

LITERARY COMPANY CRITICAL ANALYSIS ASSIGNMENT

Literary Company

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Perhaps you've heard expressions like "One person's treasure is another person's trash" or "One person's meat is another person's poison."

Expressions like these remind us that our personal likes and dislikes are different from those of others.

Criteria governing what we choose to read or not to read are particularly complex in the realm of artistic expressions—like stories, novels, poetry, plays—because how stories are told is tightly connected to what a storyteller is saying. For example, we may be drawn to or repulsed by how a writer tells a story (I thought the depiction of violence was far too graphic) or we may be drawn to or repulsed by what a story is saying (I don't like the story because it seems to encourage promiscuous sexual relationships).

Since we live in times of shifting cultural values, each of us has an unusually complex ethical dilemma when deciding what to read or watch: How should we sort through books and movies to separate the good from the bad? Even the words "good" and "bad" are problematic. They are ambiguous and confusing without contexts, definitions, and examples. Establishing contexts, definitions, and examples of "good" literature is the challenge of this first writing project.

For you, what characterizes "good" and "bad" literature? Or to borrow Wayne C. Booth's metaphor, what company (authors and their stories) will you choose to keep or not to keep? On the basis of what criteria will you make these choices? In other words, what is your philosophy governing choices like these: What stories will I choose to read? What stories will I choose to teach? What stories will I choose to write? What stories will I choose to defend?

Literary Company Critical Analysis

Literary Company Critical Essay

As we read and discuss essays from *Ethics, Literature, & Theory* and past and current literature readings, we will be steeped in ideas that address the ethics of fiction. During this exchange of ideas, your challenge will be to formulate a well articulated and reasoned philosophy that clarifies your choice of literary friends.

Literary Company Critical Analysis Assignment

	<p>Write a well-written, clearly organized critical essay that espouses your personal philosophy explaining what is good literary company.</p>
<p>Critical Analysis Resources</p>	<p>Critical Analysis Resources For this critical synthesis response assignment, use the following resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Essays from George’s <i>Ethics, Literature, and Theory</i> text.• Examples from canon, recommended, and non-fiction literature individual choices.• Examples for past readings, films, and experience.
<p>Critical Analysis Guidelines</p>	<p>Critical Analysis Guidelines These specific suggestions may help you compose your philosophy:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. You may wish to base your reasons for literary company on <i>several</i> criteria. Most discussions aimed at evaluation are complex.2. As you enumerate your criteria, define each carefully and follow up with examples that make your points clear, interesting, and memorable. Draw examples from stories you have read or even films you have seen3. Because other readers may not agree with your views, your paper is an argument. Therefore, anticipate counter-arguments and defend yourself with reason.4. Part of establishing reasons for literary company is clarifying which literary texts may be or not be among your friends. Examples either for or against friendship are thus appropriate.5. How long should your response be? Long enough to make certain you have clarified your main point—what makes a story good company. Imagine yourself having to defend a “literary friend” for inclusion in or exclusion from a high school or college reading list. Will your philosophy statement explain your reasoning?6. To enrich your discussion, use ideas you encounter in <i>Ethics, Literature, & Theory</i>. Consider using at least three critical sources in your discussion. Your essay is a synthesis, a compilation of examples and ideas drawn from several sources, all marshaled to make your thesis clear. Submit your paper according to MLA format—both in-text and end-text citations.

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