

Literary Analysis: Writing Assessment
English 11

Essential Standards: Reading and Writing

Key Ideas and Details 11-12

- Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
- Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.

Text Types and Purposes 11-12

- Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

Production and Distribution of Writing 11-12

- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience

Task Description: Connect a piece of literature that we have read this semester to the culture from which it comes. Using your knowledge of a literary piece and your grasp of cultural context, consider the following:

Character's choice.

Describe one particular choice that a character makes from a story that we have read this semester. Then, describe the consequences of this choice. This choice should and will reflect the values of the culture from which the literature comes. Some examples of such choices are Ruth's (from *The Book of Ruth*) refusal to leave Naomi, Gilgamesh's (*Epic of Gilgamesh*) building the city walls to protect his people, and Noah's (*The Story of the Flood*) decision to become drunk after the flood subsides. *Include two passages from the text that describe the choice and the consequences of the choice.

Link the choice to a cultural value.

(a) Describe the values that this decision reflects and apply them to the culture. It is important not to make stark, overly simplistic generalizations about cultures. Instead, think about what point the author was trying to make through a character's decision and the results of that decision.

*For example, if one wrote a paper on Noah's decision to become drunk after the flood subsides, it would not be logical to write that the ancient Hebrews valued drunkenness and/or had a tendency to become drunk. Rather, one would emphasize that the Hebrews believed that Noah and all people had the capacity to make mistakes, even after the flood. Furthermore, the destructive consequences of the actions—Canaan becoming a slave—are natural results of mistakes or negative choices.

(b) Include at least 3 facts about the culture that help describe how and why that value is a part of the culture.

Link the value to our modern-day culture.

- (a) Describe at least modern day event that reflects this value today. This event can be related to our country, school, or community.
- (b) Describe how this event reflects that value.
- (c) How is the value similar to the ancient culture?
- (d) How is the value different from the ancient culture?

Writing Assessment Task Content Look-Fors

- I. Character and choice
 - a. List aspects of choice (what happened that lead up to the choice)
 - b. List consequences of choice.
 - i. How did it affect the character?
 - ii. How did it affect other people?
 - iii. How did it affect the society?
- II. Link choice to cultural value
 - a. List the value(s) that the choice reflects.
 - i. What message does the choice send about moral behavior?
 - ii. What message does the choice send about what is important for an organized, civilized, and protected society?
 - iii. What message does the choice send about a particular religious belief of the culture?
 - iv. Think about leadership, obedience to certain laws, honesty, loyalty, kindness...
 - b. How do these values reflect the culture from which the story/poem comes?
 - i. Why does this culture have this value?
 - ii. List 3 facts about the culture that help describe how and why this value(s) is/are a part of the culture
- III. Link the value to our modern-day culture.
 - a. Describe at least one modern-day event that reflects this value today. (This event can be related to our country, school, or community)
 - b. Describe how the event reflects the value.
 - c. How is the value expressed in a similar way to the ancient culture?
 - d. How is the value expressed in a different way from the ancient culture?

