Instruction for G3 Essays in Literary studies in EFL

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Content

1 Introduction

The G3 essay is a critical investigation of a well-defined topic or problem resulting in a short paper based on actual research. It should contain literary analysis and display basic proficiency in an area of literary theory.

Writing the essay is both a challenge and an enjoyment. It requires focus, dedication, and planning. At the same time it is an opportunity to start delving into a topic that interests you. Students who successfully complete their essays usually feel that their confidence in their own academic abilities grows during the process. Here are a few words of advice from some who have finished their essays:

- Do your research carefully and be prepared to spend a lot of time on this
- Start writing at once! The deadline seems far away but comes quickly
- Don't be afraid to ask for help
- Do the research work, "the hard work", early to make it easier for yourself
- Don't forget to write down the page numbers when you reference, so you don't have to go back afterwards and search for them
- Don't investigate more than two questions
- Plan ahead
- Keep deadlines
- Communicate to your seminar peers
- Find all your sources immediately
- "Be serious, be strong"
- Ask a lot of questions in order to obtain [sic] a great essay
- Listen to what your peers say, they are really only trying to help

This guide will give you additional advice on how to write a good G3 essay and also outline the formal requirements that the essay must meet. Try to enjoy writing your essay. This is your work and your learning experience. Make the weeks working on this project happy ones!

2 The Structure of the Course

The end result of this course will be your G3 essay in English literary studies in EFL: A text of 7 000–9 000 words giving an analysis of one or more literary works combined with a research-based discussion of problematic aspects and pedagogical possibilities that the literary analysis has yielded regarding the incorporation of this particular text in the EFL classroom in the Swedish Upper Secondary school.

The course consists of a number of compulsory group seminars where you will discuss your own text-in-progress together with your peers and your supervisor. You will also be required to comment on and give constructive criticism on your peers' texts (peer reviewing, see p. 21). In addition to the group seminars you will also receive individual feedback from your supervisor in the form of a few individual tutorials and/or written comments. In order for this to work, it is crucial that you keep the deadlines set at the beginning of the course.

At the end of the course, there will be an examination in the form of a final seminar. Here, you will defend your own work and the ideas behind it, as well as act as opponent to a fellow student's text (see Final seminar p. 22).

The working process is as follows:
1. Formulating a proposal and deciding on your primary source(s)
2. Constructing a working thesis statement
3. Writing an introduction
4. Finding appropriate secondary material and constructing an annotated bibliography
5. Writing the theoretical framework and the pedagogical framework
6. Writing the literary analysis and the pedagogical implications
7. Writing the conclusion, the list of works cited and the abstract
8. First full draft
9. Final draft
10. Exam seminar

3 General Requirements of the Essay

The length of the essay itself should be 7 000–9 000 words. The word limit does not include the title page, the table of contents, the abstract, the list of works cited and appendix (if any). You should follow the style sheet of MLA but in general the script should be 12 Points Times New Roman, double spacing. Margins should be 2,5 cm.

All references and quotations must follow the MLA Formatting and Style Guide 8th Edition.
(for more information see p. 9 or: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/1/)

The essay must build on at least one primary source, which should be a literary text originally written in English. In addition, the analyses should make use of at least 6 secondary sources on literary theory and 6 secondary sources on literary studies in EFL. These sources must be taken from **peer-reviewed** academic journals, books or databases. While there must be references also to the curricular documents in the essay, these do not count as secondary sources. No more than one of the sources can be in Swedish and we strongly recommend that you only use sources in English.

The essay should be written in correct, formal English and contain the following:
- Title Page
- Abstract (ca 50–100 words summarizing the gist of your argument and results, plus 4–8 key words)
- Table of Contents
- Introduction (600–800 words)
- Theoretical Framework and Pedagogical framework (2 200–3 000 words)
- Literary analysis and Pedagogical implications (3 500–4 500 words)
- Conclusion (600–800 words)
- Works Cited

4 Language and Style

It is important that your language is clear and correct, so that it supports the content of your essay. Therefore, you should use appropriate terminology that is relevant to the field of research that you are discussing. However, you should not use overly complicated language, since that tends to draw attention away from the focus of your paper. Also, apart from quotations, keep to the simple present tense throughout.

The essay should be a unity in that it should have a central idea that is clearly visible throughout and developed through a logical progression of ideas, theoretical perspectives, analysis, discussion and conclusions. In order to achieve this, the thesis statement is essential, as well as cross-referencing between sections. However, in order for the unity and the logic to work, individual paragraphs must be well structured. Please remember that every paragraph should be a thought unit! Start each paragraph with a topic sentence and check that all other sentences relate to it. End all paragraphs with a concluding sentence that sums up the main point, adds a deeper insight, or works as a transition to the next paragraph. It is especially important to do so at the end of each section of the essay. Bear in mind that it is the writer's responsibility to draw conclusions and perform the analysis, these tasks should not be left for the reader to complete. The correct use of linking words is crucial to building well-structured paragraphs and to creating logical transitions between paragraphs. Here is a more extensive resource on linking words and phrases: http://www.smart-words.org/linking-words/transition-words.html

Some reminders:
- Unity – means the paragraph deals with one main controlling idea or thought unit
- Topic sentence – this sentence (usually the first) signals the controlling idea
- Coherence – a logical development of ideas within the paragraph so that the reader can follow your train of thought
- Cohesion – connecting these ideas together. Linking (see below).
- Support – support your claim by stating facts, giving examples, using quotes etc. from your sources

Sentences and clauses can be tied together in several ways:
a. **Using pronouns and substitutes.** Most inexperienced writers find it difficult to write coherently. This is not surprising in view of the complex processes involved. These processes deserve . . . The students stared at the text, trying desperately to find the clue to its interpretation. But the more they tried the more it confused them.
b. **Using linking words and phrases.** The following words indicate specific kinds of **links** to help you develop ideas:
   - *Addition* – and, also, moreover, in addition, furthermore, besides
   - *Contrast* – but, however, on the other hand, nevertheless, while, yet, on the contrary
   - *Similarity* – such, similarly, the same, equally
   - *Example* – for example, for instance, in other words
   - *Chronology* – first, second, then, afterwards, thereafter, meanwhile, finally
   - *Result* – therefore, subsequently, thus, as a result, since, hence
   - *Attitude* – of course, naturally, fortunately, unfortunately, admittedly, undoubtedly, luckily
   - *Summary* – to summarise, to sum up, in conclusion
   - *Reason* – owing to this, for this reason, this is because

5   Quoting and Referencing

Quotations and paraphrases from your primary and secondary sources will be central to your essay. According to the MLA style (8th Edition), references are given in parenthesis in the text, following directly upon the quotation or paraphrase. The parenthesis is placed at the nearest period or comma. This brief reference is complemented by the list of works cited at the end of your essay. Here are some examples of the most common ways of referencing – please see the MLA guidelines for more examples: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/02/

The standard reference gives the author's last name and the page number. If, for instance, you are quoting something from page 32 of Nick Hornby's novel *Fever Pitch*, this is referenced as (Hornby 32). If you use more than one work by the same author, add the abbreviated title after the author's name: (Hornby, *Fever* 32) and (Hornby, *Boy* 138).

There are several ways to **quote** a text. If the quotation is **shorter than 40 words**, incorporate it into your text. **Use quotation marks**, and make sure that the syntax of the quotation and your own syntax are in agreement. The period should be placed after the parenthesis.

a. Giving both the author's name and the page number in the parenthesis.
   Example:
   We can see that issues of gender and colonialism have frequently mingled. For instance, erotic texts during the era of colonial conquest often "play upon the connections between women, land and nations" (Loomba 215). This is also the case in John Donne's poem.

b. Giving only the page number since you have recently given the author's name.
   Example:
   As Loomba demonstrates, issues of gender and colonialism have frequently mingled. For instance, erotic texts during the era of colonial conquest often "play upon the connections between women, land and nations" (215). This is also the case in John Donne's poem.

If the quotation is **longer than 40 words**, make it a block quotation. **Indent** the left-hand margin **at least 2 cm**, and there should be **no quotation marks**. The reference should be given parenthetically after the last punctuation mark of the quotation.

c. A long quotation where the author's name has recently been given.
   Example:
   In her book *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* Ania Loomba explores the interrelationship between erotic conquest and colonialism:

   > If the nation is an imagined community, that community is profoundly gendered. We have already discussed how gender and sexuality are central to the conceptualization, expression and enactment of colonial relations. National fantasies, be they colonial, anti-colonial or postcolonial, also play upon the connections between women, land and nations. To begin with, across the colonial spectrum, the nation state or its guiding principles are often imagined literally as a woman. (215)

d. A long quotation where the author's name has not recently been given:
   Example:
   There are a number of studies of the interrelationship between erotic conquest and colonialism:

   > If the nation is an imagined community, that community is profoundly gendered. We have already discussed how gender and sexuality are central to the conceptualization, expression and

enactment of colonial relations. National fantasies, be they colonial, anti-colonial or postcolonial, also play upon the connections between women, land and nations. To begin with, across the colonial spectrum, the nation state or its guiding principles are often imagined literally as a woman. (Loomba 215)

When you leave something out in the middle or at the end of a quotation, this should be indicated by an ellipsis, i.e. three dots with spaces in between.

Example:

As Ania Loomba points out, "gender and sexuality are central to the conceptualization . . . of colonial relations" (215).

The List of Works Cited

This should be last in your paper, and all the primary and secondary sources you have used must be included. Please see https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/05/

6   Plagiarism

"In research writing, sources are cited for two reasons: to alert readers to the sources of your information and to give credit to the writers from whom you have borrowed words and ideas." (Hacker 620)

Much of your academic experience will involve learning what others have written and then integrating those ideas with your own. However, in academic writing, any ideas or language not credited to an outside source are assumed to be the author's. The issue of plagiarism arises when you fail to credit ideas and language that aren't yours. The word, which originated from a Latin word meaning to kidnap, refers to the unacknowledged use of another's words, ideas, or information.

According to Linnaeus University regulations, all teachers are required to report any case of suspected plagiarism to the Disciplinary Board. If plagiarism is detected, you will be suspended from academic studies. The main source of information on plagiarism is MLA Handbook. The LnU University library also has a useful resource on how to avoid plagiarism: https://lnu.se/en/library/Writing-and-referencing/referencing/

All written material that you submit for examination will be checked for plagiarism using the *Urkund* device. If you're ever unsure of whether or not you should credit an outside source within a paper you're writing, ask your instructor; better safe than sorry!

Below you will find guidelines for acknowledging (or not acknowledging) information, plus a few examples of more obscure forms of plagiarism.

What Does NOT Need to Be Acknowledged or Credited?
- Common knowledge – If most readers, like yourself, would likely know the information, you need not cite a source for it.
- Facts available in many sources – if a number of textbooks, encyclopedias, almanacs, etc. include the information, you need not cite a source for it.
- Your own ideas and discoveries – After all, your instructor is most likely looking for original ideas and propositions.

What MUST Be Acknowledged or Credited?
- Any direct quotation – The exact words quoted must be placed in quotation marks.
- Paraphrases and summaries that present background information, present facts not commonly-known, and explain various positions/opinions on your topic need to be credited.
- Arguable assertions – When an author presents a point or opinion, regardless of its truth, credit him/her.
- Statistics, charts, tables, and graphs put together by someone else need to be credited.

Other Forms of Plagiarism
- Purchasing an already-written essay
- Employing someone to write the essay for you
- Turning in an essay written previously for the course (a hand-me-down)

Concrete Examples of Plagiarism:
Plagiarism (same words, no quotation marks):
The student has used the author's exact words, leaving out only a phrase, without quotation marks or a citation.

Also Plagiarism (incorrect paraphrase):
The student has made only slight changes, substituting words such as "a couple" for "two," "notify" for "alert," and "our"/"we" for "your"/"you," leaving out a few words, and giving an incomplete citation.

7 Finding a Topic and Constructing a Thesis Statement

The object of your essay is to analyze a literary text (primary text) and then apply the findings to the Swedish EFL context. You should do this by discussing the three pedagogical questions about content, methods, and objectives.

Given the theory introduced in the pedagogical framework and the aspects analyzed in the literary analysis, what kinds of problems and possibilities do you anticipate when teaching this particular literary work in a Swedish EFL classroom? Try to correlate your findings from the literary analysis to pedagogical issues in EFL pertinent to this particular work of art. For instance, if you have applied feminist theories to Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847) then you could discuss the consequences in the language classroom of how reading for identification has been disparaged as a feminine mode of reading and how that may affect resistant readers. You have much leeway in the decision of what to address from a pedagogical standpoint, but remember that your discussion should reflect the insights gleaned from the literary analysis and fall in under the same theoretical umbrella. Following an analysis based on a psychoanalytical approach it would seem strange to investigate ideological layers of the literary text or film as basis for group discussions in EFL. In order to achieve balance in your argument, explore both potentially promising and risky aspects concerning the selected work.

This discussion should be linked to findings in literary analysis, and to the pedagogical framework and other theories that you discuss in the theory section. In order to focus your essay, you should construct a thesis statement which covers both the result of your interpretation of the literary work and its application to the EFL context. This should be included in the introduction of your essay.

7.1 Finding a Topic

Select the primary text that you want to focus on in your thesis. Formulate a title for your project. To do so consider the following: What do you like best or what bothers you the most about the text or texts you have read and wish to work on? What makes you keep thinking about a given literary work? What are the pedagogical possibilities with this primary text? What particular didactic theories would be useful in analysing it? Put this into words. Try to narrow down your subject as much as possible.

7.2 The Thesis Statement: What? How? Why?

Now formulate a central thesis (argument, investigation, or discussion) or a central question which you wish to work out in the course of your essay. The main function of the thesis statement is to introduce the reader to the purpose of the essay and to outline the major topics that will be covered to achieve that purpose. The thesis statement is one of the most important parts of your paper. It should be located in the introduction, usually at the end, and be collected and coherent in one paragraph. Think of it as the foundation of a house – if your foundation is weak and poorly constructed, what do you think happens to the house?

Your thesis or essay question should inform the title of your essay so that an average reader should be able to understand what you plan to do simply by reading its title. The thesis statement must also be referred to in the conclusion of the essay, as the author must then balance the multiple perspectives presented in the argument, demonstrating that they all relate to the central thesis. If the main argument of the essay is unclear, then the thesis statement is badly written.

The thesis statement answers the three questions *"what?"*, *"how?"* and *"why?"*: *What* are you going to analyze in your essay? This could be an argument (a thesis claim), an investigation (based on several research questions) or a discussion of a text based on certain theoretical perspectives.

How will you perform your analysis? What theoretical frameworks or methods will be used? What contextual perspectives will be taken into consideration? There should also be a sentence that delineates the scope of the essay: what is included and what is excluded?

Why is your study and analysis important? How can it contribute to literary research and literary research in EFL? How does it situate itself in relation to previous or current research on similar topics or ideas?

7.3   Some Common Mistakes

Try not to be vague when you construct a thesis statement. "Love in Romeo and Juliet" would not give the reader any clue to the specifics of your essay. This would also not be worth arguing for since it is already common knowledge that Shakespeare's play is about love (among other things). To take another example, "I argue that Coetzee's novels frequently address racial tension in South Africa" is a thesis statement, but it states the obvious, and so does not require extensive argumentation. An arguable claim could instead be "Coetzee's novel addresses racial tension through allegorical use of human-animal relations", for instance.

See Appendix 1 for concrete examples of thesis statements with commentaries.

8 Structuring the Essay

Writing an academic essay means fashioning a coherent set of ideas into an argument. Essays are linear (they offer one idea at a time and present the ideas one after the other in a logical sequence) they must present their ideas in order that makes sense to a reader. Successfully structuring an essay means attending to a reader's logic.

The essay consists of separate sections; however, they should be thematically interlinked in that there should be cross-references between the sections so that the main focus of the essay which is outlined in the thesis statement is always clear (see thesis statement p. 12). The Theory and Analysis sections may be divided into a number of sub-sections if needed.

8.1 Mapping an Essay

Structuring your essay according to a reader's logic means examining your thesis and anticipating what a reader needs to know, and in what sequence, in order to grasp and be convinced by your argument as it unfolds. The easiest way to do this is to map the essay's ideas via a written narrative. Such an account will give you a preliminary record of your ideas, and will allow you to remind yourself at every turn of the reader's needs in understanding your idea.

Essay maps help you to predict where your reader will expect background information, counter-argument, close analysis of a primary source, or support from secondary source material. Essay maps are not concerned with paragraphs so much as with sections of an essay. They anticipate the major argumentative moves you expect your essay to make.

A common structural flaw in college essays is the "walk-through" (also labelled "summary" or "description"). Walk-through essays follow the structure of their sources rather than establishing their own logical sequence.

8.2 The Introduction

The introduction is what first meets the reader and it needs to be clear, well-structured and engaging. The introduction sets the tone for the whole essay!

The purpose of the introduction is to position the essay within the research field. Establish the territory by referring to previous research and identifying your niche. Thus, the introduction should include a few paragraphs on what has been done in the field previously. Furthermore, you should motivate your study: What is the significance of this investigation? In other words, state clearly the aim, thesis (see thesis statement p. 12), and structure of the paper.

Avoid providing extensive plot summary of your primary text here or elsewhere in the essay. It can, however, be helpful with a couple of lines about the novel or support in the Syllabus or Curriculum for your approach or other central text or theme that you have chosen, and, even more importantly, of the central problems in the text/theme/pedagogical practice area that you intend to focus on.

It can be helpful to think of the introduction structured as a "zoom in" (although the order of the structure depends on your topic). Usually, the Introduction contains the following:

1. The opening paragraph which should create an interest in your essay. It introduces, in general terms, the primary text, giving the name of the author and year of publication, and it should also mention the focus of your essay. The Introduction should also begin to mention secondary material in the form of arguments, claims, and grounds for discussion, since this signals the formal, academic aspects of the essay as well as establishing the

essay as a dialogue rather than a monologue. This is a good place to refer to previous research or criticism linked to your topic. Connect to relevant sections in the Syllabus and specify which course/stage you deem most appropriate for your choice of literary work.

2. The thesis statement. What are you going to do in your essay? How will you do it? Why is it important? Name, briefly, the main theoretical perspectives you will be using. State the aim for your essay and make sure that it covers both literary studies and EFL.

3. The motives for choosing your particular theoretical perspectives. Here you can also discuss the scope of your essay (e.g. limitations etc.).

4. A general outline of your essay.

For an example of the process of writing an introduction see Appendix 2.

8.3 Theory & Method

All literary essays have a method and a theory. Method is how you go about researching and writing your essay, or, in other words, the practical system you use to collect data. Theory is the tool you use to interpret this data. Method and theory are connected, so that certain theoretical approaches demand certain methods.

There are many different methods, but in your essay, you can use a very straightforward method where you begin data collection by systematically searching databases to find relevant research articles and/or books. You then use these articles to get a rough understanding of what has been written about your text(s) and topic before. With this information, you can formulate a research project that is related to the previous research. You must include **at least 12 secondary sources** in your essay. Your method will also be to closely read your primary text (film, novel, poetry, etc.) with the intention to analyse a certain aspect or aspects of it. What you will look for in particular is determined by what theory you will be using. Thus, the method and theory section must include all the theoretical elements that you need in order to analyse your primary work(s) and to discuss their implications. In the theory section you should identify, problematize and develop the analytical tools that you need to analyse your primary source(s).

In the Pedagogical framework you should justify the choice of primary source for the Swedish EFL classroom and connect it to curricular documents. Furthermore, you need to state the relevance of the study to in-service teachers and show awareness of the complexity of the pedagogical practice. Make sure that you address the pedagogical questions that are relevant to your study. You could for instance discuss some of the following issues: text selection; the function of literature; relationship language learning and literature; the Swedish context; resistant readers; motivation; scaffolding; ways of reading – with/against the grain, aesthetic/efferent; intrinsic/extrinsic approaches etc. Please try to refrain from being normative, i.e. do not state in absolute terms what teachers should do or not do. While the intended audience of your essay may well be in-service teachers, do not address the reader as "when teaching you . . . " or write "we teachers" because that excludes other readers from your text. In this section, you should discuss literature in the EFL classroom on a more general and abstract level but still with a focus on what is relevant for your study. Try to find support in secondary sources that align with the field of literary theory that you have chosen. Often there will be articles discussing the connection between the literary theory and pedagogy, or even classroom applications of a particular critical lens.

The theory section should refer back briefly to the research context mentioned in the introduction (the previous research). It should also address current debates in the field, agreeing or disagreeing with the views of literary criticism and theories.

Please note that secondary sources do not necessarily have to be specifically about the primary text that you have chosen, but can be articles in a related field or about another primary text that illuminates your discussion on a more general level.

8.4 Analysis

The analysis section contains two parts: the literary analysis and the pedagogical implications. These two parts should build on the ideas presented and discussed in the theoretical framework and the pedagogical framework, in combination with the primary source.

The analysis should build on the ideas presented and discussed in the theory section, in combination with the primary source. The analysis should focus on the chosen literary text(s) and apply the analytical concepts to the primary source. The analysis should contain examples, quotations and paraphrases from the primary and secondary sources with good integration of quotations. Ideally, the analysis should be a tripartite discussion between your own interpretation, the interpretations of other critics, and the primary source. It is important that your analysis clearly refers to the theoretical framework of the theory section so that the logical train of thought of your argument is maintained and reinforced.

The pedagogical implications should follow logically from the literary analysis and discuss the aspects covered previously but now from a pedagogical standpoint. Address the issues in the same order as in the analysis for stronger coherence. In the pedagogical framework, you should discuss how the literary work, in view of your analysis, might offer possibilities yet also problematic aspects if included in the Swedish EFL classroom. Include references to the Syllabus or Curriculum here as well. Avoid the temptation to write this section either as a lesson plan or as a success story. If you want to provide extra reader-service, you may include a lesson plan or discussion questions in the appendices.

Remember that all elements in the analysis must be relevant in relation to the thesis statement!

8.5 Conclusion

The conclusion should sum up the content of your paper and briefly demonstrate that it all agrees with the thesis statement; in other words, that your essay does what it claims to do. Make one or two specific suggestions for future research and end on an effective note that leaves the reader with a good impression of you as a writer.

There should be no new material and no secondary sources in the conclusion.

8.6 Abstract

In the academic world, the abstract is the description of your research that is listed in databases and that first meets the eyes of a potential reader. It is therefore essential that the abstract includes a concise description of your research, not more than one page. The abstract should not read as a proposal or an appetizer, it should include all the relevant conclusions and findings from your research as well as the methods and theories involved in reaching these conclusions. Just as in your thesis statement, **include your research questions, why they are relevant, how did you approach them, what are your results/conclusions**, and finally, what are their **significance and implications**.

You can see an abstract with commentaries in Appendix 4.

9 Finding Sources and Constructing an Annotated Bibliography

The university library is a great resource, and the librarians are very helpful when it comes to finding sources. Ask them to help you! In preparation, you should have chosen a primary work and an overriding research question, so that the librarian can help you with how to identify appropriate search terms and how to use them efficiently.

When looking for sources, they do not all have to refer specifically to your primary text in order to be useful. For example, if you wish to make an analysis of racism in *Robinson Crusoe*, some sources need to be on the specific novel, while others can be on racism as such, or on other works by Defoe and his contemporaries, or on 18th century ideas of race, or on how to discuss issues of race and history in school.

Some practical advice: When reading secondary sources, make notes as you go along and make sure that you copy them correctly. Also, write down the name of the source and the page number immediately! That will save you a great deal of extra work later on.

Think about the following questions:
- What is the author arguing, exactly? Do you agree?
- Could there be any objections to the ideas presented?
- Does the author point these out himself/herself?
- Also, are any of the ideas contradictory? Why?
- In what ways can you use what the author is saying?

Organize your notes: try to decide which ideas are related, and support each other. Think about what role the arguments of other critics have in your discussion as a whole.

9.1 Annotated Bibliography[1]

Early in the essay course you will be required to submit an annotated bibliography. This will give you a chance to critically look into material that might be useful for your essay, working with library and online resources, as well as practicing writing a works cited list in MLA.

An annotated bibliography is a list of citations to books, articles, and documents. Each citation is followed by a brief (usually about 150 words) descriptive and evaluative paragraph, the annotation. The purpose of the annotation is to inform the reader of the relevance, accuracy, and quality of the sources cited.

9.2 Annotations vs Abstracts

Abstracts are the purely descriptive summaries often found at the beginning of scholarly journal articles or in periodical indexes. Annotations are descriptive and critical; they expose the author's point of view, clarity and appropriateness of expression, and authority.

9.3 The Process

Creating an annotated bibliography calls for the application of a variety of intellectual skills: concise exposition, succinct analysis, and informed library research.

First, locate and record citations to books, periodicals, and documents that may contain useful information sand ideas on your topic. Briefly examine and review the actual items. Then choose those works that provide a variety of perspectives on your topic.

Cite the book, article, or document using the appropriate style.

[1] Permission for this section has been granted by *Olin Library Reference Research & Learning Services*, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, NY, USA

Write a concise annotation that summarizes the central theme and scope of the book or article. Include one or more sentences that:

a. evaluate the authority or background of the author,
b. comment on the intended audience,
c. compare or contrast this work with another you have cited, or
d. explain how this work illuminates your bibliography topic.

9.4 Critically Appraising the Book, Article or Document

You can begin evaluating a physical information source (a book or an article for instance) even before you have the physical item in hand. Appraise a source by first examining the bibliographic citation. The bibliographic citation is the written description of a book, journal article, essay, or some other published material that appears in a catalogue or index. Bibliographic citations characteristically have three main components: author, title, and publication information. These components can help you determine the usefulness of this source for your paper. (In the same way, you can appraise a Web site by examining the home page carefully.). Below follows a general checklist:

Initial Appraisal – Author
1. What are the author's credentials, institutional affiliation (where he or she works), educational background, past writings, or experience? Is the book or article written on a topic in the author's area of expertise? You can use the various Who's Who publications for the U.S. and other countries and for specific subjects and the biographical information located in the publication itself to help determine the author's affiliation and credentials.
2. Has your instructor mentioned this author? Have you seen the author's name cited in other sources or bibliographies? Respected authors are cited frequently by other scholars. For this reason, always note those names that appear in many different sources.
3. Is the author associated with a reputable institution or organization? What are the basic values or goals of the organization or institution?

Date of Publication
1. When was the source published? This date is often located on the face of the title page below the name of the publisher. If it is not there, look for the copyright date on the reverse of the title page. On Web pages, the date of the last revision is usually at the bottom of the home page, sometimes every page.
2. Is the source current or out-of-date for your topic? Topic areas of continuing and rapid development, such as the sciences, demand more current information. On the other hand, topics in the humanities often require material that was written many years ago. At the other extreme, some news sources on the Web now note the hour and minute that articles are posted on their site.

Edition or Revision
Is this a first edition of this publication or not? Further editions indicate a source has been revised and updated to reflect changes in knowledge, include omissions, and harmonize with its intended reader's needs. Also, many printings or editions may indicate that the work has become a standard source in the area and is reliable. If you are using a Web source, do the pages indicate revision dates?

Publisher
Note the publisher. If the source is published by a university press, it is likely to be scholarly. Although the fact that the publisher is reputable does not necessarily guarantee quality, it does show that the publisher may have high regard for the source being published.

Title of Journal
Is this a scholarly or a popular journal? This distinction is important because it indicates different levels of complexity in conveying ideas. In order to determine the status of a journal (if it is peer-reviewed) look at the extended information about journal titles in the University Library Database.

Content Analysis

Having made an initial appraisal, you should now examine the body of the source. Read the preface to determine the author's intentions for the book. Scan the table of contents and the index to get a broad overview of the material it covers. Note whether bibliographies are included. Read the chapters that specifically address your topic. Scanning the table of contents of a journal or magazine issue is also useful. As with books, the presence and quality of a bibliography at the end of the article may reflect the care with which the authors have prepared their work.

Intended Audience

What type of audience is the author addressing? Is the publication aimed at a specialized or a general audience? Is this source too elementary, too technical, too advanced, or just right for your needs?

Objective Reasoning

1. Is the information covered fact, opinion, or propaganda? It is not always easy to separate fact from opinion. Facts can usually be verified; opinions, though they may be based on factual information, evolve from the interpretation of facts. Skilled writers can make you think their interpretations are facts.
2. Does the information appear to be valid and well-researched, or is it questionable and unsupported by evidence? Assumptions should be reasonable. Note errors or omissions.
3. Are the ideas and arguments advanced more or less in line with other works you have read on the same topic? The more radically an author departs from the views of others in the same field, the more carefully and critically you should scrutinize his or her ideas.
4. Is the author's point of view objective and impartial? Is the language free of emotion-arousing words and bias?

Coverage

1. Does the work update other sources, substantiate other materials you have read, or add new information? Does it extensively or marginally cover your topic? You should explore enough sources to obtain a variety of viewpoints.
2. Is the material primary or secondary in nature? Primary sources are the raw material of the research process. Secondary sources are based on primary sources. For example, if you were researching Konrad Adenauer's role in rebuilding West Germany after World War II, Adenauer's own writings would be one of many primary sources available on this topic. Others might include relevant government documents and contemporary German newspaper articles. Scholars use this primary material to help generate historical interpretations--a secondary source. Books, encyclopedia articles, and scholarly journal articles about Adenauer's role are considered secondary sources. In the sciences, journal articles and conference proceedings written by experimenters reporting the results of their research are primary documents. Choose both primary and secondary sources when you have the opportunity.

Writing Style

Is the publication organized logically? Are the main points clearly presented? Do you find the text easy to read, or is it stilted or choppy? Is the author's argument repetitive?

Evaluative Reviews

1. Locate critical reviews of books in a reviewing source, such as Book Review Index, Book Review Digest, or Periodical Abstracts. Is the review positive? Is the book under review considered a valuable contribution to the field? Does the reviewer mention other books that might be better? If so, locate these sources for more information on your topic.
2. Do the various reviewers agree on the value or attributes of the book or has it aroused controversy among the critics?
3. For Web sites, consider consulting one of the evaluations and reviewing sources on the Internet.

9.5 A Sample Annotated Bibliography Entry for a Journal Article

Waite, Linda J., Frances Kobrin Goldscheider, and Christina Witsberger. "Nonfamily Living and the Erosion of Traditional Family Orientations Among Young Adults." *American Sociological Review* **51.4 (1986): 541-554. Print.**

The authors, researchers at the Rand Corporation and Brown University, use data from the National Longitudinal Surveys of Young Women and Young Men to test their hypothesis that nonfamily living by young adults alters their attitudes, values, plans, and expectations, moving them away from their belief in traditional sex roles. They find their hypothesis strongly supported in young females, while the effects were fewer in studies of young males. Increasing the time away from parents before marrying increased individualism, self-sufficiency, and changes in attitudes about families. In contrast, an earlier study by Williams cited below shows no significant gender differences in sex role attitudes as a result of nonfamily living.

10 Peer Reviewing

The aim of the peer review seminars is to improve your paper by hearing what other students have to say about it, and to help your fellow students improve theirs by sharing your observations. Learning how to give and respond to constructive criticism is a highly valuable skill, both at the university and in the world outside academia. Seminars should be conducted in a generous and kind spirit, but do not be too cautious when offering criticism. You do not have to worry about hurting your respondent's feelings if your comments are constructive and to the point. We hope that you will find the peer review sessions useful and stimulating. In order to make the peer review sessions helpful, you should keep a few general points in mind when preparing.

- Read the draft several times and make notes.
- Keep your feedback concrete and specific.
- Indicate both strong and weak aspects of the draft.
- Give your copy of the draft (with legible notes and comments) and other written comments to the author of the draft.

When submitting material for peer review, make sure your draft is free from spelling and grammar mistakes and typographical errors and correctly formatted (including page numbers). A reader-friendly text is more likely to elicit useful comments. If large portions of your texts have not been changed since the previous peer review session, you should mark this clearly in the margin.

10.1 Checklist for Preparing Peer Reviews

Content:
- Mark any passages that you find confusing, that contain something that does not seem to fit, or that otherwise slow down the reading.
- Place a "Good" in the margin next to any passages where you think the writing is particularly strong or interesting.

Language and structure:
- Underline all logical connectors (transitional words and phrases) in the paper. Does each transition function logically? If not, make a suggestion. One way of checking for logic while at the same time assisting your peer is to number all topic sentences and check to what extent they form a sequence of logical progression and relevance in relation to the thesis statement.
- Read the paper for transitions again. Are there any places where a transition is missing? These places will feel abrupt or disconnected. Make suggestions.
- Are there any unnecessary repetitions? Mark them.
- Are there paragraphs which lack unity and coherence? Mark them.
- Mark any mistakes in language that you find: spelling mistakes, run-on sentences, comma usage, sentence fragments, concord mistakes (lack of subject/verb agreement) other grammar mistakes.
- Is the MLA style consistently employed? If not, mark!

General:
Ask yourself if there are any other questions you wish to put to the draft.
Sum up what you see as the chief strengths and problem areas of this draft.

11 Final Seminar

After you have submitted the final version, you will be assigned an opponent. You will also be the opponent to another student's essay. The schedule for the final seminar, including information on opponents, will be published in the MyMoodle classroom after the final deadline.

The final seminar is an integral part of the thesis work. The essay course is not completed before you have successfully opposed another student's paper and defended your own. Your performance at the final seminar will be evaluated and may affect your final grade.

When preparing your discussion of another student's paper you should bear in mind that only minor revisions are accepted after the final seminar (see below). Therefore, you should focus on *evaluating* and *criticizing* the paper rather than offering advice and suggestions for improvement. In this way, the final seminar is different from the peer review seminars. Furthermore, in addition to critically examining the thesis paper at hand, your task is to extract its most interesting points and pose questions that ensure a lively and informed discussion.

In the final seminar, 30–45 minutes will be devoted to each thesis paper. Although the actual content of the discussion naturally depends on the participants involved, the discussion of each thesis paper should always contain the following elements:

1. Author's Own Comments. Here the author has a chance to comment on possible remaining mistakes, infelicities, or offer other preparatory remarks.
2. Introduction (5 minutes). In the introduction the opponent should summarize the paper, that is, without making any evaluative comments explain the research focus and main argument, and relate how the argument is carried out. After the opponent has introduced the paper, the respondent has a chance to add his/her comments.
3. Discussion (15 minutes). As a general checklist, the opponent should keep the following issues in mind:
    a. *Content*
        i. Thesis statement: Is it clear? Is it relevant? Is it arguable? Is it fully developed within the available space of the paper?
        ii. Secondary material: Is the secondary material relevant to the focus? Has crucial secondary material been overlooked? Do the ideas in the paper make use of the secondary material in an interesting way? How strong is the connection between the theory and the analysis sections? Are there references to both the Curriculum and the Syllabi?
        iii. Does the essay reflect an awareness of the complexity of the pedagogical practice? Is it normative in any way? To what degree could the essay be considered relevant for in-service teachers? Does the study include a discussion of the three pedagogical questions?
        iv. Does the literary analysis show evidence of independent reasoning? Is the wider significance of the findings addressed?
    b. *Structure*
        i. Are the arguments properly introduced?
        ii. Do the arguments follow each other in a logical way?
        iii. Does the paper have a concluding discussion or conclusion?
    c. *Formal Aspects*
        i. Language: Is the language correct and appropriate? Is the style consistent? Are the sentences grammatical? Are transitions used within and between paragraphs?
        ii. Formatting: Is the paper correctly formatted? Is the MLA style used consistently? Does the Works cited follow the same standard as the in-text citations?
        iii. Quotations: Are the quotations correctly fitted and referenced?

      iv. Sources: Are sources introduced and commented upon? Is page referencing unambiguous throughout?

4. **Open Discussion** (10 minutes).The open discussion is a chance for the audience to contribute to the opposition. However, the most important part of the discussion – the opponent's and the audience's alike – should concern general issues of argument, the relevance of theoretical choices and the rhetorical structuring of the claims made. Examples of questions to ask the respondent may include "On what grounds did you choose this particular theoretical perspective?", "To what extent is your argument relevant to other literary texts, and if it is, what kind(s) of texts?" or "What, in your view, are the limitations of your argument and/or possible objections to it?" Do not be afraid of asking follow-up questions, disagreeing or presenting another perspective on the primary text under discussion – mere agreement or praise does not make for a very constructive or productive exchange (nor, of course, does one-sided critique). As the essays are not supposed to be revised beyond this seminar (apart from minor formal mistakes), the discussion should have a general interest and concern the wider ramifications of your claims, ideas and insights.

12 Works Cited:

Hacker, Diana. *A Writer's Reference*. St. Martin's, 1995.

"How to Prepare an Annotated Bibliography". *Olin Library Reference Research & Learning Services*, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, NY, USA. http://guides.library.cornell.edu/annotatedbibliography. Accessed 27 May 2016.

13 Appendix 1

13.1 Samples of Thesis Statements with Commentaries[2]

13.1.1 Sample 1 – G2 Literary Essay

This first example is taken from the draft of an introduction. Look at the comments and you will notice suggestions for overall improvement of structure of information, theoretical discussion and a general specification of the topic. The why is already implicit in this thesis statement but needs further improvement to be entirely convincing.

The purpose of this essay is to explore the ways in which the narrative depicts the various forms of discrimination, and how these narrative techniques sway the reader into sympathizing with Cinder. This will be done through a narratological analysis of the novel itself. It will be supported by articles on narratological techniques and other concepts. This includes concepts like identification. For instance, studies on focalization may shed light on how the reader might come to identify with the main character. Pertaining to this could also be articles on young adult fiction as a genre, since one of its staple subjects is coming of age, which could inform the text on relatability and therefore how the reader might identify with the protagonist. Cinder is indeed considered a young adult novel, so investigating the various aspects that make it such could be relevant. In short, a close reading of Cinder will provide material to analyze, and this material will be followed by theories on narratology, identification and young adult fiction, in order to investigate whether these have any major bearing on the novel's depiction of discrimination.

When it comes to the reasons behind this particular topic being chosen, it can be said that comparatively, there are not many studies on specific novels within modern young adult literature, yet these books can have a huge impact on their audience. A novel like Cinder can be representative of popular modern young adult fiction, and so exploring it could be quite rewarding, seeing as this type of literature does not receive the same kind of attention academically, despite having such a large influence on its target audience – an audience made up of people who are still evolving and forming their worldview.

Margin comments:

Do not confuse narrative with narrative techniques. Narrative is the actual text but narrative techniques is HOW this narrative is being told. ALSO, is your main focus discrimination or identification?

Not necessary: fill in your theoretical material here when you have found proper critics.

This is your KEY concept: I would bring this up before talking about narrative techniques.

Try to avoid sounding like a proposal. Rather write: An important aspect of identification is also genre, in this case *coming of age* etc…

Young adult novel and coming of age, are they the same genre or do they differ?

Or the other way around: start with theory (identification, narratology (focalization), genre and then do the close reading. Maybe fit in an opening of discrimination somewhere, but I do not feel that that is the real focus here. Discrimination is a motive but not the means, or?

To investigate discrimination and identification in a popular genre?

Very good.

The revised thesis statement is much clearer in expression and the three major questions (*what?*, *how?* and *why?*) have been answered satisfactorily. It is quite clear *what* this essay will be doing, *how* it will do it and *why*.

The purpose of this essay is to explore the ways in which the narrative persuades the reader to sympathize with Cinder, with identification being the key concept. This will be done through a narratological analysis of the novel itself. It will be supported by articles on narratology, young adult fiction, identification and dystopia as a sub-genre to young adult fiction. One prominent critic is Maria Nikolajeva, who has published articles specializing in young adult and children's literature, one of which is "Beyond the Grammar of Story, or How Can Children's Literature Criticism Benefit from Narrative Theory?" Another relevant article

is Elaine Ostry's "'Is He Still Human? Are You?': Young Adult Science Fiction in the Posthuman Age", which deals with the concept of being different from other humans in a science fiction setting. As mentioned, this essay will also deal with young adult fiction, since it is very relevant to the subject of identification. Identity and coming of age are very important aspects of young adult fiction as a whole, and because young adult novels are targeted towards a very specific audience, studies on the genre could inform the text on relatability and therefore how the reader might identify with the protagonist. In short, I will study various theories in order to shed light on the subject of identification, and subsequently I will do a close reading of Cinder to investigate how it applies to these theories.

As for why I will carry out this study, it can be said that comparatively, there are not many studies on specific novels within modern young adult literature, yet these books can have a huge impact on their audience. A novel like Cinder can be representative of popular modern young adult fiction, and so exploring it could be quite rewarding, seeing as this type of literature does not receive the same kind of attention academically, despite having such a large influence on its target audience – an audience made up of people who are still evolving and forming their worldview.

13.1.2   Sample 2 – G3 Essay in Literary Studies in EFL

This thesis statement exemplifies some of the typical problems (mentioned above) in an ambitious but vague thesis statement.

[…] This connects to the didactic element of the essay which is the importance of talking about language and the way we and others utilize language to make a point, in political and historical texts for example. Furthermore, it is important to discuss norms and their reproduction in our media and literature with our students, to ensure that the students are aware of the fact that language constructs our way of seeing things.

The thesis claim of this essay is that "the female characters in Dorothy Parker's stories are portrayed as mad simply because they are women". Here the question is raised whether it is the feminine identity itself which is perceived as mad and irrational. What in the female character is perceived as mad, over emotional, irrational, and why? I will investigate and attempt to come up with reasons for this. The aim of this essay is to analyze five female characters in five short stories by Dorothy Parker, in order to deduce what, if anything, it is within the female identity that is the reason for the women being perceived as mad. Theories of madness in women in literature will be utilized in the analysis of these short stories. This will be achieved by analyzing how Parker depicts the other characters' reactions to the female character's speech, vocalized or not, in the short stories. As well as this, focus will be on the reader's response to the character's behavior, thoughts and feelings, utilizing poststructuralist methods of analysis. A short comparison will also be made between how the current reader would interpret Parker's stories and how a reader living at the same time as Parker would think about her content.

Marginal comments (left column):

Since this is a literary DIDACTIC essay the didactic perspective needs to take much more place than now. This would be a good opportunity to relate it to the LGR11 (and not in the end of the paper).

No need to put the claim in citation. AND, is this really true? I feel that you argue more for that the reason why these women are considered "mad" is simply because they perform according to certain gender restrictions and gender expectations.

Whether suggests another example in this sentence which is missing. THUS you need to add an "OR" which will bring more clarity to your argument here as well.

??? Do you mean gender identity here?

??? How do you use mad? It seems that you are unsure if it means an actual mental disease, hysteria or the like, or as it is used in Parker's texts, as "nuts" or over the top etc. These meanings are not compatible and you need to clearly distinguish them from each other. Callins somebody "mad" is not the same things as lying in an asylum!

See NS13.

male

IN your analysis you make a different division. Between those where other characters or readers react to and those where the voice is internalized and thus only reaches the reader!

??? Are you really discussing reader response? And in what way is this a post structural method?

13.1.3 Sample 3 – G3 Film Didactic Essay

The following thesis statement yields a promising project looking into films from a didactic perspective. The first version, though, is somewhat fragmented and lacks precision as well as additional information about the project:

It is in this context that this text has its main focus; the fact that black-and-white films are almost never used in the classroom. This text aims to argue what the benefits could be of using the black-and-white film in the classroom of the English subject for Swedish upper secondary schools. In order to do this three research questions have been formulated to gain knowledge needed to argue for the stated claim.

- Why are black-and-white films scarcely used in the Swedish Schools?
- What can films in black-and-white contribute with in the classroom which films in colour cannot?
- In what ways (if at all) do we experience black-and-white films differently from films in colour?

Moreover, to give further information on the text's main focus, three films will be analysed; Frank Capra's *It's a Wonderful Life*, Robert Zemecki's *Forrest Gump* and Steven Spielberg's *Schindler's List*. Why these particular films have been chosen and how they will be used will be explained later in the text.

A revised version improves greatly on the earlier thesis statement:

It is on this basis, the fact that the film's presence and importance in the classroom is growing, this essay has been written. However, the main focus of this essay has been limited to a certain aspect of film in the classroom, namely the use of old monochrome films in the classroom. It should be noted, however, that I will henceforth in the essay remove the word "old" and instead use the terms "black-and-white films" or "monochrome films", but it is still old black-and-white films which is being. The purpose of this essay is to investigate if there could be any benefits of using the black-and-white film in the classroom of the English subject for Swedish upper secondary schools. To investigate this field, theories on how students respond differently to film, so-called reception studies, how film teaches students about history, and how students might perceive films in black-and-white differently from films in color will all be used. The essay has been especially motivated due to the fact that there is no previous research on this matter, which will be further elaborated on in the next chapter. Two research questions have been formulated in order to answer the essay's purpose:

- What can films in black-and-white contribute with in the classroom which films in color cannot?
- How does history in film and ideas on reception affect black-and-white films potential impact on students?

To assume information on the essay's main focus and to answer the research questions, two films will be

Seems a bit vague here, use thesis or essay instead. AND, maybe this should be a new paragraph since this is your thesis statement and very important.

Argue is when you want to prove something, it seems like you are more investigating?

HOW will they be analyzed? Think and reconsider this important section that in the thesis statement we should know WHY it is important, WHAT should be done, and HOW it should be done. So, it means that you should very briefly sketch your theoretical and methodological plan (although I understand this is difficult perhaps at this stage – return to it when you are more familiar with your theories). You should also here motivate the choices of films, even if you will discuss those choices more in detail later. And, briefly discuss your thesis statement relation to previous research, what is called Research Context. In doing this you prepare the reader for the theory section below. Think always as well on signposting, clearly describing in your thesis what you are about to do.

Relevant and good research questions. I would consider changing the position between the second and the third.

Relevant choices I guess, since you want to have both an old and a modern B/W film as well as a film in colour. Motivate the choices briefly here though.

When you are doing you last revision, make sure that paragraphing is according to MLA. So, in most cases, they should not include a blank line but only an indent.

This sentence is ok but could be improved if you structured it differently. And referring to film as specific (the) suggests ONE film, but rather take the "the" away to make it more general.

"However" suggests a strong disagreement with the previous sentence. Find a better opening here, or just start with "The main focus…"

Good idea.

remove

films

This is the US spelling. Make sure you either through the whole essay use US or British spelling.

Rather refer to sections in a G3-essay.

Maybe better to write: …ofrmulated in relation to the essay's purpose. (or something similar).

I am unsure if it is wise to merge these two concerns. I will have to get back to this when I read your whole essay, but the connection between history and reception seems not obvious at this stage. Consider breaking this question up into two questions. AND, films should be in possessive form, films'

LAN

analyzed and compared to each other: Frank Capra's *It's a Wonderful Life* (1946) and Robert Zemecki's Forrest Gump (1994). The reason as to why these two films were chosen were due the fact that they both account for history in some way, and because one of them, Forrest Gump, is often used in schools, whereas the other, *It's a Wonderful life*, is not. Also, since this essay is focused on investigating the usage of black-and-white films in the classroom, it would be necessary to compare an old film in black-and-white with a new film which is frequently used in the classroom. The various qualities mentioned above, whether they are old or new, black-and-white or in color, often used in schools or not, as well as how students might respond to the two films according to reception studies and how they teach students about history, will all be important aspects later when the films are analysed.

Add "to"

This is relevant but a nasty reader would probably ask you why not use a modern B/W film instead for a better comparison? It could be good to already here meet such as critique with an added sentence or two.

This is the UK spelling but above you use the US spelling with z). Be consequent.

13.1.4 Sample 4 – G3 Essay in Literary Studies in EFL

The following thesis statement is more focused (even simpler) and gives the reader a clear and concise idea of the purpose of the essay:

> The aim is to investigate to what extent the representation of the three characters, Miss Skeeter, Aibileen and Minny, reproduce the white people as superior in trying to help the passive and objectified coloured people. Kathryn Stockett claims in her homepage that her intention with the book is to highlight the relationship between white and black people in Southern USA in the 1960s, writing in the voices of two African-American maids. In an afterword to the novel she states that "I was scared, a lot of the time, that I was crossing a terrible line, writing in the voice of a black person. I was afraid I would fail to describe a relationship that was so intensely influential in my life, so loving, so grossly stereotyped in American history and literature" (Stockett 450). She names her afterword "too little, too late" and perhaps that is a well-suited title, because the contradictions that occur in The Help make her purpose significantly ambiguous. The way she represents the black maids is sometimes really downgrading. To write a few lines about how scared she was to fail describing the relationship does not make this more acceptable. Therefore, I will argue that this is yet another novel where a white author tries to write about racism, and where the outcome results in the representation of white people trying to help the coloured people in a patronising way. I am well aware that it is not only the coloured people who are objectified in the book, but also the white people. Nevertheless, this paper will mostly focus on the black maids, although Miss Skeeter will be a part of the analysis.
>
> Moreover, the essay will contain a didactic part dealing with how *The Help* could be used in upper secondary schools in Sweden. The syllabus for English says, "students should be given the opportunity to develop knowledge of living conditions, social issues and cultural features in different contexts and parts of the world where English is used" (Skolverket 2011).

Furthermore, in the Curriculum for the upper secondary school, norms and values are listed, and according to the Education Act,

The education should be carried out in accordance with fundamental democratic values and human rights, covering the inviolability of people, the freedom and integrity of the individual, the equal value of all people, gender equality and solidarity between people. The school should actively and consciously influence and stimulate students into embracing the shared values of our society, and encourage their expression in practical daily action. (Curriculum for the upper secondary school 10)

These areas are important to take into account in teaching, and the novel stresses many of the issues. For instance, as mentioned earlier, racism is one of the main themes in the book. In addition, persons such as Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King are discussed. Moreover, The Civil Rights Movement and Ku Klux Klan are not to be forgotten. Therefore, ideas how to deal with and teach these topics will be presented.

14 Appendix 2

14.1 An example: The Process of Writing an Introduction

In the following section you will be able to follow the process of creating a workable and attractive introduction in three steps including commentaries from a supervisor.

This is a first draft of an introduction:

Introduction
The Harry Potter book series has become a phenomenon. With millions of copies sold worldwide, translations into 73 different languages, theme parks being put up, merchandise of all kinds being sold and eight movies made based on the series, the reasons for its popularity has become a much debated topic. It could be argued like "Someone" (insert reference later) does that a reason for the series popularity is that readers are able to connect to the characters of the story. Can we as readers feel sadness when a character loses someone close to them or can we feel scared for the characters when they have to face something beyond their capabilities even when we know that it is not real, that the events are not actually happening? The way readers relate to different characters in books through identifying themselves or empathising with them is one reason why some books are read by so many people. This essay will investigate the identification process in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, and study reader identification with the characters of the novel as a potential reason for its popularity. By comparing and describing reader response theory and character identification the essay will explore how readers can form emotional bonds or connections to the characters they read. The reason why the essay will focus on the first book is because this is the book where the readers are originally introduced to the main characters that they can then follow through the rest of the novels.

MLA: *Harry Potter*-book series.

Not wrong, but "in the story" sounds better.

You are not scared for something, you can be scared of something or scared with the characters.

Provide publication date.

Add commas before and after

Awkward, we do not read characters, we encounter them in the story of something similar.

COMMENTS:
This is generally a well-written introduction, easy to follow, and with a clear purpose and thesis statement. The opening makes your project worthwhile by mentioning the popularity of the series. Consider the following:

1. You might want to, just very briefly, explain reader-response, which particular brand you are using etc. (could be added later of course)
2. I think the intro works and it is relevant, but it could perhaps, language wise, still be improved a bit. Important since it is the first words the reader meets.
3. Research context. Have there been any relevant studies of identification? This could then be named and shortly discussed.
4. A good thing is in the end of the intro, to discuss the general structure of your essay: what you will do in chronological order, as signposting for the reader.

The second draft of the introduction is a great improvement in structure and precision. The use of the opening quotation marks a formal and academic approach to the primary text, as do the inclusion of the critics Beach and Willner. The theoretical framework has also been specified:

1. Introduction

"The more involved we are with the fictional world and what happens to the people in it, the more likely we are to enjoy being entertained." (Cohen 183)

The *Harry Potter*-book series seems to entertain many readers if one takes into account the millions of copies that have been sold worldwide, the translations of the books into 73 different languages and the eight movies that have been made based on the series. It is no wonder that the reasons for its popularity have become a much debated topic. University professors Beach and Harden Willner argues, based on their study of the power that the Harry Potter books have on children, that one of the reasons for the series popularity is that through the richness of J.K Rowling's characters readers are able to connect to them and identify with them (104-105). In contrast with other approaches to literature that focus on the author or the content or form of a text; reader-response theory or criticism focuses on the reader and their experience of the text or work. The way readers relate to different characters in books through identifying themselves or empathising with them is one reason why some books are read by so many people. This essay will investigate the identification process in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (1997), and study reader identification with the characters of the novel as a potential reason for its popularity. The reason why the essay will focus on the first book is because this is the book where the readers are originally introduced to the main characters that they can then follow through the rest of the novels.

By comparing, and describing, different theories about character identification the essay will explore how readers can form emotional bonds or connections to the characters they read about. The theories include identification through sympathy or empathy, identification through simulation, identification as an imaginary process, similarity- and wish identification. It will also touch on the question of the paradox of feeling for fictional characters. Can we as readers feel sadness when a character loses someone close to them or can we fear for the characters when they have to face something beyond their capabilities even when we know that neither the character nor the events are actually real? Based on the different theories presented the analysis will try to make the connection between identification and the *Harry Potter* characters clear and the essay will close with the conclusions drawn from the analysis.

Margin annotations:

- seem
- Either only surnames or full names on both – as it stands here it look as they are married!!!
- Argue
- Possessive form
- Cut
- Cut
- This stands alone, rephrase, move or integrate better. My suggestion is to move it to the end of this para.
- Make sure that these terms also are used in the theory section, in that order.
- I would not spend so much time on the paradox of f, but move it as an intro to the theory section.

The final version of the introduction reads smoothly and clearly establishes the focus of the essay, situating it in a proper research context and theoretical framework as well as letting the reader be aware of the general structure of the essay:

1. Introduction

"The more involved we are with the fictional world and what happens to the people in it, the more likely we are to enjoy being entertained." (Cohen 183)

The *Harry Potter*-book series obviously entertains many readers which can be seen in the millions of copies that have been sold worldwide, the translations of the books into seventy-three different languages and the eight movies that have been made based on the series. It is no wonder that the reasons for its popularity have become a debated topic.

University professors Beach and Willner argue, based on their study of the power that the *Harry Potter* books have on children, that there are three possible reasons for the series' popularity. The first reason is embedded in the magical world and story that has been created, they write that this world draws readers "into the books by connecting aspects of the world in which they live with a world that transcends reality" (103). The characters participate in everyday activities but they are interspersed with unusual and magical objects and experiences. They also hold that, in the story created, Harry's life and adventures become "increasingly complicated and the plots grow more elaborate" (103). The second reason is the richness of the characters. Even minor characters have fullness because they have whole personal histories established before they become part of the story. Readers strongly identify with the characters, Harry in particular but also the other characters with "lively and worthy supporting personalities that mirror Harry's development" (105). The authors claim that the characters have unique and fully rounded personalities yet are universal enough to rise above the limits of imagination. The characters possess both the qualities and the faults of heroes but are also "our friends and family members personified" (105). The third reason is the respect that J.K Rowling has for her readers. Rowling gives young readers a challenge since the books become increasingly longer with each instalment. She gives them a chance to pay attention because they can never know what is going to happen next, the opportunity to be creative through their imagination and the story has moral and ethical "lessons" that the readers can learn from (105-06).

This essay will focus on one of these three reasons, namely the second one. The way readers relate to different characters in books through identifying themselves or empathizing with them is one reason why some books are read by so many people. This essay will investigate the identification process in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (1997), and study reader identification with the characters of the novel as a potential reason for its popularity. The reason why the essay will concentrate on the first book is because this is the book where the readers are originally introduced to the main characters that they can then follow through the rest of the novels.

By comparing, and describing, different theories about character identification the essay will explore how readers can form emotional bonds or connections to the characters they read about. The theories that will be presented are: identification as an imaginary process consisting of two components, absorption, similarity and wish identification, transportation theory, identification through simulation and the five emotional responses to fiction. Based on the different concepts the analysis will try to make the connection between identification and the Harry Potter-characters clear by providing specific examples from the novel.

15 Appendix 3

15.1 Sample of Theoretical Section with Commentaries[3]

These ideas indicate that manhood, or masculinity, is something fixed, unable to change. It is often referred to as something natural[4] or normative in comparison with feminine.

In sociology, psychology and psychoanalysis, masculinity is instead understood as something constructed, something which has been and continues to being made in society, in culture, between men and women and men and men. In *Undoing gender*, Judith Butler notes on the "performative structure of gender" and that "gender designations are thus never settled once and for all but are constantly changing" (10) and in *Understanding Masculinity* Chopra, Dasgupta and Janeja discuss "learning masculinity" and masculinity as being a nonlinear process which constantly mutates and changes based on "age, caste, gender and work relations through processes where masculinity is constantly learned, constructed and confirmed" (1608).

While the ideas of gender identity being fluid and performative, Connell remarks that it is also necessary to understand masculinity as part of "organized social relations" (29). Epstein explains masculinity as "not isolated from other social differences, but is imbricated in a range of social inequalities. The ways that individuals or groups of men learn to 'do man' are strongly involved with how they 'do race' or 'do sexuality' or any of the other differences which make a real difference to people's lived experiences (53).

In literature, masculine studies are more recent, as is queer theory, and subjected to more criticism of the sort of arguments such as men already being represented enough in literature (Hobbs 383) and Rutherford notes that male characters are often generalised and that femininity is often considered more complex. The counterargument is often put forward as the need "to expose the damaging impact of patriarchy on men (as well as women), and its aim *(is)* to celebrate alternative masculinities over hegemonic ideals through an analysis of male protagonists" (Hobbs 383).

Is this contrast necessary? If it is, could you connect it to SV?

Which point of view does Connell talk about then? A traditional, non-academic one? Make this contrast more evident for the reader.

Add comma after ref.

First names should be added.

This paragraph would benefit from you paraphrasing and explaining the relevance of the quotations a bit more. Seems a little detached from everything else!

This first clause does not really make a clear point.

Comment on these quotations or leave them out. Like this they seem a tad "floaty".

Full stop after ref & start a new sentence (without and).

[3] Many thanks to the authors for the permission to reproduce their essays in various stages with commentaries here. In conclusion, all of these essays became, in the end, successful essays. These thesis statements are not exclusively dealing with literary didactic essays but their value as examples are still valid for any kind of literary essay.

[4] I have never understood the concept of something natural as unchanging or fixed, as nature is very much mutating and changing all the time.

16 Appendix 4

16.1 Sample of Abstract with Commentaries

This essay is a postcolonial reading of Doris Lessing's *The Grass is Singing.* The essay will focus on that the discourse that construct the segregated Southern Rhodesian society are not only making life impossible to live for the oppressed black majority but that the discourse also destroy the lives for the British colonisers that cannot uphold the standards by which they are supposed to live, in the novel represented by Dick and Mary Turner. Thus the essay argues that the pressure that discourse puts on the white majority is so strong that it destroys the people that cannot live according to it. The essay draws on the idea that a weak coloniser poses a threat to the segregation laws and the color-bar system by acting against the discourse. A failed British coloniser can consequently spark the idea among the natives that they can be successful, and therefore the failed white man is a danger to the colonisers' system of power.

Commentaries:

Ok, but the sentence structure and the grammar are pretty confused here. Try to rewrite for clarity.

Or the novel?

Preferably, your abstract should indicate how you understand "discourse" (a sentence or so of definition).

Why specifically British?

The sentence as such feels a bit redundant (you've basically said it in the previous one).

And a revised version:

This essay is a postcolonial reading of Doris Lessing's *The Grass is Singing.* The essay will focus on the discourse that constructs the segregated Southern Rhodesian society. The discourse does not only make life impossible for the oppressed black majority but also destroy the lives for the British colonisers that cannot uphold it. The essay argues that the pressure that the discourse puts on the coloniser is so strong that it destroys the people that cannot live according to it. The novel draws on the idea that a weak coloniser poses a threat to the segregation laws and the color-bar system by acting against the discourse. The interpretation of the term discourse that will be used in this study is Michel Foucault's idea that discourse is a system that is created by people in power to control oppressed groups so that the power structure can be maintained.

A clear improvement on the last version, but you could perhaps vary the sentence structure a bit (the sentences all begin in basically the same way, for example). You also give the impression that the analysis will be hardcore Foucault whereas in fact you also use later, more obviously postcolonial appropriations of the concept of "discourse". Should be reflected here and to some extent in the intro.

Also, there should be an "Abstract" heading here.

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