

Teacher-modeled Essay

That Time of Year Again: The Circuit by Francisco Jiménez

In the short story, *The Circuit*, Francisco Jiménez uses characterization, imagery and symbolism to show the difficult living conditions of migrant families. This is the story about a boy and his family as they move from one harvesting job to another. When “that time of year” comes around again, the family suddenly moves to harvest another crop.

One of the most vivid images that the author creates in this short story is the garage where Panchito and his family lived one season. Jiménez also describes cleaning the dirt floors and the broken walls. The following excerpt paints a clear picture of the garage:

The garage was worn out by the years. It had no windows. The walls, eaten by termites, strained to support the roof full of holes. The dirt floor, populated by earthworms, looked like a gray road map (p. 26)

Through Papá’s character, the author shows a man who cares for his family as they migrate from harvest to harvest. Although Papá did not have a lot of dialogue, Jiménez creates a hardworking, responsible character. From packing up Papá’s car named “Carcanchita” to preparing their new home by plugging “the holes in the walls with old newspapers and tin can tops,” Papá worked hard to provide for his family. Not only did Papá “wipe the sweat off his forehead with his sleeve” as he packed up the car, but he also made sure that Mamá and the little ones had a mattress to sleep on inside the garage.

In addition to imagery and characterization, Jiménez includes symbolism in the story as well. For example, when Papá buys the car, he assumes that “the original owner must have been an important man” because of the necktie he found in the backseat. For Papá, the necktie represents “importance” or social significance.

Through Papá’s character, the garage, and the necktie, Francisco Jiménez uses characterization, imagery and symbolism to show the tough living conditions for migrant families. My parents, who grew up in similar conditions, have told me stories about their childhood experiences growing up in California. Jiménez effectively captures how close knit migrant families are and the migratory lives they lead.

Teacher-modeled Essay

In the story, *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters*, John Steptoe uses characterization to show how important it is to be kind. In this African Cinderella story, Steptoe uses the differences between the two sisters to teach how essential good deeds are in our lives. This fairytale is about an African Villager named Mufaro who has two beautiful daughters. When the king decides to choose a bride from among "The Most Worthy and Beautiful Daughters in the Land," both Mufaro's girls go to the city to meet the king.

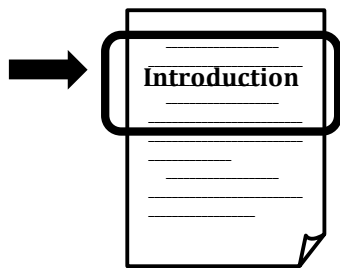
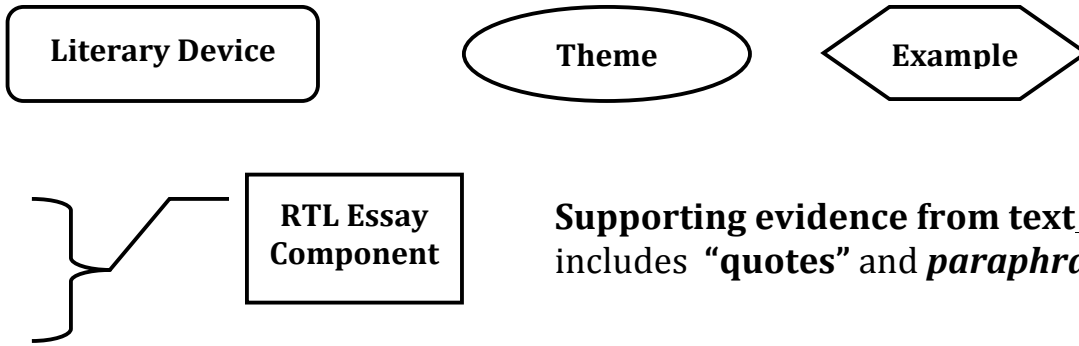
One way that the author uses characterization to show the importance of kindness is by telling us how thoughtful Nyasha is. Nyasha is thoughtful because she doesn't complain about her sister to her dad. Also, she gives a yam to the hungry, little boy and sunflower seeds with the old woman in the forest.

Another way that Steptoe uses characterization to show the value of kindness is by illustrating how uncaring Manyara is. In contrast to Nyasha, Manyara is mean because she has a "bad temper," teases and tells her sister that she will be "queen" and Nyasha will be her "servant." Additionally, Manyara is greedy because she leaves for the city in the middle of the night while Nyasha waits to leave with her family in the morning.

In addition to showing how good it is to be thoughtful and caring, the author uses characterization to show the positive results of being kind, even when we are sad or scared. Even after her sister treats her badly, Nyasha goes "about her chores" and grows a "bountiful" garden. Also, Nyasha bravely meets the snake even though her sister warns her that he is a "monster." Then, "there, before Nyasha's eyes," the garden snake changes into the king!

Through Nyasha's sweet character, Steptoe tells how important it is to be kind to everyone in our lives. When I argue with my sister, I notice that it makes my little sister sad. Steptoe teaches us that if we act considerately to people in our lives, good things will happen to us.

Teacher-modeled Essay with Annotations



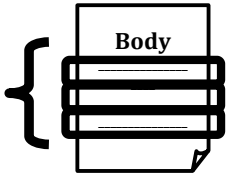
In the story, Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters, John Steptoe uses **characterization** to show **how important it is to be kind.**

Thesis Statement

In this African Cinderella story, Steptoe uses the differences between the two sisters to teach how essential good deeds are in our lives. This fairytale is about an African Villager named Mufaro who has two beautiful daughters. When the king decides to choose a bride from among "The Most Worthy and Beautiful Daughters in the Land," both Mufaro's girls go to the city to meet the king.

Additional sentence to explain thesis

Gist Summary



Teacher-modeled Essay with Annotations

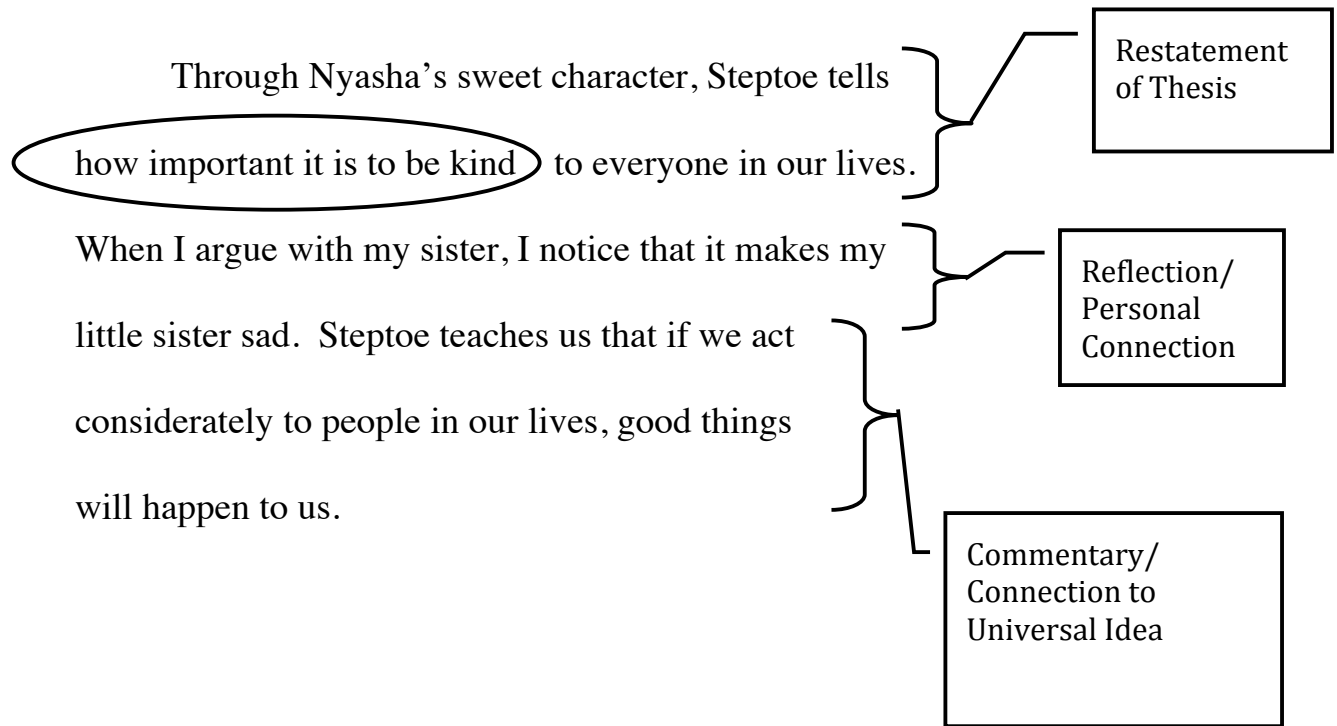
One way that the author uses **characterization** to show **the importance of kindness** is by telling us how **thoughtful** Nyasha is. Nyasha is thoughtful because *she doesn't complain about her sister to her dad. Also, she gives a yam to the hungry, little boy and sunflower seeds with the old woman in the forest.*

Another way that Steptoe uses **characterization** to show **the value of kindness** is by illustrating how **uncaring** Manyara is.

In contrast to Nyasha, Manyara is mean because **she has a "bad temper," teases and tells her sister that she will be "queen" and Nyasha will be her "servant."** *Additionally, Manyara is greedy because she leaves for the city in the middle of the night while Nyasha waits to leave with her family in the morning.*

In addition to showing how good it is to be **thoughtful** and **caring**, the author uses **characterization** to show **the positive results of being kind**, even when we are sad or scared. **Even after her sister treats her badly, Nyasha goes "about her chores" and grows a "bountiful" garden. Also, Nyasha bravely meets the snake even though her sister warns her that he is a "monster."** Then, **"there, before Nyasha's eyes," the garden snake changes into the king!**

Teacher-modeled Essay with Annotations



Synonyms/Antonyms/Related Words for the word **KIND**:

Synonyms

thoughtful
caring
sweet character

Antonyms

thoughtless
mean
bad temper
uncaring

Related Words

kindness
considerately
good deeds
tease
complain
treat badly
bravely

Effective Introductions



An effective introduction of **Response to Literature...**

1. **Includes title, author, thesis statement and summary of the text**
2. Summarizes the text in 1-2 sentences

The introduction may also include...

3. *An understanding of the literary work as a whole*

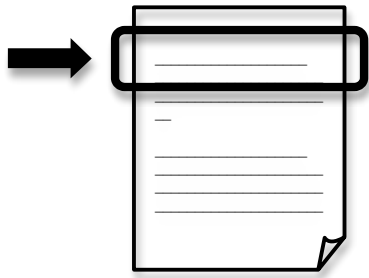
Examples:

Thesis Statement

Understanding of the literary work

In the short story, *The Circuit*, Francisco Jiménez uses characterization, imagery and symbolism *to show the difficult living conditions of migrant families.* This is the story about a boy and his family as they move from one harvesting job to another. When “that time of year” comes around again, the family suddenly moves to harvest another crop.

Summary



Effective Introductions



An effective introduction to a **Response to Literature...**

1. Includes **title**, **author**, {**thesis statement**} and summary of the text
2. Summarizes the text in 1-2 sentences (gist summary)

The introduction may also show...

3. An understanding of the text as whole.

type of text

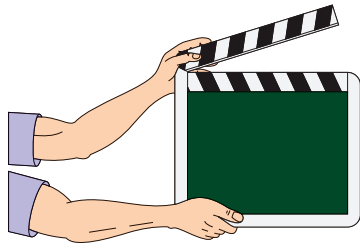
title of text

author

In the story, *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters*, John Steptoe uses characterization to show how important it is to be kind. } **Thesis Statement**

In this African Cinderella story, Steptoe uses the differences between the two sisters to teach how essential good deeds are in our lives. This fairytale is about an African Villager named Mufaro who has two beautiful daughters. When the king decides to choose a bride from among "The Most Worthy and Beautiful Daughters in the Land," both Mufaro's girls go to the city to meet the king. } *Understanding of the text*

1-2 Sentence Gist Summary



Effective Conclusions

An effective conclusion of **Response to Literature** includes...

1. **A summary of the interpretation**
2. *A commentary (and/or) a reflection*

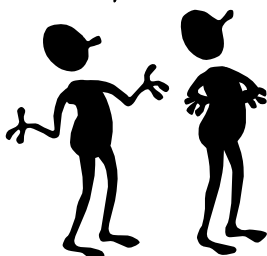
Summary

Through Papá’s character, the garage, and the necktie, **Francisco Jiménez** uses **characterization, imagery and symbolism** to show the tough living conditions for migrant families. *My parents, who grew up in similar conditions, have told me similar stories about their childhood experiences growing up in California. Jiménez effectively captures how closeknit and loving migrant families are in spite of the hardships they face.*

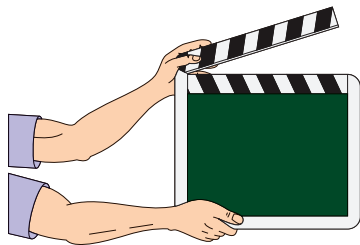
Commentary/Reflection

So what?

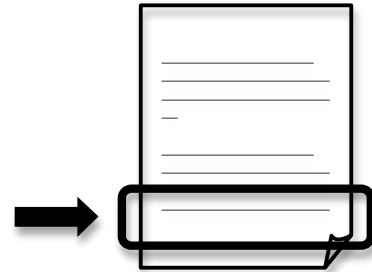
The
“So
what?”



Sometimes writers like to refer to conclusions as the “So what?” factor: What did the reader get out of the essay? Why should the reader care?



Effective Conclusions



An effective conclusion of **Response to Literature** includes...

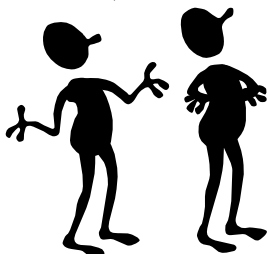
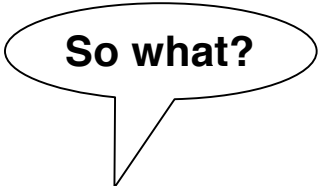
1. A summary of the interpretation (revisits/paraphrases the thesis)
2. A commentary (and/or) a reflection

Through Nyasha’s sweet character, Steptoe tells how important it is to be kind to everyone in our lives. *When I argue with my sister, I notice that it makes my little sister sad. Steptoe teaches us that if we act considerately to people in our lives, good things will happen to us.*

Summary

Commentary/
Reflection

The
“So
what?”



Sometimes writers like to refer to conclusions as the “So what?” factor: What did the reader get out of the essay? Why should the reader care?