

# One Page Concept Review: the Q3 Essay

## Q3 Prompts Grouped into Types of Questions

Analyzing how a part or a specific type of detail contributes to the whole	31%
Analyzing a specific character type or a character with a specified characteristic	23%
Analyzing a specified literary or narrative technique	13%
Analyzing the effect of "X" on a character	11%
Analyzing societal or political criticism	7%
Analyzing a specific type of conflict	5%
Analyzing a specified theme	5%
Analyzing how a specific effect is created	5%

## Q3 Prompts Grouped into Topic Categories

### Thematic Prompts

- How society shapes individuals
- How author critiques society: politics, social or cultural norms
- How author attempts to address an important idea

### Structural Prompts

- Importance of structural feature(s) to whole: symbol, allusion, non-chronological ordering of text, mystery or quest for knowledge
- Importance of text feature(s) to whole: title, beginning, conclusion, recurring events, setting or contrast between two settings, epiphanies
- Importance of text detail(s): unrealistic details, recurring events, violent imagery, social occasions, secrets, death scene, physical journey, single important moment, acts of cruelty, mysterious origins

### Writer's Craft Prompts

- How author creates effect: complex response in reader
- Justifying author's choices: deviations from literary realism, use of humor, unconventional ideas

### Conflict Prompts

- Individual vs. Society
- Individual vs. Parent Figure
- Individual vs. Self
- Individual vs. Cultural Norms
- Individual vs. Control of Others
- Passion vs. Responsibility
- Outer Conformity vs. Inner Rebellion
- Acts of betrayal
- Search for justice

### Character and Characterization Prompts

- Importance of a type of character to whole: stock or stereotyped characters, villains, confidantes, minor or absent characters, *seemingly* irrational characters, morally ambiguous characters, tragic characters who cause suffering for others, foils, characters separated from home (literally or figuratively), characters who sacrifice something, liars and deceivers, mysterious origins
- How external factors shape characterization: society, a difficult past, childhood or adolescence, physical or cultural setting

## Intro and Thesis:

- Identify title, author, and genre (novel or play) [Acronym: TAG]
- Set up the characters and conflict that you will be writing about (minus the resolution to the conflict: save that for your last body paragraph or conclusion)
- Do not use the language of the prompt. Put it in your own words.
- Prompts are two parts: How does Concept X lead to some bigger idea in the text. Most of the time this bigger idea will be theme or character development.
- Narrow the prompt to a single character or conflict so that the topic is manageable.

## Best Structures:

- **Before/After** [I. Intro and thesis; II. Up until X moment, Y is true (Y=an interpretation, not an event); III. After X moment, Z is true (Z=an interpretation, not an event); IV. Change shows something important in the text (from thesis)]
- **Cause/Effect** [I. Intro and thesis; II. X is true; III. X causes Y; IV. Y shows something important in the text (from thesis)]
- **Contrast** [I. Intro and thesis; II. Concept X; III. Contrasts with Concept Y; IV. Difference/Preference for X or Y shows something important in the text (from thesis)]
- **Idea/Qualification** [I. Intro and thesis; II. Idea/Expectation/Appearance; III. Idea/Expectation/Appearance is qualified/contradicted/reversed; IV. The gap between the two shows something important in the text (from thesis)]

If you do something else, you want a structure where body paragraph one sets up body paragraph two. If you can re-arrange the order of your body paragraphs and it still makes sense, you're probably writing two superficial mini-essays instead of developing a single idea at length. Look at the Sample Structures for Four Paragraph Papers in the AP Writing sub-section of my web-page for more ideas.

You are free to write more than four paragraphs, just don't run out of time doing it.

## Body Paragraphs:

- You must have topic sentences. This is non-negotiable. And it probably won't happen unless you have planned your essay structure first.
- Mention a new character? You must introduce who they are to the reader. This doesn't have to be more complicated than an appositive phrase. (Example: "Malvolio, the *pompous steward of Olivia's household*, argues that ...")
- Evidence needs to be specific. Plan on discussing (at length) one specific episode per paragraph (supported by more general references to the novel or play).
- The best evidence comes from turning points in the text.
- Evidence should be generally chronological and work its way through the text (and not, for instance, be all from the beginning).
- What does the evidence reveal about the situation or character? How does it develop the conflict? You can't just *say* these things, you have to *explain* them. And you have to explain them in enough detail so that someone who hasn't read the book can still follow your argument.
- The big sin of Q3 body paragraphs: a crap-load of summary, then one or two sentences of analysis at the end. *Constantly* comment on the significance of what you are describing. That one or two sentences at the end of the paragraph should be a mini-conclusion to an argument you've been developing over the length of the paragraph.

## Conclusion:

- Sum up what you have proved. Be specific when doing this.
- Then transition into a discussion about how this fits into the larger picture of the work as a whole. This is easiest if you are discussing a particular theme.
- Even if it's a character prompt (and the big idea to which you are connecting is character development), try to integrate a discussion of an important theme into the conclusion.
- See the Writing About Theme in the AP Writing sub-section of my web-page for more information about how to conclude with a thematic statement.