

T-Analysis Assignment

Purpose

T-Analysis

A T-Analysis is a technique to help you read literature more carefully and prepare you to write formal analysis papers. The T-Analysis allows you to accomplish the following:

- Apply a close reading to a selected text.
- Examine that text through a specific literary critical lens.
- Probe a literary question concerning that text.
- Investigate the question through textual evidence and support.
- Relate and explain the significance of that evidence to your literary question.
- Arrive at an answer to your literary question.

You will write five T-Analyses during this course. Each T-Analysis is worth 20 points.

Guidelines

Guidelines

1. Divide your paper in half with a line across the top like a “T.” Here are two easy methods to create that “T”: use the provided template or create a table.
2. Ask a question about the literary work that would be asked by a theorist that was using a Formalist, Feminist or Multiculturalist, Psychoanalytic, Marxist, New Historicist, Ecocritic., or Reader-Response critical lens. After each theory lesson, you should ask yourself: “How might a _____ critic view this piece of literature?”

At the top of your “T,” pose your question about a story, poem, or play you are reading. Your question may be about anything interesting to you—a question about a character, a conflict, the setting, the language, the imagery, the irony, a symbol, the theme, or a particular theoretical approach—anything *you* find worthy of analysis.

3. On the left side of the “T,” cite passages or quotations from the work that you have chosen (5 to 8 examples) that are relevant to your question; these are ideas that a certain kind of critic would pick to enhance or support his or her reading of that work and that may eventually help you answer the question you’re posing. Briefly summarize the content of each passage and include page or line numbers that help you remember where you found the passages.

T-Analysis
Student
Example 1

4. Fourth, on the right side of the “T,” clarify how each passage that you’ve pulled from the text is relevant to your question; explain why and how this particular quotation reflects that critical perspective.
5. The fifth step is to answer your question in one sentence. This statement summarizes your notes and the observations you have made about them. If you are writing a paper, this summary statement could function as a thesis sentence. The evidence you have assembled on your “T” could function as the support for your thesis statement.

Name:
English 251 Online
T-analysis: Psychoanalytic (lens)

Nathaniel Hawthorne’s “The Birthmark”

QUESTION: What motivates Aylmer’s compulsion to remove Georgiana’s birthmark?

OBSERVATION/THESIS: Aylmer is projecting his own imperfections upon his wife. (Projection occurs when a person unconsciously attributes his or her own attitudes or feelings onto another person as a defense against guilt or anxiety.)

Quotations	Explanations
1. Aylmer loves science more than he loves Georgiana (357).	Aylmer’s priorities reveal he is more concerned with himself than the well-being of his wife; this preoccupation may suggest that consciously or unconsciously, he is focused on achieving his own perfection not Georgiana’s welfare.
2. Aylmer’s “splendid successes were almost invariably failures” (365); the blighted plant (362), the blurred portrait (363), etc.	Consciously or unconsciously, Aylmer most likely senses his own failure, perhaps explaining why he becomes preoccupied with Georgiana’s seemingly small imperfection. If he can rid Georgiana’s birthmark, he proves to himself his own perfect mastery of science. Again, Georgiana is really of secondary importance in his desire.
3. Other men find Georgiana’s blemish a charming addition to her beauty (358).	That others find Georgiana charming adds additional evidence that the real problem is not Georgiana’s imperfection, but

T-Analysis Student Example 1

		Aylmer's.
4. Aylmer's dream is a revelation of his unconscious—images he cannot even remember without Georgiana's prodding (360).		Aylmer's deepest thoughts reveal a frantic dissatisfaction with his own inability to remove the birthmark, an admission of his own imperfection as a scientist.
5. Aylmer says, "I feel myself fully competent" [to remove the birthmark] (360).		In the face of several failures, Aylmer's pride seems to take the forefront; should he fail, he would confront his own imperfection.
6. "You are perfect" (368).		In Georgiana's death Aylmer finally confronts his own imperfections.

T-Analysis Student Example 2

Name:
English 251 Online
T-analysis: Formalist (lens)

John Updike's "A&P"

QUESTION: How does the setting of "A & P" underscore Updike's theme?

OBSERVATION/THESIS: The setting of "A & P" helps Updike show how Sammy's world is one of stifling conformity and stagnation.

Quotations	Explanations
1. Sammy's hometown is near Salem, Massachusetts, where accused "witches" were once burned (§2).	Many of these so-called "witches" may have been innocent people ostracized and persecuted by an intolerant majority.
2. Updike elaborately describes the layout of the A & P, "the cat-and-dog-food-breakfast-cereal-macaroni-rice-raisins-seasoning-spreads-spaghetti-soft-drinks-crackers-and-cookies aisle" (§5).	These elaborate descriptions give the impression of a rigid structure, not only in the store but perhaps in a larger social environment.

**T-Analysis
Student
Example 2**

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| 3. The patrons of the A & P are described as “sheep” pushing carts (§5). | Sheep have the association of being thoughtless followers. |
| 4. Queenie and her friends move up the aisle “against the usual traffic” (§10). | That these girls would move “against” the flow of traffic suggests that they are not conforming to “the rules.” |
| 5. A sewer has erupted outside the A & P (§10). | The erupted sewer suggests that a kind of pollution affects the town—perhaps a self-righteous moral smugness, perhaps a complacency. |
| 6. Other buildings surrounding the A & P include two banks, a church, and three real estate offices (§10). | These buildings emphasize the staid, middle-class values of money, buying-and-selling, and the Sunday School mentality that Lengal seems to represent. |
| 7. The A & P is described as a pinball machine (§11). | Pinball machines call up images of aimless steel balls bouncing about a confined space. |
| 8. Again, Updike describes elaborately the contents of an A & P aisle: “light bulbs, records at discount of the Caribbean Six or Tony Martin Sings or some such gunk you wonder they waste the wax on, . . .and plastic toys done up in cellophane that fall apart when a kid looks at them anyway” (§18). | These images suggest again the crassness of the prevailing mass-produced culture and grocery store music. |
| 9. The A & P customers are described again as “you know, sheep,” “all bunched up” (§18). | Updike emphasizes the crowd mentality of the “A&P” patrons who now appear ready to descend on the girls in bathing suits for ignoring established conventions. |