

TRUMBULL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Trumbull, Connecticut

A CRITICAL APPROACH TO POPULAR LITERATURE

Grade 12

English Department

2016

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A Critical Approach to Popular Literature
Grade 12
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The Trumbull Board of Education will continue to take Affirmative Action to ensure that no persons are discriminated against in its employment.

CORE VALUES AND BELIEFS

The Trumbull High School community engages in an environment conducive to learning which believes that all students will **read and write effectively**, therefore communicating in an articulate and coherent manner. All students will participate in activities **that present problem-solving through critical thinking**. Students will use technology as a tool applying it to decision making. We believe that by fostering self-confidence, self-directed and student-centered activities, we will promote **independent thinkers and learners**. We believe **ethical conduct** to be paramount in sustaining the welcoming school climate that we presently enjoy.

Approved 8/26/2011

INTRODUCTION & PHILOSOPHY

In A Critical Approach to Popular Literature, students will read and analyze a selection of popular literature. Though the titles are familiar, students will examine them critically, focusing on trends and patterns. Students will also identify and evaluate how authors construct accessible pieces of literature that attract the masses.

The texts of A Critical Approach to Popular Literature include works of non-fiction and fiction, allowing students to garner information and draw conclusions about the nature of popularity from informational texts, and then apply this information while analyzing the selection of popular fictional works. With the Connecticut Core Standards' focus on increasing literacy skills, especially through works of non-fiction, students in this course have the opportunity to interact with complex, rich literary works. This course strives to acknowledge books outside of the traditional literary canon that have been turned into "classics" by the students whom we teach.

This class will offer an environment in which students can learn from one another while examining texts through various literary and critical lenses. By revisiting texts that initially sparked students' interest in literature, students will hopefully reinforce or maybe even restore a love of reading. The students will leave the course with a better understanding of the nature of popularity and its influence on people, their interests, and their reading habits.

COURSE GOALS

The following course goals derive from the 2010 Connecticut Core Standards.

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.3 | Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed). |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.7 | Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem. |

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1 | Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence. |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.7 | Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation. |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1 | Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.4 | Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks. |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.11-12.6 | Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression. |

The following standards derive from the 2016 International Society for Technology in Education Standards.

| | |
|--|---|
| ISTE Empowered Learner (Standard 1) | Students leverage technology to take an active role in choosing, achieving, and demonstrating competency in their learning goals, informed by the learning sciences. |
| ISTE Knowledge Constructor (Standard 3) | Students critically curate a variety of resources using digital tools to construct knowledge, produce creative artifacts, and make meaningful learning experiences for themselves and others. |

COURSE ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

Students will understand that . . .

- in order to determine a text’s popularity and worth, one must evaluate the text by applying theoretical foundations.
- authors utilize methods and strategies to attract readers.
- research, inquiry, and extension of learning beyond what is presented by the teacher is necessary in developing independent thought and analyzing text.
- in order to develop a comprehensive argument, one must analyze texts through a variety of lenses and perspectives.
- as members of an advanced learning community, one needs to contribute independently and take on the responsibility of propelling the thinking and discussion.

COURSE ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- What is the meaning of “popularity” in today’s society? And to what extent is it measurable?
- Why do certain books attract so many followers, and is there a formula for creating popular fiction?
- How should literature be judged? Does “popular” equate with “good”?
- How does society influence trends in literature, and in turn, how do these trends influence society?

COURSE KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS

Students will understand . . .

- foundational terminology and theories from *The Tipping Point* and *Contagious*.
- various critical lenses and their applications to literature.

Students will be able to . . .

- apply the foundational terminology and theories from course texts to supplemental materials.
- read with a critical lens.
- participate meaningfully in shared inquiry.
- collaborate with others.
- extend collaboration via Google Docs and/or Google Classroom.
- define and evaluate popularity in literature and other social trends.
- research and build a depth of knowledge about popularity, social trends, and literature.

COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Name

A Critical Approach to Popular Literature

Level

Advanced College-Preparatory

Prerequisites

Successful completion of grades 9, 10, and 11 English.

Materials Required

None

General Description of the Course

Why do certain books get so many followers? Do they deserve the popularity and live up to their reputations? How should literature be judged? What makes it good and worth reading? In this course, students will read and analyze a selection of contemporary popular fiction, in addition to excerpts from popular titles from the past and non-fiction texts that explore the source of popularity and “contagious” nature of some trends. Students will be required to engage in independent reading and analysis of additional informational and fictional texts and criticism to further explore the essential questions of the course. Students will compare these texts with the core course texts to attempt to uncover a formula for creating popular fiction and predict future trends, presenting their findings through frequent discussions and presentations. Authors may include, but are not limited to: Suzanne Collins, J.K. Rowling, Jodi Picoult, Nicholas Sparks, Gillian Flynn, John Green, Stephanie Meyer, Rick Riordan, James Patterson, and Malcolm Gladwell.

Assured Assessments

Formative Assessments:

- Whole-class discussion (Units 1, 3)
- Google Classroom discussions (Unit 2)
- Teacher-student conferencing (Unit 4)

Summative Assessments:

- Essays applying theoretical terminology (Units 1, 2)
- Examination of author’s craft (Unit 3)
- Author Study Project (Unit 4)

Core Texts

- Selections from Berger, Jonah. *Contagious: Why Things Catch On*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2013. Print.
and/or
- Selections from Gladwell, Malcolm. *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference*. New York: Little, 2006. Print.

- Collins, Suzanne. *The Hunger Games*. New York, Scholastic, 2010. Print. and/or
- Hawkins, Paula. *The Girl on the Train*. New York: Riverhead, 2015. Print.
- Rowling, J.K. *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. London: Scholastic, 1998. Print.
- Student-selected texts by student-selected author

UNIT 1

Developing a Critical Approach to the Understanding of Popularity

Unit Goals

At the completion of this unit, students will:

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.7 | Craft working definitions of popularity through examination of fiction, non-fiction, and pop culture sources in different media formats. |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1 | Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of course texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence. |

Unit Essential Questions

- What is the nature of popularity?
- How does society define “popular,” and what makes something popular in society?
- How do I define “popular”?

Scope and Sequence

- Students will create working personal and class definitions of popularity through examination of fiction, non-fiction, and pop culture sources, toward a working definition of popularity from society’s perspective.
- Using core texts, students will examine the process of the development of popularity.

Assured Assessments

Formative Assessment:

Whole-class discussion:

Students will participate in a discussion asking them to examine social trends and popularity while referencing theoretical texts, supplemental activities and materials, etc. Teachers may use a speaking and listening rubric in order to give students feedback for growth and reflection, but the assignment may not factor into the course grade. Its purpose is as a brainstorming activity to formulate student ideas, scaffold learning, and check for understanding. In addition, teachers can capture information about individual and class understandings to inform instruction.

Summative Assessment:

Essay applying theoretical terminology:

Students will write an analytical essay applying the theories of popularity presented in the unit. The assignment focus may be a social trend (e.g., item, phrase, song, etc.) or popular texts (e.g., children’s books, a course text, contemporary literature, a core text from a previous course). Assessment will be based on the English Department Writing Rubric. This assessment will count as a major grade for the marking period.

Resources

Core

- Selections from Gladwell, Malcolm. *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference*. New York: Little, 2006. Print.
and/or
- Selections from Berger, Jonah. *Contagious: Why Things Catch On*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2013. Print.

Supplemental

- Programs such as *60 Minutes* “Merchants of Cool” and teacher-selected relevant TED Talks
- Texts related to early exposure to popularity: baby books, children’s books (e.g., Dr. Seuss, A.A. Milne), etc.
- Current articles on society trends and popularity

Time Allotment

- Approximately 3-4 weeks

UNIT 2

Timeless Popularity

Unit Goals

At the completion of this unit, students will:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.3 | Identify and analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story in development of a text’s popularity. |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1 | Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions referencing course texts and theoretical terminology, productively moving each discussion forward. |
| ISTE Empowered Learner (Standard 1) | Leverage technology to take an active role in choosing, achieving, and demonstrating competency in learning goals related to discussion of the popularity of texts. |

Unit Essential Questions

- Why does *Harry Potter* appeal to so many readers and society at large?
- Why does the popularity of some texts last longer than does the popularity of others?
- Is there a formula for success?

Scope and Sequence

- Students will research the various ways in which *Harry Potter* has been deemed a phenomenon in the literary and cultural world.
- Students will analyze authors’ writing styles.
- Students will examine trends of the past to determine what makes certain texts popular initially and then what helps certain texts remain popular over time.
- Students will determine if there is a formula for success by examining authors who have made a career of producing popular fiction.

Assured Assessments

Formative Assessment:

Google Classroom discussions:

Students will respond in written responses on Google Classroom to course discussion questions or relevant articles, interacting with teacher and other students. Some potential questions are: When examining a selection of popular texts, what are the shared qualities that contribute to their popularity? How do their differences impact popularity in relation to each other and other texts? Is the formula for all texts the same? Why or why not? Teachers may use a rubric in order to give students feedback for growth and reflection, but the assignment may not factor into the course grade. Its purpose is as a reflective and synthesis activity to formulate student ideas, scaffold

learning, and check for understanding. In addition, teachers can capture information about individual and class understandings to inform instruction.

Summative Assessment:

Essay applying theoretical terminology:

Students will write a creative or analytical essay focusing on the strongest aspect of J.K Rowling's writing choices. Assessment will be based on the English Department Writing Rubric. This assessment will count as a major grade for the marking period.

Resources

Core

- Rowling, J.K. *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. London: Scholastic, 1998. Print.

Supplemental

- Roald Dahl texts and other classics, fairy tales, films, cult classics, contemporary texts, etc.

Time Allotment

- Approximately 4-5 weeks

UNIT 3

Examination of Popular Literature

Unit Goals

At the completion of this unit, students will:

| | |
|---|---|
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.3 | Identify and analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story in development of a text’s popularity. |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1 | Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions referencing course texts and theoretical terminology, productively moving each discussion forward. |
| ISTE Knowledge Constructor (Standard 3) | Critically curate a variety of resources using digital tools to construct knowledge related to the current popular trends in literature today. |

Unit Essential Questions

- What are the current popular trends in literature today?
- Why are certain books trendsetters? How do popular texts impact trends in current literature?
- How does society influence trends in literature, and in turn, how do these trends influence society?

Scope and Sequence

- Students will research current popular trends in literature.
- Referring to information in previous units, especially Unit 1, students will continue to examine the impact of society on trends and how one trendsetter furthers a trend.
- Students will read, analyze, and discuss current popular texts.

Assured Assessments

Formative Assessment:

Whole-class discussion:

Students will participate in a discussion asking them to examine and analyze the popularity and worth of the core texts, while referencing theoretical terms and supplemental texts, activities, and materials, etc. Teachers may use a speaking and listening rubric, but the assignment may not factor into the course grade. Its purpose is as a brainstorming activity to formulate student ideas, scaffold learning, and check for understanding.

Summative Assessment:

Examination of author’s craft:

Students will analyze the effectiveness of an author’s choices in relation to the elements of literature in teacher-selected formats (e.g., formal graded discussion, test, formal essay, in-class

writing, online discussion, creative pieces, etc.). In some cases, teachers may allow students to select the mode of assessment that would best allow them to present their findings on author's craft. The rubric will assess students' insight, use of support, and mechanics. This assessment will count as a major grade for the marking period.

Resources

Core

- Collins, Suzanne. *The Hunger Games*. New York, Scholastic, 2010. Print. and/or
- Hawkins, Paula. *The Girl on the Train*. New York: Riverhead, 2015. Print.

Supplemental

- Literature Circle / Book Club selections
- Current articles on society trends and popularity
- Research using Amazon, Goodreads, *New York Times* Bestsellers List, etc., for most popular titles and reviews
- Serial podcasts: Why is this new form so popular?

Time Allotment

- Approximately 6-8 weeks

UNIT 4

Culminating Thesis Project: Author Study

Unit Goals

At the completion of this unit, students will:

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.7 | Conduct a sustained research project to answer their own essential question in a formal thesis statement, narrowing or broadening the inquiry when appropriate, synthesizing multiple sources from the class and their own research, and demonstrating understanding of the popularity of their chosen author. |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.4 | Present information, findings, and supporting evidence in a formal presentation, conveying a clear understanding of their chosen author's popularity. |

Unit Essential Questions

- What is my chosen author so popular?
- What aspect of this author's craft or of this series is most appealing to readers?
- Why does this particular style, topic, genre, etc. resonate with readers?
- What is it about these books that elevates them to the status of popular literature?
- Does my chosen author deserve this status?

Scope and Sequence

- Students will select a popular author and create an essential question addressing his/her popularity.
- Students will read at least two works by the author.
- Students will conduct research in order to answer their own essential question.
- Students will synthesize core texts, research, class discussion, and the author's texts in a formal presentation driven by a clear thesis derived from their essential question.

Assured Assessments

Formative Assessment:

Teacher-student conferencing:

Periodically throughout the course, teachers will conduct conferences with students to monitor progress, discuss discoveries, and assist students as they work through the research and presentation development process. Teachers may use a rubric, but the assignment may not factor into the course grade. Its purpose is as means of support and brainstorming opportunity to assist students in formulating ideas and developing a strong thesis that will drive their final project from initial proposal to completed project.

Summative Assessment:

Author Study Project:

The semester-long culminating project, which students will begin within the first weeks of the course, will require students to perform an in-depth, critical author study. From a list, students will choose one popular author whose works appeal to readers, making him or her successful in garnering popularity. By reading multiple texts by his/her chosen author, conducting, collecting, and analyzing research, and applying our coursework and course texts to his/her topic, each student will investigate why there is so much hype surrounding this author and his/her works and why this author's formula for popularity works. Each student will present his/her findings to the class while also submitting an annotated bibliography and a detailed reflection piece. The rubric will assess students' insight, use of support, and mechanics. This project counts as the final exam for the course.

Resources

Core

- Continuous reference is to core texts from previous units
- Student-selected texts by student-selected author

Time Allotment

- Research lasts approximately the entire semester. Presentations and reflections comprise approximately the final two weeks of the course.

COURSE CREDIT

One-half credit in English
One class period daily for a half year

PREREQUISITES

Successful completion of grades 9, 10, and 11 English.

ASSURED STUDENT PERFORMANCE RUBRICS

- Trumbull High School School-Wide Reading Rubric
- Trumbull High School School-Wide Writing Rubric
- Trumbull High School School-Wide Independent Learning and Thinking Rubric
- English Department Writing Rubric

SCHOOL-WIDE RUBRICS

Rubric 1: Read Effectively

| Category/ Weight | Exemplary 4 | Goal 3 | Working Toward Goal 2 | Needs Support 1-0 |
|---------------------|---|---|---|--|
| Respond X_____ | Demonstrates exceptional understanding of text by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly identifying the purpose of the text Providing initial reaction richly supported by text Providing a perceptive interpretation | Demonstrates understanding of text by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying the fundamental purpose of the text Providing initial reaction supported by text Providing a clear/straightforward interpretation of the text | Demonstrates general understanding of text by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partially identifying the purpose of the text Providing initial reaction somewhat supported by text Providing a superficial interpretation of the text | Demonstrates limited or no understanding of text by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not identifying the purpose of the text Providing initial reaction not supported by text Providing an interpretation not supported by the text |
| Interpret X_____ | Demonstrates exceptional interpretation of text by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extensively reshaping, reflecting, revising, and/or deepening initial understanding Constructing insightful and perceptive ideas about the text. Actively raising critical questions and exploring multiple interpretations of the text | Demonstrates ability to interpret text by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reshaping, reflecting, revising, and/or deepening initial understanding Summarizing main ideas of text Actively interpreting text by raising questions and looking for answers in text | Demonstrates general ability to interpret text by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guided reflection and/or revision of initial understanding Summarizing some of the main ideas of text Guided interpretation of text by locating answers to given questions in text | Demonstrates limited ability to interpret text as evidenced by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Struggle to implement guided reflection and/or revision of initial understanding Struggle to summarize any main ideas of text Struggle to answer questions by locating responses in text |
| Connect X_____ | Demonstrates perceptive connections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> text-to-text text-to-self text-to-world | Demonstrates specific connections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> text-to-text text-to-self text-to-world | Demonstrates general connections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> text-to-text text-to-self text-to-world | Struggles to make connections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> text-to-text text-to-self text-to-world |
| Evaluate X_____ | Demonstrates insightful evaluation of text by one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critical analysis to create a conclusion supported by the text Perceptive judgments about the quality of the text Synthesis of text Expression of a personal opinion | Demonstrates an evaluation of text by one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critical analysis to form a conclusion from the text Thoughtful judgments about the quality of the text Evaluation of text to express personal opinion(s) | Demonstrates a general evaluation of text by one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formulation of a superficial conclusion from the text Assessment of the quality of the text Use of text to express personal opinion(s) | Demonstrates a struggle to evaluate the text by one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formulation of a conclusion from the text Assessment of the quality of the text Use of text to express personal opinion(s) |

Rubric 2: Write Effectively

| Category/ Weight | Exemplary 4 Student work: | Goal 3 Student work: | Working Toward Goal 2 Student work: | Needs Support 1-0 Student work: |
|---------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| Purpose X_____ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes and maintains a clear purpose Demonstrates an insightful understanding of audience and task | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes and maintains a purpose Demonstrates an accurate awareness of audience and task | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes a purpose Demonstrates an awareness of audience and task | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not establish a clear purpose Demonstrates limited/no awareness of audience and task |
| Organization X_____ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflects sophisticated organization throughout Demonstrates logical progression of ideas Maintains a clear focus Utilizes effective transitions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflects organization throughout Demonstrates logical progression of ideas Maintains a focus Utilizes transitions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflects some organization throughout Demonstrates logical progression of ideas at times Maintains a vague focus May utilize some ineffective transitions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflects little/no organization Lacks logical progression of ideas Maintains little/no focus Utilizes ineffective or no transitions |
| Content X_____ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is accurate, explicit, and vivid Exhibits ideas that are highly developed and enhanced by specific details and examples | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is accurate and relevant Exhibits ideas that are developed and supported by details and examples | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May contain some inaccuracies Exhibits ideas that are partially supported by details and examples | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is inaccurate and unclear Exhibits limited/no ideas supported by specific details and examples |
| Use of Language X_____ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates excellent use of language Demonstrates a highly effective use of standard writing that enhances communication Contains few or no errors. Errors do not detract from meaning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates competent use of language Demonstrates effective use of standard writing conventions Contains few errors. Most errors do not detract from meaning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates use of language Demonstrates use of standard writing conventions Contains errors that detract from meaning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates limited competency in use of language Demonstrates limited use of standard writing conventions Contains errors that make it difficult to determine meaning |

Rubric 5: Independent Learners And Thinkers

| Category/Weight | Exemplary 4 | Goal 3 | Working Toward Goal 2 | Needs Support 1-0 |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| Proposal X_____ | Student demonstrates a strong sense of initiative by generating compelling questions, creating uniquely original projects/work. | Student demonstrates initiative by generating appropriate questions, creating original projects/work. | Student demonstrates some initiative by generating questions, creating appropriate projects/work. | Student demonstrates limited or no initiative by generating few questions and creating projects/work. |
| Independent Research & Development X_____ | Student is analytical, insightful, and works independently to reach a solution. | Student is analytical, and works productively to reach a solution. | Student reaches a solution with direction. | Student is unable to reach a solution without consistent assistance. |
| Presentation of Finished Product X_____ | Presentation shows compelling evidence of an independent learner and thinker. Solution shows deep understanding of the problem and its components. Solution shows extensive and appropriate application of 21 st Century Skills. | Presentation shows clear evidence of an independent learner and thinker. Solution shows adequate understanding of the problem and its components. Solution shows adequate application of 21 st Century Skills. | Presentation shows some evidence of an independent learner and thinker. Solution shows some understanding of the problem and its components. Solution shows some application of 21 st Century Skills. | Presentation shows limited or no evidence of an independent learner and thinker. Solution shows limited or no understanding of the problem. Solution shows limited or no application of 21 st Century Skills. |

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT WRITING RUBRIC

| | Claim/Thesis | Evidence | Explanation | Writing Conventions |
|----------------------------|---|--|---|--|
| Exemplary (4) | Claim is clear, specific, and expresses a complex argument. It opens divergent, insightful understanding of the text. | Convincing evidence (not previously discussed in class/not obvious within the text) supports the claim. Quotes are incorporated seamlessly with appropriate introductory context. | Ideas are insightful and the explanation of thinking demonstrates a clear, thorough, and convincing connection between the evidence and the claim. Explanation thoroughly answers the questions “How do you know?” and “So what?” | Writing demonstrates purposeful organization, clear coherence, and smooth progression of ideas. The writer uses appropriate language for his/her audience and purpose. The piece is free of most errors in grammar and mechanics. Quotes are cited according to MLA style. |
| Proficient (3) | Claim is clear, specific, and states an arguable interpretation of text. | Evidence (quotes or well-selected paraphrase previously discussed in class/more obvious within the text) adequately supports the claim. Quotes are incorporated with appropriate introductory context. | Ideas are explained adequately and connect the evidence to the claim. Explanation adequately answers the questions “How do you know?” and/or “So what?” | Writing demonstrates adequate organization, coherence, and progression of ideas. The writer uses appropriate but inconsistent language for audience and purpose. Grammatical and mechanical errors are present. Inconsistent use of correct MLA citation. |
| Progressing (2) | Claim attempts to demonstrate an interpretation of the text but may not be arguable and/or may not be focused on or fully address the prompt. | Evidence is present but may not clearly support the claim, may be more focused on repeating the claim rather than supporting it, or may merely reference a plot point. Quotes are not introduced with appropriate context. | Ideas display gaps in thinking or may merely repeat the claim or evidence. Explanation attempts to connect evidence to claim but is inadequate and/or not convincing. Explanation does not answer the questions “How do you know?” and “So what?” | Writing demonstrates limited organization with lapses in coherence and/or progression of ideas. The writer uses informal language for audience and purpose. An accumulation of grammatical and mechanical errors is present. MLA citation is incorrect. |
| Emerging (1) | Claim is unclear, rooted in inaccuracies, and/or a statement of fact. It does not set up an interpretation for the response. | Evidence is not present or not clearly referenced and/or not relevant to the claim. If used, evidence may simply restate a plot point (summary). | Explanation is not present, may be unrelated to claim and evidence, and/or introduces no new thinking to the response. Explanation may offer discussion about topic(s) that is unrelated to the evidence and claim. | Writing is disorganized and/or unfocused with pervasive errors in grammar and mechanics that interfere with meaning. MLA citation is not used. |
| (0) | Unacceptable / No Score | Unacceptable / No Score | Unacceptable / No Score | Unacceptable / No Score |