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writing insightful Literary Analysis Essay Wavebreakmedia / iStock / Getty Images Get sense of what to do right with this literary analysis essay example. A literary analysis is more than a book report; it goes deeper into the text, examining the themes, literary devices, characters, and more. To write a great literary analysis essay, you need a good thesis and a good grasp of the novel, story, poem, or other literary work you're discussing. You also need examples for inspiration. At the middle school level, a literary analysis essay can be as short as one page. For high schoolers, the essay may become much longer as they progress. Often, this type of essay will focus on a specific area of literary analysis, such as character development or imagery within a text. Students can sometimes choose the story, novel, or book series they wish to write about, and they learn to use quotes from the text to support their thesis statements. This sample essay focuses on the character development of Laura in the book *By the Shores of Silver Lake* by Laura Ingalls Wilder. The thesis statement for this literary analysis essay is, "When her eldest sister loses her sight, Laura must suddenly take on the role of the oldest child in the family and grow in maturity. In *By the Shores of Silver Lake*, Laura Ingalls Wilder focuses on the theme of coming of age, especially as it relates to her main character, Laura. Although this theme runs throughout the novel, it is especially apparent as Laura's role in the family changes. The novel begins with Laura's older sister, Mary, losing her sight due to scarlet fever. This directly affects Laura, who must go from being a middle child to suddenly assuming the role of the oldest and acting as Mary's eyes. Its role she has had no experience with, and as she learns to accept it and grow to meet her responsibilities, she begins to leave childhood behind. In previous novels in the Little House series, Laura and Mary have a typical sibling relationship. Mary is the oldest and is often placed in charge of Laura, such as when Pa and Ma go to town and leave them alone together in the chapter Keeping House in On the Banks of Plum Creek. The two sometimes fight, and Laura plainly resents Mary's bossiness while at the same time looking up to her sister. This relationship changes at the beginning of *By the Shores of Silver Lake*, which opens with a simple scene where Mary rapidly loses her eyesight. Mary's blindness on the family daily life. Mary can no longer see to care for herself, and as the family sets out on journey to their new home in South Dakota, Laura resists her responsibilities. She must guide her blind sister carefully as they board the train. In the boarding house, she must cut Mary's meat for her at dinner and help her find her silverware and food. In the wagon that takes them farther west, she must sit on the uncomfortable end of a board seat to give Mary the safer spot in the middle. At the age of 12, Laura must suddenly make countless small adjustments to show she is responsible for Mary's safety and well-being. Even more significantly, Laura must see out loud for Mary, as is described in the chapter Riding the Cars. On that dreadful morning when Mary could not see even sunshine full in her eyes, Pa had said that Laura must see for her. Being Mary's eyes is perhaps one of the most essential duties Laura takes on. She is not only responsible for Mary's safety and practical needs, but she must also share her outlook on the world in a way that allows Mary to experience it too. This is no light burden, although Laura carries it well. By the end of the novel, Laura has taken on the role of eldest. She even takes over Mary's dream of becoming a school teacher. Laura swears to Mary that she will study hard and become a teacher so she can help finance Mary's college education. She no longer has the option of sitting back and allowing her sister to lead. Instead, she must literally guide her sister from place to place. She must offer direction with her vision and words, and she must provide a means for her sister to achieve her dreams. Although Laura is only 13 at the end of the novel, she has grown significantly in maturity due to her changing role within the family. Click Image to View and Download PDF Literary Analysis Essay Example Created by Beth Wiggins for LoveToKnow There are several qualities that make this an insightful literary analysis essay: Clear thesis statement. The thesis statement is clear and concise, stating the main argument of the essay. It identifies the text, the character being analyzed, and the specific aspect of the text being discussed. The thesis is supported by evidence from the text, including quotes and references to specific chapters. The thesis is also supported by a clear understanding of the text's themes and the author's intent. The thesis is also supported by a clear understanding of the text's structure and the author's use of literary devices. The thesis is also supported by a clear understanding of the text's historical context and the author's background. The thesis is also supported by a clear understanding of the text's cultural context and the author's perspective. The thesis is also supported by a clear understanding of the text's social context and the author's role. The thesis is also supported by a clear understanding of the text's political context and the author's influence. The thesis is also supported by a clear understanding of the text's economic context and the author's status. The thesis is also supported by a clear understanding of the text's religious context and the author's beliefs. 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