

Traditional Western Package – can be done alone




Literary Analysis Package (Western, Traditional)

- Your end product will be a 1000 word, Five Paragraph Composition


What's a Literary Analysis?

A **literary analysis** is a detailed examination of a piece of literature. It's not just a summary of a story, but an argument about how the author created a particular effect or meaning. Think of yourself as a detective, looking for clues in the text (like specific words, symbols, and literary devices) to support your claim about the work. Your main goal is to **persuade** your reader that your interpretation is valid and well-supported by evidence from the text itself.

The Essential Toolkit

1. **The Thesis Statement** : Your **thesis statement** is the most important part of your analysis. It's the single sentence that presents your main argument. It's not a question or a simple fact. A good thesis is **debatable** and focused.
 - *Example of a weak thesis:* *Moby Dick* is a book about a whale.
 - *Example of a strong thesis:* In *Moby Dick*, Herman Melville uses the white whale not merely as an antagonist but as a complex symbol of the destructive obsession with unattainable ideals.
2. **The Body Paragraphs** : Each body paragraph should support your thesis statement. A well-structured paragraph typically follows the **P.E.A.** structure:
 - **Point:** The topic sentence of the paragraph.
 - **Evidence:** A direct quote or a specific detail from the text.
 - **Analysis:** Explain **how** your evidence supports your point and your thesis.
3. **Literary Devices** : Literary devices are the tools an author uses to create meaning.
 - **Metaphor/Simile:** A comparison. **Metaphor** says one thing **is** another; a **simile** uses "like" or "as".
 - **Symbolism:** An object, person, or idea that represents something else.
 - **Imagery:** Language that appeals to the five senses.
 - **Foreshadowing:** Hints or clues about what will happen later.
 - **Irony:** The contrast between what is said and what is meant, or what is expected and what happens.

Writing Process

1. **Pre-writing & Brainstorming** : Read the text carefully, identify a theme, and formulate a question to develop your thesis.

2. **Outlining** 🗺️: Create a roadmap with an introduction, body paragraphs, and a conclusion.
3. **Drafting & Revising** ✍️: Write a first draft and then revise it for clarity, strong transitions, and a solid argument.

Common Pitfalls to Avoid ⚠️

- **Summarizing instead of analyzing.**
- **Using too many quotes** without enough explanation.
- **Making vague claims** instead of specific, detailed arguments.

Indigenized Package – better done together

A Guide to Analyzing Coast Salish Oral Tradition in Writing

This guide is for high school students writing a literary analysis of a Coast Salish story. Unlike a book, these stories are living parts of a culture, passed down through generations. Your analysis will not only explore the narrative but also the cultural context and the art of the storyteller.

1. The Foundation: A Different Kind of Text

Coast Salish oral traditions are not "fiction." They are historical records, maps, and lessons about how to live in the world. They carry the knowledge of Coast Salish peoples, connecting them to their lands and ancestors.

- **You're not just reading words; you're listening to a performance.** Focus on the storyteller's voice, rhythm, and any gestures.
- **A story's purpose is not just entertainment.** It teaches about kinship, history, and proper conduct.

2. The Essential Toolkit 🧰

A. Thesis Statement 🎯: Your thesis should make an arguable claim about how the story, as told, creates meaning.

- *Example:* In the Malahat story of the chief choosing a wife, the storyteller's emphasis on the "homely" woman's tears and the chief's internal knowing demonstrates that Coast Salish values prioritize humility and inner character over superficial beauty.

B. Evidence & Analysis (The P.E.A. Model): The P.E.A. structure still applies, but your "Evidence" is different.

- **Point:** Your topic sentence.
- **Evidence:** Describe a specific moment from the performance. You must be descriptive since there is no page number.
- **Analysis:** Explain how that specific performance detail serves a purpose.

3. Elements to Analyze

When listening to a Coast Salish story, pay attention to these key elements:

- **Cultural Context:** What does the story reveal about the values and beliefs of the Coast Salish people? Stories often explain the origins of places and the importance of kinship.
- **Repetition:** Why are phrases or events repeated?
- **Character Archetypes:** Do you see recurring character types, like a clever Trickster figure?
- **Place and Kinship:** Coast Salish stories are deeply tied to specific territories. The physical features of the land are often seen as transformed ancestors.
- **Sound and Silence:** Pay attention to the storyteller's use of pauses, volume, and rhythm.

4. Citing Your Source

- **You must be specific and respectful.** Oral traditions are the intellectual property of the communities and individuals who hold them.
- **Citation requires the name of the storyteller.** If the storyteller is known, you must name them.
- **A common format would be a footnote or a note in your paper, for example:**
This analysis is based on a recorded performance of the "Loon Story" by Elder [Elder's Full Name], from the [Nation Name], recorded on [Date] at [Location].