

The Evaluation Essay

Definition of Evaluation: A form of discourse the purpose of which is to assess according to fixed standards. Evaluation essays utilize characteristics that enable a writer to make judgments about a subject. In the case of short stories, novel, poetry or drama, writers assess the literary quality of the work, as well as the values the story endorses or refutes.

Objectives: Students will apply their knowledge of evaluation to works of literature or film presented in the AP course or on the AP Literature and Composition exam.

Skill Focus for the Evaluation Essay:

- ▶ How was I engaged as a reader?
- ▶ Did the writer keep my interest by making me want to know what happens or did the writer create an understanding of something deeper?
- ▶ Does the work help me to understand my own personality, the character of others, or the nature of the world?
- ▶ Does the work disturb me because it presents values different from my own?
- ▶ How does the work clarify, support, or contradict my own world-view?
- ▶ Was the story "real" in the sense that it provided a truth about life?
- ▶ What was the truth? How was the story effective in demonstrating this truth?
- ▶ How has the writer brought people and actions "alive?"
- ▶ Was I able to identify with any of the characters or situations? Why?
- ▶ Are there any clichés or tired ideas presented?
- ▶ How does this work compare with others I have read?

Evaluation Lesson Suggestions:

- ▶ **Literature: Reading Fiction, Poetry, and Drama, 4th ed. Robert DiYanni** (The Evaluation of Fiction, pp. 31-33; The Evaluation of Poetry, pp. 468-471; The Evaluation of Drama, pp. 827-829; The Evaluation of the Essay, pp. 1725-1726)
 - ▶ John Updike, *A&P*, pp. 33-38, #s 7-10
 - ▶ Kate Chopin, *The Story of an Hour*, pp. 38-42, #s 1-6
 - ▶ Adrienne Rich, *Aunt Jennifer's Tigers*, pp. 471-472, #s 11-15

- ▶ Richard Seltzer, *The Masked Marvel's Last Toehold*, pp. 1727-1730, #s 7-10
- ▶ General Questions for the Evaluation of Fiction, p. 116
- ▶ General Questions for the Evaluation of Poetry, p. 559
- ▶ General Questions for the Evaluation of Drama, p. 861
- ▶ General Questions for the Evaluation of Essays, p. 1763

TEKS: 1B-F; 2A-F; 3A-E; 4A-C; 6A-C; 7A-G; 8A-C, E-H; 9A-D; 10A-C; 11A-D; 12A-F; 13A-F; 15A, C, E; 16A-H; 18A-C