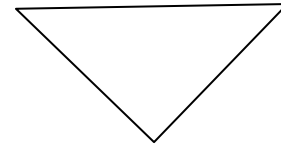


The Scarlet Letter Essay Guidelines

- A. Topic
See assignment sheet.
- B. Heading
Follow standard class guidelines.
- C. Title
Please title your paper. Be creative when giving your paper a title. Hint: “Character Analysis” is not an original title! Title should be centered. DO NOT capitalize, underline, or use quotation marks on your paper’s title. If you use the title of the novel in the title of your paper, italicize only the title of the novel.
- D. Introductory Paragraph
Start out broad and narrow to thesis.

Definition or general statement of topic
Background of topic
Narrow down to topic
Specific Thesis Statement



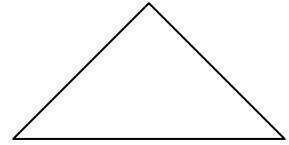
- E. Body Paragraphs
Each paragraph should have strong topic sentence.
Each paragraph should contain two quotes or quote bits to illustrate a quality or characteristic. Quotes are like pictures in a book. They do not tell the story; they illustrate it. You are the storyteller. Do not depend on your quotes to prove your point. What you say about your quote (how you logically tie your quotes into your argument) should prove your point. You should be able to take your quotes out of your paper and the logic and sense of your point should still be there. You need to discuss each quote and show how it illustrates the point you are making. Never expect the reader to do this for himself. You must show the reader why the particular quote you chose is relevant to the point you are making. This means you will always discuss each quote you use to show how it illustrates you point.

The three steps in proving a point are:

1. Make a statement
2. Use a quote or quote bit to illustrate your point
3. Analysis: logically show the reader how the particular quote or example proves your point

- F. Conclusion Paragraph
Restate Thesis

Broaden out to discuss the character.
Paragraph should have at least 3 sentences.
Remember this is the last thing your reader reads, so
make it memorable.



G. Helpful Hints

1. Always write in present tense (says not said, does not did, etc.)
2. Always use lead-ins before each quote (ex. In Chapter 3 Dimmesdale says to Chillingworth, "...” (67).
3. Paper should be typed.
4. Topic sentences should refer back to your thesis statement.
Usually a thesis statement will mention your topic sentence subjects in the order in which they occur in the body of your paper.
5. Don't use "I" or "I believe" or "you."
6. Don't say "this quote shows" or "here is a quote that proves." This is redundant.
7. Always discuss each quote and its significance.
8. Be careful of telling too much of the story, but some clarification is necessary.
Tell the reader what was going on when the quote was said. Think of the reader as someone who has not read the story, but someone who is intelligent. The reader is a friend of yours, not the teacher. So don't assume anything.
9. Use of the semi-colon--
Use a semicolon to join parts of a compound sentence if no coordinating conjunction is used.
Example: Secret Service agents scanned the area; everything seemed in order.

Use a semi-colon before a conjunctive adverb that joins clauses of a compound sentence.
Example: Three local factories have closed; consequently, many people have been laid off.
10. Did you really prove your thesis?
Read your paper over, or better yet, have someone else read your paper. Does it make sense?