

B.O.D. (): Writing to Literature

Reading literature closely is important; however, writing to what has been read is also essential.

The Always Rules:

- have a strong thesis
- put quotation marks around the title of a short story, essay, or poem
- underline the title of a book or novel
- refer to the author only by his last name or entire name.
- use quotations wisely, then elaborate
- make the conclusion worth reading by including new insightful analysis, connection to another similar work of literature, and an interesting, yet relevant, ending (a quote is possible).
- Write in active, not passive, voice.
- Punctuate correctly
- Use transitions for at least one paragraph and within paragraphs as well.
- Use Stock Language
- Try to get one topic and stick with it!
- Try not to SKIP lines; use indentation!
- Try to give your writing a title! It tends to keep you focused.
- If using poetry, use lines from the work and label it as such.
- Vary your sentence usage!
- Write in the present tense. Avoid writing in the past tense.
- Develop your paragraphs; 1 or 2 sentences cannot fully develop a paragraph.
- Adhere to the 10% Rule in reference to Introductions and Conclusions – your introductions/conclusions cannot be less than 10% of the length of your entire paper.
- Indent 4 lines or more of quoted material without the use of indentation because indentation in itself a “signpost” to your reader that you have borrowed the information.
- Spell out all numbers ten and below (0-10). Always spell any number if it is the first word of a sentence.
- Distinguish the narrator’s or speaker’s voice from the author’s when you analyze literary works
(for poetry, use speaker instead of narrator)

The Never Rules:

- DO NOT Summarize!
- Avoid contractions! (do not instead of don't)
- Do not announce your intentions!
- Avoid redundant rhetoric
(separate out, focus in on, exact same)
- Avoid shifting voice and tenses.
- Don't ignore the conflict
- Don't ignore the point of view.

General Writing Tips:

For Standardized Tests:

1. Pay attention to your time:
5 – 10 minutes for brainstorming
30-40 minutes for writing
5 – 10 minutes for Proofing & editing
2. Summary – what is happening?
(do not do this-unless asked to)
Analyze – what does it mean?
How do these things affect interpretation? **(Please use these)**
3. Setting is significant, especially in short stories.
4. In short stories, everything matters in plot; there are no accidents.
5. Use descriptive detail. Elaborate!
6. Use quotes that apply
7. Use interrogative or rhetorical questions.
8. Use character's name, theme, literary device, etc. to begin sentence.
9. Practice using your vocabulary!
10. Break pieces down in your work.
11. Make connections with the work.
12. Use a thesaurus!
13. Have a clear thesis statement.
14. Begin some sentences with gerund, participial, or infinitive phrases.
15. Thinking "What if" before you write, spurs ideas.

Stock Language:

- ___ The author uses ...to expound on the idea that...
- ___ Readers are left to question...
- ___ One is left to ...
- ___ (author's last name) implies
- ___ In the midst of the trial, the hero...
- ___ As in mythology,
- ___ ...ergo,...
- ___ To concur,
- ___ The denouement...
- ___ Utilizing ...allows readers to...
- ___ The likelihood that...
- ___ It is certain ...
- ___ Admittedly, ...
- ___ If literature is supposed to ..., then...
- ___ It is this act...
- ___ Seemingly, ...
- ___ Ultimately, the use of... causes...
- ___ the tone created by the figurative language was...
- ___ The author's utilization of similes was integral to the creation of the mood of the story; however, the effect of personification on the reading experience cannot be overlooked.
- ___ Lucid clues here give...
- ___ Conclusively,
- ___ Other great ones you come up with☺