Writing Body Paragraphs:

Body paragraph development for literary analysis: Remember there is no one way to write all essays. You should pay careful attention to the kind of assignment you are writing: comparison/ contrast, cause/ effect, definition, etc. The following outline works well for a critical analysis or a literary analysis or a reaction paper.

CEAs:

C = Claim

E = Evidence

A = Analysis

**1. Thesis statement (Major Claim) as last sentence in introductory paragraph:** Through the character Macbeth, William Shakespeare presents his audience with a diagrammatic study in the destruction of a man and his reputation, as well as the rebirth of Scotland.

**2. Topic Sentence, the first sentence of the paragraph.**

a. The topic sentence tells the reader what the paragraph will be about

b. The topic sentence relates back to the thesis statement

**[*This thesis statement (major claim)is true because:]***

**3. Minor Claim(Point or Reason):**

(Note: This should be a statement connected to your thesis. It should not be a statement about the characters or story; these are the evidence.)

Ex. Macbeth knows that in order to become king, Duncan must die, by natural or unnatural means, and this last thought strikes him with panic and fear while he debates the good or bad of the prophecies.

**[*This reason is valid because of the following evidence or example from the work*]**

**3A. Evidence/Example from Text and Explanation:**

* + The examples should specific to support the explanation of the topic sentence
  + The examples might include a quote directly from the text

Ex. That he did not dismiss them right away as ridiculous indicates that in spite of his bravery as a soldier, Macbeth is not totally committed to Duncan; instead in a soliloquy he admits, “…why do I yield to that suggestion/Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair/And make my seated heart knock at my ribs/Against the use of nature”

**[*The evidence (or example) supports or proves the minor Claim by ...*]**

**3B. Analysis**

This section will explain **how** your examples apply to and prove your thesis. You will answer questions such as so what? How does it apply? What do your examples and explanations show?

Ex. Shakespeare does not take any shortcuts in developing Macbeth as a human being who, when given a choice, chooses his own gain instead of loyalty to his king and country.

**Depending on the complexity of the thesis statement and/or prompt, you can include a 2nd (even a 3rd) claim to your body paragraph:**

**4.  Minor Claim****(Point or Reason):**

**[*This reason is valid because of the following evidence or example from the work*]**

**4A. Evidence or Example from Text:**

**[*The evidence (or example) supports or proves the minor Claim by ...*]**

**4B. Analysis**

**5. Minor Claim** **(Point or Reason):**

**[*This reason is valid because of the following evidence or example from the work*]**

**5A. Evidence or Example from Text:**

**[*The evidence (or example) supports or proves the minor Claim by ...*]**

**5B. Analysis**

**6. Conclusion** – Summarize your earlier points, but also try to consider “what’s next?” How do these claims

and evidence affect your reader universally?

Here is another example using F.Scott Fitzgerald’s The Great Gatsby:

**1.**Thesis Statement: Fitzgerald shows that in relationships, love or compassion does not necessarily imply a sense of commitment to a person, and vice versa.

**2/3.** The relationship between Tom, Myrtle, and Daisy shows a lack of commitment among characters. **2/3.** He’s married to Daisy, but is actively having an affair with a woman named Myrtle Wilson. This relationship is filled with irony: Daisy is beautiful and charming, while Myrtle is neither. **3A.** It is also ironic that Tom still feels some sort of commitment to his wife, even while with Myrtle. At a party in Manhattan, a drunken Myrtle cries out, “Daisy! Daisy! Daisy!... I’ll say it whenever I want to!” (41) **3A.** Tom actually gets so angry that he strikes her and breaks her nose. **3B.** Even while choosing to be with Myrtle over his wife, he feels the need to protect his wife. It actually seems that he cares for both women, but does not feel committed to either.