INTRODUCTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Sample essay question: Is James Sullivan in the movie *Monsters Inc.* an epic hero?

Intro: Start general (beyond the story) and get more specific (your thesis…a direct answer to your essay question).

Sentence 1: Take a main idea (1-3 words) of the story and relate it to life in general.

*Heroes walk the earth in many shapes and sizes.*

Sentence 2: Introduce the genre, story, and author.

*The wildly creative tale Monsters Inc. by Lee Unkrich and David Silverman depicts an outlandish arena for a hero to emerge: the bedroom closet.*

Sentence 3: Relate the story to your main idea.

*James Sullivan is a monster who makes his living by scaring children, but his journey is one that all epic heroes travel.*

Sentence 4: Thesis statement…a direct answer to the essay question.

*Sully’s efforts to save Boo and bring her home earn him the title of epic hero.*

Conclusion: Wrap up your essay concisely, but do not just repeat everything you’ve already stated. You want to go the opposite direction of your introduction: specific to the story to general. This is a bit less structured than your introduction.

Restate your thesis **IN DIFFERENT WORDS**.

*James Sullivan is a proven epic hero.*

Suggest a result or consequence of the thesis with regards to the character(s) you are discussing.

*Not only do his fruitful efforts save Boo, but they also bring enlightenment to his faithful companion Mike. His reward for going against the grain is more than mere accomplished feelings; he saves a human life, he forges a stronger relationship with Mike, and he solves the Monster society’s energy crisis.*

Universalize the situation with the character(s) to life in general.

*Monster or human, heroes start from ordinary means among the masses. The difference between the hero and the ordinary is simply having the nerve to stand up against the status quo and make a stand when presented the opportunity to do so.*

CEI Paragraphs

Each body paragraph should be built in this format:

Claim (1 sentence): A sentence that supports part of your thesis. One claim does not need to support the entire thesis, but all of your claims should fit together to support your thesis. If a claim does not support your thesis, you must do one of two things: 1) Change your claim or 2) rewrite your thesis to include your new claim. Either one of these is acceptable. Your thesis is not carved in stone. It may change and evolve as your paper is written.

Evidence (1 sentence with a lead-in and a citation): An excerpt from your reading (a quote or a narrated part) that supports your claim. If it does not support your claim (and therefore your thesis), it should not be used at this point of your paper. It should be introduced with a lead-in and cited in MLA format.

DO NOT start or end a paragraph with a quote.

Interpretation (at least 3 sentences): This is where most of your writing appears. It is your job as the writer to explain three things:

1) What the quote means: What is the context of the quote? Who said it? What is happening in the story at this time? This is your chance for a bit of plot recall.

2) How it proves your claim true: Make the connection for the reader. Do not assume the reader will put 2 and 2 together; that is your job as the writer.

3) How your claim and evidence support your thesis: Be sure to relate your point to the thesis specifically. Again, make the connection apparent for the reader.

DO NOT USE ANYTHING RELATED TO THE FOLLOWING BANNED PHRASES:

-This proves that…

-This means that…

This shows…

-My claim supports/proves…

-My quote supports/proves…

-My thesis…

-I think that…

-I believe that…

-In conclusion…

-In the book…

-We see that…

Integration of Quoted Material

Even though good quotations are essential to a successful research paper, do not rely too heavily on the direct quotation. Some student papers are little more than a series of disconnected direct quotations. Excessive quoting indicates that the writer has not assimilated the material and integrated it into a readable, distinct, individual work. To avoid this problem, be selective in the use of direct quotations; instead, use paraphrasing when appropriate.

**Lead-ins**

***Always*** use **correct lead-ins** for direct quotations. The lead-in links the quotation to the text that surrounds it in the paper.

**Never drop a quotation into a sentence or a paragraph without a proper lead-in.**

***Do this:***

Agee points out that “many teachers believe rules stifle spontaneity,” resulting in a de-emphasis in the instruction of grammar in the modern classroom (10).

***Never Do This:*** There has been a de-emphasis of grammar instruction in the modern classroom**.** “Many teachers believe rules stifle spontaneity” (Agee 10).

hers believe rules stifle spontaneity” (Agee 10).

**There are three types of lead-ins:**

Somebodysays,

# Blended

* Make sure both the lead-in and the quotation are complete, correct sentences.
* **Begin the quotation with a capital letter.**
* **Use a colon.**
* Make the quotation a grammatical part of your sentence.
* **Do not use a comma or a capital letter unless it would be called for by the structure of your sentence.**
* **Do not use ellipses at the beginning or end.**
* Punctuate as dialogue.
* Use synonyms of the verb “to say” when possible.
* Remember the quotation must be a complete sentence.
* **Use a comma.**

# Sentence:

**Examples:**

Jane Agee comments, “Many students who would not have attempted college seven years ago are now coming into state universities through junior colleges” (10).

State universities are now providing “special remedial programs” in which students who do not meet the “entrance requirements are admitted on probation” (Agee 13).

Agee insists that English instruction on the college level will not improve until educators become realistic: “Public school teachers need to sit down and evaluate the situation” (12).

**THEME STATEMENT**

The (genre) (title) by (author) focuses on (main idea) and reveals (statement about humanity).

Genre: poem, short story, novella, novel, movie, etc.

Title: name of the work

Author: who created the work

Main idea: 1-3 words

Statement about humanity: generalization that most people in society ***and*** characters in the story have in common