

Life of Pi

Formal Literary Essay

**Houghton
ENG 4U**

You are to write a formal literary essay on the novel Life of Pi. You are to write a five (5) paragraph essay that includes sub-points for each of your arguments. Choose a topic to respond to and use the organizers provided to develop and support your arguments. You must do secondary research/reading in order to develop your arguments. You will be required to cite at least two credible, secondary, academic sources in your essay.

Essay Topics

Comparison

- Compare Pi's coming of age to Hamlet's

- The use of perspective and the concept of metafiction

Focus on Character

- Pi's evolution/growth
- Pi's journey as an example of the heroic quest
- The symbolic significance of the characters on the lifeboat

Focus on Themes and Social Commentary

- The role of Fate
- The role of Faith and religion
- Agnosticism vs. Atheism and the better story
- Nature's law vs. Man's law / Instinct vs. Reason
- An examination of: the importance of family and friends
- A discussion of the concept of innocence
- A discussion of the ending / the purpose of the ending

Focus on Language

- Use of symbols and imagery
- An exploration of archetypal themes, characters and symbols
- Allusions to the Bible, other sacred texts, mythology and literature

You will be responsible for the following:

1. **Secondary reading**
2. **A complete essay organizer.**
3. **A rough copy of the essay**
4. **A complete peer evaluation checklist**
5. **A good copy, including title page and works cited page**

Citation

Works Cited

Your works cited page should list all the texts cited/quoted in your essay. You will have at least three texts cited, Life of Pi and your two secondary sources.

Format the citation for the novel as follows:

Author's last name, Author's first name. Title of book. Publisher, City of publication closest to where you live: year of publication.

Embedded Citation

In the body of your essay, you must cite your sources. After each quote or reference to the text, you must include your embedded citation.

Format for novel citation:

(Author's last name, page number)

You can look up MLA citation rules/protocol on <http://citationmachine.net>

Other things to remember:

- Double space your good copy
- Integrate your quotations properly
- Write in present tense
- Do not use contractions
- Do not use personal pronouns
- Write a creative title for your essay, not just the title of the texts)