

Short Story Essay Assignment

Write a **2-3 page formal essay** (typed and double-spaced in 12 point font) comparing two short stories from the list of stories we have read.

- ❖ Young Goodman Brown, by Nathaniel Hawthorne
- ❖ Rappaccinni's Daughter, by Nathaniel Hawthorne
- ❖ The Pit and the Pendulum, by Edgar Allan Poe
- ❖ The Fall of the House of Usher, by Edgar Allan Poe

Ultimately, your essay will compare, in a meaningful way, two of the stories we have read by identifying and explaining unifying features between the two texts. You may choose to relate the stories based on the development and conflicts of their characters, specific literary elements the authors use, or themes developed throughout the texts.

Introduction

Topic Sentence – Begin with a topic sentence that hooks the reader and leads into your essay.

Narrow the Focus – Narrow the focus of your paper by mentioning either character conflicts, literary elements (symbolism, metaphor, etc) or a specific theme as the *main element* that you will be analyzing in your paper.

Thesis Statement – Make an **original assertion** about the two stories with regard to *characters conflict, literary elements, or specific theme* – preferably something beyond the level of “obvious truth,” and therefore, insightful, thought-provoking and open to debate. Include the title and authors of the works you are discussing.

Body 1 (First Story)

Describe how the element (*characters conflicts, literary elements, or theme*) you have identified is used purposefully by the author in the first work. As part of your analysis, please remember that YOU MUST provide **relevant quotations** as evidence supporting your claims and observations. These paragraphs are where you should provide your analysis—*how* does your analysis of character, literary elements, or specific themes develop your thesis statement?

Body 2 (Second Story)

Analyze your element (*characters conflicts, literary elements, or theme*) for the second work, following the same procedure for Body 1.

Body 3

Points of Comparison – In support of your **thesis statement**, analyze and investigate specific points of comparison (or contrast). Here is where you compare and contrast how each work uses the element you are analyzing.

(Conclusion)

Final Editorial Remarks – Finish your essay with some concluding remarks on the ultimate meaning/life-lesson (s) associated with each story, making specific reference to the character conflicts, literary elements, or themes that you analyzed throughout your paper.