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|  **GRADE** | **Intro Paragraph / Thesis** | **Body/Evidence** | **Literary Analysis** | **Mechanics** |
| **A** **(exceeds expectations)** | Engaging opening introduces the essay’s general topic and inspires thinking about that topic; thesis is an easily identifiable, well-phrased argument that addresses a specific idea to be examined and proven in the essay;the thesis includes title/author and directly addresses specific elements of the text. | Each topic sentence clearly connects to the thesis and offers an identifiable, well-phrased idea to be proven in the paragraph; Multiple, well-chosen quotes and specific evidence that support the thesis | Writer draws sophisticated, well-developed commentary based on evidence to support the connected ideas of the topic sentence and thesis;analysis demonstrates writer’s ability to interpret the purpose of literary elements or build thematic concepts through cited evidence | Effective syntax and grammar demonstrate a mastery of writing conventions and serve the author’s purpose; Complete adherence to MLA guidelines; absence of misspellings, punctuation errors |
| **B** **(good)** | Generally engaging opening; thesis statement is phrased as an argument but may need to be strengthened through clarification of the main idea being offeredthe thesis includes title/author but references to elements of the text may be vague. | Each topic sentence generally connects to the thesis but in one or more topic sentences the main idea may need to be clarified; Multiple quotes and specific evidence that support the thesis | Writing generally reflects a critical, analytical understanding of the text but is unbalanced; Inferences demonstrate interpretive ability of cited evidence but could be developed further  | Syntax and grammar may be awkward in places (but not distracting); a few misspellings (but not distracting); consistent adherence to MLA guidelines;  |
| **C****(satisfactory)** | Opening is functional but too simplistic;thesis is too general, vague, but argument is still presentthe thesis somewhat references title/author  | Topic sentences are present but the main idea is not detectable; a fact about the text is summarized, or there is an unclear connection to thesis.  Specific Evidence is weak because of insufficient support to topic sentence.  | Writing demonstrates basic comprehension of the textwriter restates the content of cited evidence rather than draws significant inferences about sub-textual meaning;  | Awkward syntax and grammar confuse writer’s point and distract reader; misspellings, contractions, fragments distract reader; inconsistent adherence to MLA guidelines – few citations/incomplete citations |
| **D****(marginal)** | Opening is ineffective, poorly organized, and undeveloped thesis may summarize plot point rather than present argument about text; thesis may not address the prompt at all;  | Topic sentences absent or consistently lack focused ideas, either offering general, irrelevant comments or stating facts about the text;Specific evidence is absent or ineffective/ insufficient;  | Writing demonstrates some awareness of text details but not a critical, analytical understanding of the text; points made are vague and unproven; essay lacks focus; no literary analysis present | Frequent syntax, grammar, misspelling errors that distract the reader; lack of adherence to MLA guidelines – (missing citations, lack of proper format) |
| **F****(unacceptable)** | Fails to fulfill the requirements of the assignment, thesis not present. | Fails to fulfill the requirements of the assignment, specific evidence not present | Fails to fulfill the requirements of the assignment, No analysis | No adherence to MLA guidelines (missing citations, lack of proper format); No Work Cited page |