**“On The Rainy River” Theories and Proofs**

When writing a critical analysis of literature, a writer must first indicate a theory, then defend this theory with specific evidence from the text and finally explain the evidence in relation to the theory. Take a look at the following example from “Horses of the Night”

Theory – Vanessa’s imagination parallels that of Chris early on in the story.

Proof – She envisions the house with “trees [that] were still growing” and branches that “had been coaxed into formation of towers and high up nests”. Chris’ sisters also do not exist for her “not even in photographs” because she does not want to know about them and she is horrified about swimming in the lake because she believes that “one of the creatures had lived on”

Explanation – Vanessa’s imagination is similar to Chris in that she also envisions the world as a fantastical place not based on the reality around her. She also refuses to recognize that which she doesn’t want to see in much the same way that Chris does.

On the attached sheet you will find a general list of rules for using quotations as evidence in your body paragraphs.

***For the following theories from “On the Rainy River” write the proof and explanation for each. You will need to do this on a separate sheet of paper.***

1. The narrator’s story is a cathartic and restorative attempt to gain closure.
2. Elroy Berdahl is a hero to Tim because he is a pillar of neutrality.
3. Part of Tim O’Brien’s problem at the beginning of the conflict is that his life sits in intellectual theory rather than pragmatic life.
4. Tim O’Brien is a sensitive person.
5. People, when faced with a difficult choice, would rather follow social convention than their own personal morality.

**General Rules for Integrating Quotations (Review)**

1. Avoid using lengthy pieces of text. Choose only the most important parts of the quotation to support your ideas. Sometimes this may be only one or two words.
2. Integrate the quotation so that when you are reading it aloud you can’t tell where the quotations begin and end.
3. If you remove a piece of text, insert an ellipse. Eg. Joe Keller asserts that he “should’ve put [Chris] out when he was ten…then he’d know how a buck was made in this world” (77).
4. Use square brackets to change words so that you maintain consistency in point of view and tense. Your critical writing should ALWAYS be in third person point of view and in the present tense.
5. When a quotation is punctuated properly the citation should come at the end of the sentence and followed by a period. If there is another form of punctuation (question or exclamation mark) then this will come in front of the citation. If the sentence includes quotations from more than one page they should be listed in the order that they are quoted and separated by a comma.

For more examples and advice, see the power point on the website.