

How to write a Critical Essay

Introductions (T.A.R.T.S)



*Your introduction should **not** say 'In this essay...'*

- **T:** You must use capital letters for the title of the novel
- **A:** You must spell the title and author's name correctly
- **R to T:** You must refer to the task

Main body of your essay (P.C.Q.A)

- Should be written formally with no contractions (don't, hasn't, etc.)
- Should consist of around five key points which are linked to form an argument
- Should include topic sentences, linking words and phrases and evidence from the text (quotations)
- Should all relate to the task
- Must be in full sentences and clearly written

Quoting and analysis



Do not write 'This quote shows...' it's in speech marks, of course it's a quotation...

- Each quotation must be fully analysed including showing what connotations of words are there, analysis of imagery and other language techniques

Evaluation

- You need to tell me why the evidence you have chosen (quotations and analysis) is effective in proving your argument (what the question is about)
- Vary the way you evaluate in relation to the task
- Think about the text as a whole. How do ideas link together/ progress the story and characterisation?

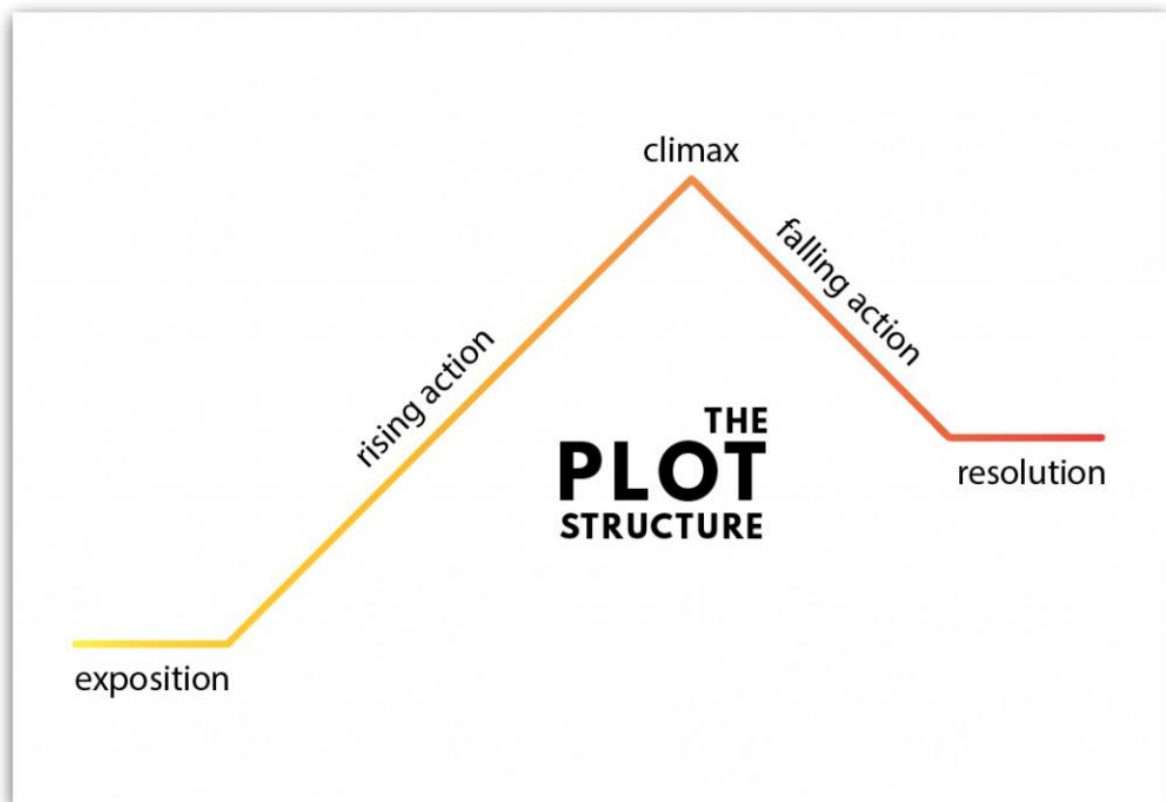
Conclusions (T.A.R.T.S)

- Should sum up your key points and relate back to the task

Elements to Consider in a Critical Essay

Exam questions always state “*by referring to appropriate techniques....*” The following are the techniques used in **1984** that you could discuss in your essay.

- **Setting**: time and place.
- **Plot**: storyline and key events.
- **Narrative**: narrative voice? Chapters? Parts?
- **Characterisation**: description, actions, dialogue of key characters – paying close attention to how they change and *develop* over the course of the plot.
- **Theme**: issues the text deals with.
- **Language**: writing style / language techniques used by the author to vividly convey setting, character and theme.
- **Structure**:



Helpful Phrases for Essay Writing

Techniques	Linking	Evaluation	Analytical
Climax / Anticlimax	Furthermore	Memorable use of...	Conveys
Key moment	In addition	Skilful use of...	Illustrates
Characterisation	However	Striking use of...	Proves
Setting	Conversely	Emotive	Suggests
Symbolism	As a consequence	Effective	Implies
Turning Point	As a result	Powerful	Symbolises
Theme	Bearing this in mind	Significant	Reflects

Main Body Paragraph Checklist

In EACH main paragraph, have you done the following?	✓
• LINKED to the paragraph before?	
• Included CONTEXT before your quotation?	
• Used a few words to INTRODUCE your quotation?	
• Written TWO pieces of ANALYSIS ? (Or used PCQA-CQA?)	
• Referred to the THEME ?	
• Mentioned a TECHNIQUE ?	
• Used <i>different</i> words instead of 'This Shows...'?	
• LINKED to the next paragraph?	
• If you've mentioned a character for the first time, briefly said who they are?	