Name _____

Period _____ Date _____

Short Story Theme Essay - Pre-Writing

You will be writing a four-paragraph essay (following CBEARx2 format) in which you explain how a major theme is represented in a short story of your choice.

First, choose the story and theme you will write about:

___ "And of Clay Are We Created" by Isabel Allende

- **Suggested theme**: Helping others has the power to teach us how to grow

___ "Night Calls" by Lisa Fugard

- **Suggested theme**: Moving on from painful past experiences can strengthen one's relationships

If you would like to come up with your own theme for one of these short stories, that's ok! Just run it by me first.

Thesis: Answer the following question, stating your **theme** and **two specific ideas** about the story to support your theme (these two ideas will become the focus of your two body paragraphs): What is a major theme in the story you have chosen?

Sample thesis statement: In the short story, "Pagans," by Rick Bass, the theme of civilization's conflict with the natural world is represented through the teenagers' experiences with the toxic river and their encounters with wildlife.

Your Thesis:

Now, gather information for your two body paragraphs

Body Paragraph 1:

Claim #1 (remember the ideas listed in your thesis; your claims should clearly and specifically support your thesis):

Two pieces of evidence for Body Paragraph 1 (remember, your evidence should clearly and specifically support your claim)

Body Paragraph 2:

Claim #2 (remember the ideas listed in your thesis; your claims should clearly and specifically support your thesis):

Two pieces of evidence for Body Paragraph 1 (remember, your evidence should clearly and specifically support your claim)

Short Story Theme Essay Outline

This outline is intended for you to brainstorm and outline/organize your ideas! This is not a place for you to write your entire essay. Use this outline to make sure you include all necessary parts of your essay in the correct order.

Introduction Paragraph *(In this box, outline ideas for your **hook**, **background/summary** for the major plot points of your story, and how you will connect all this to your **thesis**)*

Body Paragraph #1
Claim - 1 sentence *(Be sure your claims **line up with and support your thesis**; remember, claims should be your **original ideas** and should be **arguable**; **DO NOT SUMMARIZE**!)*
Background #1 - 1-3 sentences *(Provide **background/context** information about your first piece of evidence (coming next). **Set the scene** for this piece of evidence. Ask yourself, "What does my reader need to know in order to understand this piece of evidence?")*
Evidence #1 - 1 quote from the story *(Remember to **copy down your quote exactly as it appears in the text.** Remember to find the **best pieces of evidence** to support your claims. Remember to **cite your evidence** with author's last name and page number in parenthesis after the quote.)*
Analysis #1 - 2-3 sentences *(Most important part of your essay! Remember, analysis is where you state your **original ideas/interpretations** about your evidence and **explain clearly how your evidence supports your claim**. **DO NOT MERELY SUMMARIZE WHAT THE QUOTE HAS ALREADY TOLD YOUR READER!**)*

Background #2 - 1-3 sentences *(Provide **background/context** information about your second piece of evidence (coming next). **Set the scene** for this piece of evidence. Ask yourself, "What does my reader need to know in order to understand this piece of evidence?")*

Evidence #2 - 1 quote from the story *(Remember to **copy down your quote exactly as it appears in the text.** Remember to find the **best pieces of evidence** to support your claims. Remember to **cite your evidence** with author's last name and page number in parenthesis after the quote.)*

Analysis #2 - 2-3 sentences *(Most important part of your essay! Remember, analysis is where you state your **original ideas/interpretations** about your evidence and **explain clearly how your evidence supports your claim**. **DO NOT MERELY SUMMARIZE WHAT THE QUOTE HAS ALREADY TOLD YOUR READER!**)*

Reiterate - 1-2 sentences *(Restate the **important ideas** in this paragraph; **restate claim** in different words; basically, wrap up this paragraph with a sentence of two that reminds your reader about why this paragraph is important)*

Body Paragraph #2

Claim - 1 sentence*(Be sure your claims **line up with and support your thesis**; remember, claims should be your **original ideas** and should be **arguable**; **DO NOT SUMMARIZE**!)*

Background #1 - 1-3 sentences *(Provide **background/context** information about your first piece of evidence (coming next). **Set the scene** for this piece of evidence. Ask yourself, "What does my reader need to know in order to understand this piece of evidence?")*

Evidence #1 - 1 quote from the story *(Remember to **copy down your quote exactly as it appears in the text.** Remember to find the **best pieces of evidence** to support your claims. Remember to **cite your evidence** with author's last name and page number in parenthesis after the quote.)*

Analysis #1 - 2-3 sentences *(Most important part of your essay! Remember, analysis is where you state your **original ideas/interpretations** about your evidence and **explain clearly how your evidence supports your claim**. **DO NOT MERELY SUMMARIZE WHAT THE QUOTE HAS ALREADY TOLD YOUR READER!**)*

Background #2 - 1-3 sentences *(Provide **background/context** information about your second piece of evidence (coming next). **Set the scene** for this piece of evidence. Ask yourself, "What does my reader need to know in order to understand this piece of evidence?")*

Evidence #2 - 1 quote from the story *(Remember to **copy down your quote exactly as it appears in the text.** Remember to find the **best pieces of evidence** to support your claims. Remember to **cite your evidence** with author's last name and page number in parenthesis after the quote.)*

Analysis #2 - 2-3 sentences *(Most important part of your essay! Remember, analysis is where you state your **original ideas/interpretations** about your evidence and **explain clearly how your evidence supports your claim**. **DO NOT MERELY SUMMARIZE WHAT THE QUOTE HAS ALREADY TOLD YOUR READER!**)*

Reiterate - 1-2 sentences *(Restate the **important ideas** in this paragraph; **restate claim** in different words; basically, wrap up this paragraph with a sentence of two that reminds your reader about why this paragraph is important)*

Conclusion Paragraph: *(In this box, outline ideas for your conclusion. Remember, this is the "So what?" paragraph. Your conclusion should* ***restate your thesis*** *in different words, remind your reader of the* ***important ideas*** *in your essay, and answer the question "****So what?****" about your essay.*