, **submit a finished, edited paragraph that explains how the literary element you chose helps to establish Twain’s characters in “The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg.”** Be sure that your topic sentence includes both elements of characterization, since you will not be providing me with an introductory paragraph or thesis statement.

Rubric

Paragraph structure: Claim, Evidence, Reasoning (CER)

12	Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning are present and strong, demonstrating mastery of each part’s purpose. Ideas are well-connected and expressed not just clearly, but fluently.
11	CER are present and correct. Claim is clearly expressed, evidence supports it, and reasoning explains how evidence supports the claim.
10	Same as above, except that one part is ineffective (it is present, but does not accomplish its purpose). For example, reasoning that only restates claim.
9	All parts are present, more than one is ineffective.
8	One part is missing, or all are included but ineffective.
6	Attempted Claim Evidence Reasoning development. Must revise and resubmit.
0	No evidence of Claim Evidence Reasoning development. Must revise and resubmit.

Content of analysis

12	Description of how element contributes to characters, is insightful, with well-chosen examples.
11	Clearly describes how element contributes to characters, with effective examples.
10	Shows how the element contributes to the characters with relevant examples. Connections between ideas or examples may be implied rather than stated explicitly.
9	Tells how element contributes to the characters, with related examples. Connections unclear.
8	Provides inconsistent analysis. Parts are developed, others lack explanation or evidence.
6	Attempts to analyze element, but is unsuccessful or incorrect. Must revise and resubmit.
0	Does not discuss literary element, or provides only a summary. Must revise and resubmit.

***REMEMBER TO REFER TO THE WORK AS A FILM UNLESS YOU ARE SPECIFICALLY REFERRING TO THE TEXT THAT WAS PROVIDED.**

Transitions Between Paragraphs

Step 1

Choose a couple of adjacent paragraphs that lack transitional elements. Call these "Paragraph A" and "Paragraph B." Be certain that they should be logically connected in the first place.

Step 2

Determine the relationship between the main ideas of both paragraphs. For example, Paragraph B might build upon the logic of Paragraph A, or it could present a counterargument. Understanding this relationship is critical in choosing the right transitional element.

Step 3

Take note of how Paragraph A concludes. It should leave the door open for some sort of continuation.

Step 4

Revise the opening sentence of Paragraph B so that it picks up where Paragraph A left off. Use transitional elements like "next," or "in addition" to move the discussion forward.

Step 5

Reread the two paragraphs. Notice if the transition is smooth and logical. If not, continue revising. It is possible that these two paragraphs don't belong next to each other, and you should think about reorganizing the entire document.

Introductions and Conclusions

There is no formula for writing effective introductions and conclusions—but below I have listed some strategies that you may find helpful.

What Should an Introduction Do?

- An introduction has two main purposes – to catch the reader’s interest and to indicate the subject of the paper. It needs to perform both of these purposes smoothly, as an awkward introduction will only confuse your reader. Be sure to engage your reader as quickly as possible and orient them to your attitude toward your subject. Your introduction should draw your readers into your paper and —convince them to continue reading it.
- Your introduction should also, of course, include your thesis statement, as well as set out a “roadmap” for your reader. Your thesis statement, usually the last sentence or two of the introduction, should be a clearly articulated statement outlining the specific argument that the rest of your paper will develop. By the time your reader finishes reading your introduction, they should know what you are going to argue and should have an understanding of how you are going to prove your argument.
- Do not think of your introduction as an —umbrella paragraph under which all other points of your essay must fall. Rather, think of your introduction as a “doorway” to the more involved analysis and evidence you provide in the rest of your paper. Make sure that the points that you raise in your introduction relate directly to the subject of your paper. This is not the place to make broad generalizations about society, the world, human beings, etc.
- If you find writing your introduction difficult, try writing it last – sometimes it is easier to write your introduction after you have written the body of your paper. Often, an effective introduction will be easier to write after you have developed your ideas during the course of writing the paper itself.

What Should a Conclusion Do?

Unfortunately, there is no formula for writing conclusions. It is one of the hardest things to do well. Some strategies you might find useful are listed below:

- Don’t just repeat what you’ve already said. If your conclusion says almost exactly the same thing as your introduction, it may indicate that you have not done enough critical thinking during the course of your essay (since you ended up right back where you started). By the end of your essay, you should have worked through your ideas enough so that your reader understands what you have argued and is ready to hear the larger point (i.e. the big —so what?) you want to make about your topic. Your conclusion should create a sense of development or movement to a more complex understanding of the subject of your paper.
- Try to pull everything together. Your conclusion should serve as the climax of your paper. So, save your strongest analytical points for the end of your essay, and use them to drive your conclusion.
- Don’t be afraid to say something new. It is fine to introduce new information or quotations in your conclusion, as long as the new points grow from your argument. New points might be more general, answering the —so what question; they might be quite specific. Just avoid making new claims that need additional support.
- Go out with a “bang.” Vivid, concrete language is as important in a conclusion as it is elsewhere—perhaps more essential, since the conclusion determines the reader’s final impression of your essay. Do not leave them with the impression that your argument was vague or unsure.

Day 5

- Take a look at four different conclusions that could grow from the same introduction. How has the author maintained continuity and/or developed the argument from the introduction? How has the author developed a focus over the course of the essay? What impression does each conclusion leave you with as a reader?

Introduction: We all know that textbooks dry history out completely, dehydrating the gripping stories and critical conflicts of the past to a dusty piece of history leather—tough, nasty, and hard to digest. As I reviewed three accounts of expansion in the western United States, I found some signs of life in the desert. Compared to the texts I reviewed for our last adoption, the new textbooks offered more complete accounts and stronger analysis of the interactions between settlers and Native Americans, race and gender dynamics in the west, and the role of the federal government in all phases of western settlement. We have a much more palatable assortment of facts for our students to chew on, but is it any more substantial? Here, I question which of these texts will allow us to teach not just the facts but the skills—reading, writing, questioning, and thinking critically—which we as a committee have decided should take precedence in our classes.

- Question: Which of these texts is best? The colorful pictures and graphics, the clear prose, the primary documents all have their appeal. But these tasty morsels distract us from asking the real question—what are we teaching for? If we want our students to think like historians, then Land of the Free’s liberal use of primary documents, the very same documents historians use to construct the past, makes it our best choice.
- Quotation: To inspire critical thinking, we need materials that can help us move beyond the textbooks and engage our students’ creativity. Of the three texts I reviewed, only *Oh Say Can You See* included a variety of supplementary materials to spice up our classes, from primary documents and historical film clips to art slides and CD-ROMs. In short, the variety of extra resources makes this textbook our best option, for it allows us the potential to revise John F. Kennedy’s famous plea, —ask not what your textbook can do for you, ask what you can do for your textbook.
- Vivid Image: I remember what made history matter to me; as a high school student, I found the diary my grandmother kept during the depression. I carried that little leather-bound book with me everywhere, poring over its contents, seeking connections between my family’s past, my country’s past, and myself. If we want to inspire our students to move from memorizing facts to developing an interest in history, I recommend *A More Perfect Union* as our choice. This text’s attention to emotionally touching photographs and personal stories of the west offers us the best hope of enabling our students to make a personal connection with the past.
- Call to Action/Connecting to Larger Issues: Clearly, all three of the textbooks currently up for adoption have major flaws—but is it our responsibility to take these foundlings in and spend hours of quality time working with them? Instead of squandering our economic clout on these sub-standard texts, we can protest. Let’s delay the adoption until next year and lobby the textbook companies to give us what we want—textbooks that will give us history colored in all of its complexity, conflict, and compromise. In this way, perhaps we can inspire our students as

Literary Analysis Essay Rubric

	4	3	2	1	
Introduction/Thesis	First paragraph is catchy. Thesis is evident and point to be argued well stated.	First paragraph has a weak "grabber." Thesis is mixed among many sentences and hard to piece together.	A catchy beginning was attempted but was confusing rather than catchy. Thesis is not entirely apparent although topic is evident.	No attempt was made to catch the reader's attention in the first paragraph. Thesis is not apparent nor is the topic of the essay.	_____
Quotes and Support	All facts/quotes presented in the essay are accurate and support/relate back to the thesis/topic sentence. 5 quotes present.	Almost all facts/quotes presented in the essay are accurate and occasionally support/relate back to the thesis/topic sentence. 4-5 quotes present.	Most facts/quotes presented in the story are accurate. Evidence is scattered and difficult to follow rather than used to prove your thesis/topic sentence. 3-4 quotes present.	There are several factual/quotation errors in the essay. There is no real effort to make the piece cohesive. 3 or less quotes present.	_____
Organization	The essay is very well organized. Five paragraphs (or more) evident. One idea or argument follows another in a logical sequence with clear transitions.	The essay is pretty well organized. Five paragraphs evident. One idea may seem out of place. Clear transitions are used.	The essay is a little hard to follow. Paragraphs are unclear. The transitions are sometimes not clear.	Ideas seem to be randomly arranged. No effort at paragraph organization.	_____
Analysis	The essay thoroughly analyzes the author's style/ techniques using literary terms.	The essay analyzes the author's style/ techniques mostly using literary terms.	The essay somewhat analyzes the author's style/ techniques using literary terms, but contains some summary of the plot.	The essay does not analyze the author's style/ techniques using literary terms, or the essay contains little analysis and mostly just summarizes the plot.	_____
Closing Paragraph	Conclusion concisely restates thesis statement, main points, and includes an insightful final concluding thought on the topic.	Conclusion restates thesis statement, main points, and includes a final concluding thought on the topic.	Conclusion vaguely restates thesis statement, main points, and includes a weak final unoriginal final thought.	Paper does not contain a conclusion or conclusion is not apparent to reader.	_____
Mechanics	The essay is free of mechanical errors.	The essay has two or three mechanics errors.	The essay has four or five mechanics errors.	The essay has more than five mechanics errors.	_____
TITLE				Creative title that makes the reader want to read the essay.	_____
TOTAL SCORE					_____
x 4=					_____