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## Introduction to a Literary Analysis

### Introduction to a Literary Analysis

Many writers of fiction use their stories to convey a message. A literary analysis explores what the author was trying to say through his choice of setting, tone, characters, symbolism, and other techniques. A literary analysis should contain a thesis that must be supported by evidence from the text. The thesis can come at the beginning or end of the analysis.

Here is a short analysis of *Anne of Green Gables*.

*Anne of Green Gables* was written by Lucy Maud Montgomery in 1908. It tells the story of Anne Shirley, an eleven-year-old orphan who struggles to reconcile the real world with her imagination. She initially uses daydreams and fantasies to cope with the difficulties and uncertainties of her world, but her friends and guardians teach her how to navigate the complexities of real life.

The author uses Anne's circumstances and appearance to symbolize difficulty and social isolation. Anne is orphaned, passed through foster homes, and placed in an orphanage. When she is finally assigned an adoptive home, she learns that her adoption was a mistake—Marilla Cuthert and her brother Matthew had wanted a boy instead. In addition to feeling unwanted, Anne felt that she was plain. Her red hair was the most difficult aspect of her appearance to accept. While she claims to be able to imagine that she has a different complexion and facial appearance, she says, "I *cannot* imagine that red hair away."

Anne's dreams become her identity. When someone asks her about herself, she says, "What I *know* about myself isn't really worth telling. If you'll only let me tell you what I *imagine* about myself you'll think it ever so much more interesting." The author begins to give Anne a real sense of identity by placing her at Green Gables—a tangible symbol of stability under Matthew and Marilla Cuthbert's oversight. Unlike her fantasies, Green Gables is *real*. Anne adopts this identity, saying, "It's a million times nicer to be Anne of Green Gables than Anne of nowhere in particular; isn't it?"



## Lesson 1

Avonlea, and Green Gables in particular, is an interesting setting. The author gently makes fun of some aspects of small-town life such as the occasional gossip, meanness, and unwillingness to change. However, she also portrays the coastal setting on Prince Edward Island favorably—almost romantically—through Anne's eyes. The author believes that the real world can be as beautiful as dreams for those who have eyes to see and that small towns, in spite of their shortcomings, can be the perfect place for a child to develop.

The characters in *Anne of Green Gables* are precisely created to root Anne in the real world. Specifically, Mrs. Rachel Lynde's bluntness, Marilla Cuthbert's relentless sensibility, and Diana Barry's loyal companionship keep Anne firmly grounded in reality. In turn, she brings creativity, liveliness, and zest into all of their lives. Through her portrayal of the various characters, the author reminds readers of two seemingly contradictory facts: real life is more fulfilling than daydreams, but a life without creativity or spontaneity is missing something vital.

*Anne of Green Gables* explores the discord between dreams and reality and concludes that a meaningful life is grounded in reality yet enriched through creativity and imagination.

**A Choose a book, short story, or poem to analyze.**

- ☐ 1. I will write about \_\_\_\_\_ in Lesson 14.

## Review

**B Underline the correct word.**

- Starting Monday, Quick Printing Company will **accept**, **except** applications for the job opening.
- Everyone in our family **accept**, **except** Leanna got a chance to see northern lights.
- Instead of sending a check, Clint will **bring**, **take** the money along when he comes tonight.
- Ma told Laura to **bring**, **take** a drink of water to Pa in the hayfield.

**C Underline the correct verb.**

- Do**, **Does** anyone remember the name of Helen Keller's teacher?
- All of the tables **was**, **were** propped against the back wall.
- Most of the honey in the jar **has**, **have** crystalized already.
- Is**, **Are** any of Alayna's friends invited to the mystery supper?



**D Circle each adverbial noun or noun phrase.** Sentences may have more than one answer.

10. Anna wasn't feeling well, so she went home.
11. Rhett's family moved from Indiana to South Carolina last winter.
12. Sunday afternoon our family is in charge of the service at the nursing home.
13. All day and all night the blizzard raged, eventually blocking the windows and doors.

**E Write the correct form of the verb to complete each sentence.**

14. (present perfect of *spring*) "This pail \_\_\_\_\_ another leak," said Dad.
15. (future of *grow*) The liver has the amazing ability to repair itself; for example, a portion can be removed, and the remainder \_\_\_\_\_ to full size again.
16. (past of *label*) Miriam \_\_\_\_\_ the bones of the skeletal system on the diagram.
17. (past perfect of *leave*) By the time Jude arrived, Graham and Camden already \_\_\_\_\_.
18. (present of *push*) Your digestive system \_\_\_\_\_ food through 30 feet (9 m) of twisted pipeline called the intestines.
19. (future perfect of *pump*) By the time you are 70, your heart \_\_\_\_\_ over 50 million gallons (189 million liters) of blood through your body.

**F Diagram the sentence.**

20. Teresa sold her car last month.

## Penmanship

**G Using your best handwriting, copy the Bible verse.**

"I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well" (Psalm 139:14).



## Spelling – Patterns

### Spelling Words

alibi	intermediate	mediation	meridian	plasma
catastrophe	manifesto	mediator	militia	propaganda
immediate	media	medieval	nostalgia	vertigo
immediately	median	mediocre	panorama	veto

#### **H** Write the spelling word that fits each definition.

21. \_\_\_\_\_ having to do with the Middle Ages
22. \_\_\_\_\_ an excuse or story to prove that a person is not guilty
23. \_\_\_\_\_ a written statement of the goals or beliefs of a person or a group
24. \_\_\_\_\_ a line of longitude that circles the earth
25. \_\_\_\_\_ a sad yet pleasant feeling caused by wishing for something past
26. \_\_\_\_\_ professionals who carry news to the public
27. \_\_\_\_\_ the act of negotiating between individuals or parties in conflict
28. \_\_\_\_\_ a group of citizens with military training, available in an emergency
29. \_\_\_\_\_ a wide view of a scene
30. \_\_\_\_\_ one who intervenes between two opposing individuals or parties
31. \_\_\_\_\_ a method of trying to influence people by telling half-truths or lies
32. \_\_\_\_\_ a tragic disaster; a complete failure
33. \_\_\_\_\_ ordinary
34. \_\_\_\_\_ the right of the U.S. President to reject a law Congress has passed
35. \_\_\_\_\_ a feeling of whirling dizziness
36. \_\_\_\_\_ right away; without delay
37. \_\_\_\_\_ the straw-colored liquid part of the blood
38. \_\_\_\_\_ coming in the middle stage, place, or ranking
39. \_\_\_\_\_ the strip of land between two lanes of traffic going in opposite directions
40. \_\_\_\_\_ at once; without delay; close by; with nothing in between

#### **I** Write the Section 1 spelling words in your notebook.