**LITERACY THEORY AND ADOLESCENT LITERATURE ESSAY**

**Assignment:** While the perception of young adult (YA) literature as a viable literary form - worth an adolescent’s exploration - has evolved, the genre remains disconnected from the literary community. For example, Cindy Lou Daniels in *Literary Theory and Young Adult Literature: The Open Frontier in Critical Studies* posits that “many people working in literary theory and criticism are foregoing the opportunity to explore this phenomenon because they mistakenly believe that works labeled as YA should only be analyzed in terms of the connection – whether that be historical or psychological - to the supposed “intended” reader.” In this paper, you will provide context regarding the current stances and perceptions of YA by those working in and researching literacy theory. You will respond to these findings, with reference to research, as well as our class texts to support your thesis. Your thesis should explain your overall claim that you develop in regard to this topic, after your review of the relevant literature.

**Task:** Choose *at least three titles* from this semester’s reading list that you would like to discuss in relation *to three literary theories*. After reviewing the literature in relation to this prompt, you will create a thesis for your paper. Your thesis should encompass your argument which is to be informed by your exploration of (your selected) literacy theories. You will use texts you have read from class to integrate concepts, and further articulate your idea through examples and evidence. You will also consider the following questions when correlating these texts to literary theory:

* What literary theories would align to these texts?
* How can using one of these literary lenses help students interpret and evaluate the quality of the YA text?
* Why is it worth an adolescent’s study?
* Justify your choice and explain how you would have students critically examine the texts using the literary theory.

*“Youth Lens*” may provide a good starting point in this work regarding one of the three literary theories you must discuss. You may use Youth Lens as one of your literary theories, although it is not a requirement. For an example of such an analysis, please see *Acting Adolescent: Critical Examinations of the Youth-Adult Binary in Feed and Looking for Alaska* (Sarigianides, Lewis, & Petrone, 2016).

**Format:** Share your analysis in an APA styled paper of at least 5 pages. Please see the accompanying rubric for essay requirements.

Resources:

<https://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/ALAN/v43n2/pdf/lewis.pdf>

<https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/subject_specific_writing/writing_in_literature/literary_theory_and_schools_of_criticism/index.html>

<https://libguides.uta.edu/literarycriticism/theories>

<https://www.iep.utm.edu/literary/>

**Using Literary Theory to Critically Examine Adolescent Literature Rubric**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Exceeds Expectations** | **Meets Expectations** | **Needs Improvement** | **Inadequate** |
| **Introduction** | •Engaging opening introduces the topic of literary analysis and adolescent literature and inspires thinking about that topic  •Logically proceeds to thesis; thesis is an easily identifiable, well-phrased argument that assesses the need for literary analysis of adolescent literature  • The idea offered in the thesis reflects sound critical, analytical thinking | •Generally engaging opening; areas to be strengthened may include: presentation of topic  •Development of transition between general opening and specific thesis statement; thesis statement is phrased as an argument but may be strengthened through clarification of the main idea being offered | •Opening is functional but too brief and/or simplistic, essay’s topic is apparent but needs to be developed to engage the reader  •Abrupt transition from first sentences to thesis statement; paragraph may be incoherent, jumping from one point to the next without developing a smooth progression of ideas •Thesis may be too general, vague, or imprecisely phrased | •Opening is ineffective, poorly organized, and undeveloped (inappropriately brief); thesis may not address the prompt at all |
| **Content/Information**  **Literary Theory #1**  •Clarity of purpose •Critical and original thought  •Use of examples | •Analysis and justification of three literary theories with the chosen YA text is well developed and clarity of purpose is exhibited throughout  •Abundance of evidence of critical, careful thought and analysis and/or insight  •Evidence and examples are vivid and specific, while focus remains tight | • Analysis and justification of three literary theories YA text is generally evident throughout  •Evidence of critical, careful thought and analysis and/or insight  •There are good, relevant supporting examples and evidence | • Analysis and justification of three literary theories with the chosen YA text may be vague or too broad; some sense of purpose is maintained throughout  •Some evidence of critical, careful thought and analysis and/or insight  •There are some examples and evidence, though general | • Analysis and justification of three literary theories with the chosen YA text are absent or incompletely expressed and maintained  •Little or no evidence of critical, careful thought or analysis and/or insight  •There are too few, no examples and evidence or they are mostly irrelevant |
| **Content/Information**  **Literary Theory #2**  •Clarity of purpose •Critical and original thought  •Use of examples | •Analysis and justification of using a literary theory with the chosen YA text is well developed and clarity of purpose is exhibited throughout  •Abundance of evidence of critical, careful thought and analysis and/or insight  •Evidence and examples are vivid and specific, while focus remains tight | • Analysis and justification of using a literary theory with the chosen YA text is generally evident throughout  •Evidence of critical, careful thought and analysis and/or insight  •There are good, relevant supporting examples and evidence | •Analysis and justification of using a literary theory with the chosen YA text may be vague or too broad; some sense of purpose is maintained throughout  •Some evidence of critical, careful thought and analysis and/or insight  •There are some examples and evidence, though general | •Analysis and justification of using a literary theory with the chosen YA text are absent or incompletely expressed and maintained  •Little or no evidence of critical, careful thought or analysis and/or insight  •There are too few, no examples and evidence or they are mostly irrelevant |
| **Content/Information**  **Literary Theory #3**  •Clarity of purpose •Critical and original thought  •Use of examples | •Analysis and justification of using a literary theory with the chosen YA text is well developed and clarity of purpose is exhibited throughout  •Abundance of evidence of critical, careful thought and analysis and/or insight  •Evidence and examples are vivid and specific, while focus remains tight | • Analysis and justification of using a literary theory with the chosen YA text is generally evident throughout  •Evidence of critical, careful thought and analysis and/or insight  •There are good, relevant supporting examples and evidence | •Analysis and justification of using a literary theory with the chosen YA text may be vague or too broad; some sense of purpose is maintained throughout  •Some evidence of critical, careful thought and analysis and/or insight  •There are some examples and evidence, though general | •Analysis and justification of using a literary theory with the chosen YA text are absent or incompletely expressed and maintained  •Little or no evidence of critical, careful thought or analysis and/or insight  •There are too few, no examples and evidence or they are mostly irrelevant |
| **Structure**  •Organization  •Flow of thought  •Transitions  •Format | •Paper is logically organized  •Easily followed  •Effective, smooth, and logical transitions  •Professional format | •Paper has a clear organizational structure with some digressions, ambiguities or irrelevances  •Easily followed  •Basic transitions  •Structured format | •There is some level of organization though digressions, ambiguities, irrelevances are too many  •Difficult to follow  •Ineffective transitions  •Rambling format | •There is no apparent organization to the paper.  •Difficult to follow  •No or poor transitions  •No format |
| **Grammar/Mechanics**  •sentence structure  •punctuation/mechanics | •Manipulates complex sentences for effect/impact  •No punctuation or mechanical errors | •Uses complex sentences  •Few punctuation or mechanical errors | •Uses compound sentences  •Too many punctuation and/or mechanical errors | •Uses simple sentences |
| **Language**  •Vocabulary; use of vocabulary  •Tone | •Vocabulary is sophisticated and correct as are sentences which vary in structure and length  •Uses and manipulates subject specific vocabulary for effect  •Writer’s tone is clear, consistent and appropriate for intended audience | •Vocabulary is varied, specific and appropriate •Frequently uses subject specific vocabulary correctly  •Writer’s tone emerges and is generally appropriate to audience | •Vocabulary is used properly though sentences may be simple  •Infrequently uses subject specific vocabulary correctly  •Writer’s tone exhibits some level of audience sensitivity | •Vocabulary is unsophisticated, not used properly in very simple sentences.  •Uses subject specific vocabulary too sparingly |
| **Overall**  **75 PTS** |  |  |  |  |