

LITERARY ANALYSIS ESSAY PROMPT & TEMPLATE

“The Devil and Tom Walker” Washington Irving 1783-1859

PROMPT: Washington Irving (1783-1859), a satirist and one of America’s first literary voices, explores the theme of greed in

“The Devil and Tom Walker.” **Analyze the theme of greed in this work.**

Title: Come up with a clever (but not silly) title for your essay. Remember: You need to include the author’s name and the literary work in your title, but that should not be all there is to your title. Write your title here:

Remember: No punctuation for your title except for the quotation marks around “The Devil and Tom Walker” (titles of short stories are always enclosed in quotes). No bold or large font either. Thanks!

Paragraph 1: Introduction: The introduction basically serves as a “table of contents” to your essay. It should be five sentences: the thesis statement, a sentence about the topic of your first body paragraph, a sentence about the topic of your second body paragraph, a sentence about the topic of your third body paragraph, and a concluding/transition sentence to the body of your essay.

REMEMBER: It’s probably a good idea to fill in the information for your introduction **AFTER** you have mapped out the rest of your paper!

THESIS STATEMENT: Washington Irving (1783-1859), a satirist and one of America’s first literary voices, explores the theme of greed in “The Devil and Tom Walker.”

SENTENCE ABOUT WHAT *THEME* MEANS WHEN DISCUSSING LITERATURE: _____

[NOTE: There is a great definition of theme on p. 1187 in your textbook.]

SUMMARY SENTENCE OF THE STORY ITSELF: _____

SENTENCE ABOUT THE TOPIC OF FIRST BODY PARAGRAPH: _____

SENTENCE ABOUT THE TOPIC OF THE SECOND BODY PARAGRAPH: _____

SENTENCE ABOUT THE TOPIC OF THE THIRD BODY PARAGRAPH: _____

CONCLUDING/TRANSITION SENTENCE: _____

Paragraph 2: Body Paragraph 1: The pattern for each of the body paragraphs will be exactly the same. That keeps everything organized and consistent.

TOPIC SENTENCE: The first example of greed in “The Devil and Tom Walker” occurs when _____
_____.

SETUP FOR TEXTUAL EVIDENCE: Prior to this event in the story, _____
_____.

[NOTE: All you’re doing here is just summarizing what’s happening in the story right before your example and textual evidence.]

TEXTUAL EVIDENCE: “ _____

_____” (Irving _____).

ANALYSIS OF THE EXAMPLE: _____

[NOTE: All you’re doing here is commenting on what this example says about the theme of greed.]

TRANSITION SENTENCE TO NEXT PARAGRAPH: _____

Paragraph 3: Body Paragraph 2

TOPIC SENTENCE: The second example of greed in “The Devil and Tom Walker” occurs when _____
_____.

SETUP FOR TEXTUAL EVIDENCE: Prior to this event in the story, _____
_____.

[NOTE: All you’re doing here is just summarizing what’s happening in the story right before your example and textual evidence.]

TEXTUAL EVIDENCE: “ _____

_____” (Irving _____).

ANALYSIS OF THE EXAMPLE: _____

[NOTE: All you’re doing here is commenting on what this example says about the theme of greed.]

TRANSITION SENTENCE TO NEXT PARAGRAPH: _____

Paragraph 4: Body Paragraph 3

TOPIC SENTENCE: The final example of greed in “The Devil and Tom Walker” occurs when _____

_____.

SETUP FOR TEXTUAL EVIDENCE: Prior to this event in the story, _____

_____.

[NOTE: All you’re doing here is just summarizing what’s happening in the story right before your example and textual evidence.]

TEXTUAL EVIDENCE: “ _____

_____” (Irving _____).

ANALYSIS OF THE EXAMPLE: _____

[NOTE: All you’re doing here is commenting on what this example says about the theme of greed.]

Paragraph 5: Conclusion: This paragraph needs to be a full paragraph—not just a sentence—and leave the reader with something to think about. Avoid starting your conclusion with the phrase “In conclusion.” Also, even though you are summarizing the essay and should not be presenting new information, your conclusion should seem fresh and use new phrasing and diction (word choice). Note: There is NO textual evidence in a conclusion.

OVERALL SUMMARY: _____

COMMENT ON THE FIRST EXAMPLE: _____

COMMENT ON THE SECOND EXAMPLE: _____

COMMENT ON THE THIRD EXAMPLE: _____

POWERFUL ENDING: _____

Work Cited

Irving, Washington. "The Devil and Tom Walker." *Elements of Literature: Fifth Course*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 2005. 153-61.

Things to Remember:

- Your MLA heading needs to appear in the upper left-hand corner of the first page of your essay. Like the rest of your essay, it is double-spaced. Be sure to use your full, formal name.
- There is no MLA page number on page 1.
- You need to give your essay a title. The title should include the name of the author and the literary work being analyzed. It should be centered with no extra spacing, no change in font or font size, no bold, italics, or quotation marks. The only exception is that when you include the title of a literary work in your title, you do need to punctuate that appropriately.
- MLA page numbers appear from page 2 on. They are simply in the upper right-hand corner and contain your last name and the page number. (Ex. Oliveira 2). Notice there is no punctuation between the last name and the page number.
- Font size should be 10-point or 12-point. Font style should be conservative: Arial or Times New Roman.
- The Work Cited page needs to be the last page of your essay. It is printed on a separate sheet of paper and uses reverse indentation. Simply copy the example we have provided to be sure you have it correct.
- This is a literary analysis essay, which means you do not use the first-person pronouns (I, me, my, mine) or second-person pronouns (you).
- Be sure your language is formal and that you are not using slang or symbols or abbreviations.
- Proofread your essay! The spell-check and grammar check are helpful tools, but they are no substitute for your eyes!