

Literary Analysis Essay Outline Example 1

Topic: Symbolism in "The Great Gatsby"

Introduction

- Hook: Symbols often reveal deeper meanings than characters' words.
- Background: F. Scott Fitzgerald uses recurring symbols throughout the novel.
- Thesis: In *The Great Gatsby*, Fitzgerald uses the green light, the Valley of Ashes, and Dr. T. J. Eckleburg's eyes to illustrate the corruption of the American Dream.

Body Paragraph 1: The Green Light

- Topic Sentence: The green light symbolizes Gatsby's hopes and unattainable dreams.
- Evidence: Gatsby's fixation on the light across the bay.
- Analysis: The light represents his desire for Daisy and an idealized future.

Body Paragraph 2: The Valley of Ashes

- Topic Sentence: The Valley of Ashes highlights the moral decay hidden beneath wealth.
- Evidence: Description of the industrial wasteland.
- Analysis: It contrasts the glamour of East and West Egg.

Body Paragraph 3: Dr. T. J. Eckleburg's Eyes

- Topic Sentence: The billboard eyes symbolize judgment and the loss of spiritual values.
- Evidence: George Wilson's interpretation of the eyes.
- Analysis: They reflect society's moral emptiness.

Conclusion

- Restate thesis.
- Summarize symbolism's role.
- Conclude with Fitzgerald's critique of the American Dream.