

Grade 9 Choice Novel Study Essay Identity

All of the books that were chosen for you to use for the novel study unit have something in common. They deal with the theme of *identity*.

Definition of identity:

2 a : the distinguishing character or personality of an individual : individuality
(<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/identity>)

To put it simply, your identity is made up of the characteristics that make you you. These are the traits that distinguish you from others and make you unique. All of us have our own combination of traits and characteristics that define you.

At your age, your identity is still forming. You're still learning and growing and finding out who you are. This growth can be found in many of the novels studied.

In your life, you may at some point be put in a situation that changes you and defines you. Your response to tragedy, success, personal obstacles, challenges, etc. helps you to define who you are and what you are capable of or limited by. In many of the novels studied, characters are put in situations that test their limits or force them to make changes or adapt. Those situations help form a character's identity from that point on.

Your job is to use more than one of the readings that we've done this year - or your own personal experiences - and show how the theme of identity is used. You can compare situations, contrast situations, or find some unique way of approaching the topic of identity in your essay.

As usual, you will write a 5 paragraph essay. You will need to come up with a thesis that is arguable, fact-based, and interesting. **Your body paragraphs exist to help prove your thesis.** Each paragraph/point should be related to proving that thesis/point.

Things we've read/watched/talked about this year:

Once Upon a Time, Charles, Cranes Fly South, Of Mice and Men, 13RW, choice novel study, etc. You also did a fair bit of writing about yourself (What Matters Most to You, Introductory Letter, etc.)

Pick TWO of those things (or something I've forgotten about...) and use the theme of Identity to form a thesis. Can you find characters from two readings and compare them? Are they developing their identity in a similar way? Have they faced a crisis that is changing/shaping their identity in a similar/different way? Have two characters reacted similarly/differently to some sort of crisis? Etc.

You will be given an edit sheet to fill out for someone else, which should help you to improve your essay after your first draft. It will look something like this:

A: Organization and Ideas

Introduction

- The hook (question, quote, story, statement, etc...) grabs the attention of the reader.
- Sufficient information on the topic is provided so that the audience understands the topic/material completely.
- Thesis and outline points are stated and clear. Thesis is fact-based, arguable and interesting.

Body

- Each paragraph includes a topic sentence introducing the broad goal.
- Each broad goal has three specific proof points explained in detail. If there is not enough detail, please indicate on the essay where more support is needed.
- Specific references to the novel(s) are provided (author & page number in parentheses. Eg: (Steinbeck, 32))
- Paragraphs are organized in a logical manner, which makes the ideas easy to follow.
- Transitions were evident throughout the entire essay.
- Word choice is appropriate for the audience and context.

Conclusion

- Thesis has been re-stated
- Ideas presented in the paper have been summarized
- A final thought for the audience has been included

B: Grammar/ Spelling

C: Comments

1. Identify one thing the author did well in this essay (introduction, organization, grammar, word choice, etc...). If applicable, provide an example from their text that demonstrates this skill.
2. What is one thing that the author should focus on in his/her good copy (providing more support, transitions, organization of ideas, etc...)?
3. Which literary devices are used or should be used to make this writing better. (voice, repetition, word choice, metaphors, similes, comparisons, examples, organizational structure.)