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Mr. McClure

English 10, Block 4

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Literary essay outline

Generic Outline

Title

- I. Introduction – (The introduction will end with your thesis, a version of the prompts that have been suggested for this essay.)
- II. Support of thesis paragraph 1
 - A. Topic sentence (The “A” in ACES)
 - B. A quote from the text (The “C” in ACES)
 - C. An explanation of the quote and how it supports the topic sentence (the “E”)
 - D. A summary (shift) sentence (The “S” in ACES)
- III. Support of thesis paragraph 2
- IV. Support of thesis paragraph 3
- V. Antithesis (What are the best arguments against your point? Give some ground.)
- VI. Refutation (Explain why you still hold that your interpretation is strong.)
- VII. Conclusion

For example outlines for the archetypal approach and the psychological approach, keep reading.

Sample Outline #1 - Archetypal Approach -

“The Demon Lover” is a ghost story that follows an archetype (pattern)

I. Introduction – (The introduction will end with your thesis, something like “The Demon Lover” is a simple ghost story whose archetype (pattern) is the ballad of James Harris, also known as “The House Carpenter.”)

II. Ghost story setting

III. Ghost story suspense

A. No human eye (someone seems to be watching)

B. The mysterious letter

C. The mysterious lover with spectral eyes

D. The frightening climax

IV. Follows the James Harries archetype

A. The devil gets a promise from the woman

B. The devil returns later to claim what has been promised to him.

C. The woman is already married to someone else

1. Often a house carpenter

2. Mr. Drover is a flat character but seems simple like a house carpenter

D. The woman has a child (Mrs. D. has three.)

V. Antithesis - Doesn't follow the James Harries folklore entirely, but close enough

A. Some things missing

1. No great wealth to offer

2. No ships

B. Mrs. Drover does seem crazy enough to write the letter herself and to feel watched (even though she's not) and to sign her own initial to the letter.

VI. Refutation

A. The car, like the ships in the James Harries legend, is taking the maiden into the hinterland of deserted streets just as the ship took the other woman to Hell.

B. There are no footprints in the dust, so something supernatural must have written and placed the letter.

VII. Conclusion

A. Summary of ghost-like setting, of ghost story suspense and of James Harries archetype

B. Mrs. Drover is crazy, for sure, but who, being stalked by a demon, wouldn't be?

Sample Outline #2 - Psychological approach -

Mrs. Drover demonstrates several psychological disorders that worsen as she grows older.

I. Introduction – (The introduction will end with your thesis, something like “Although ‘The Demon Lover’ seems, at first glance, to be a simple ghost story, it is actually a tale of a woman whose psychoses drive her to imagine that she is being stalked by a demon.”)

II. Mrs. Drover demonstrates paranoia

- A. “No human eye” is watching; she imagines she’s being watched by something supernatural.
- B. Watched by “someone contemptuous of her ways” - she thinks someone detests her.

III. She also demonstrates schizophrenia.

- A. She is anxious.
- B. She is easily annoyed.
- C. Her personality is full of opposites.
 1. She looks looked “at once urgently and stealthily” into the mirror.
 2. Normal expression was one of “controlled worry but of assent.”
 3. Could “sustain a manner that was at once energetic and calm.”
 4. She’s so crazy that she wrote the mysterious letter to herself
 - a. The letter writer used an opposite too: The years have gone by “at once slowly and fast.”
 - b. The letter was signed “K,” the first initial of Kathleen’s name.

IV. Finally, she suffers from postpartum depression.

- A. Serious illness after the birth of her third child
- B. Develops “an intermittent muscular flicker,” a tick, at this time, too.

V. Antithesis -

- A. There is no mention of Mrs. Drover seeing her own footprints near the writing table.
- B. The lover is the garden did seem pretty scary and seemed to mark Kathleen with a welt on her hand.

VI. Refutation

- A. Mrs. Drover is imagining things.
 1. She imagines spectral eyes on a soldier she once dated.
 2. She imagines that that soldier is the devil marking her with a welt when he is merely a rather abusive person.
 3. She imagines that a regular taxi driver is the “demon” from the garden.
 4. Couldn’t she also imagine the letter was put there by something supernatural and want so much to believe that that she didn’t notice the footprints? Or maybe there were none because the story says there wasn’t much dust.
- B. Kathleen has been delusional for some time.
 1. She wanted to tell her mother and sister she has been in love.
 2. She wanted attention. She wanted to run to her mother and sister

- like a 12-year-old to tell them her lover was gone.
- C. The anxiety, paranoia, schizophrenia, and postpartum depression are clear. They cause Kathleen to imagine that a normal taxi driver is her lover from the garden.

VII. Conclusion

- A. Summary of three psychological disorders.
- B. Mrs. Drover is crazy, and her mental disorders are worsening, causing her to imagine that her former lover is “out to get her.”